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Hermeneutics postcolonial and posmisional

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ALSO:

A Postcolonial-mission-territorial Hermeneutics for a Liberative Shamanic Pneumatology



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*The Spirit is the indwelling of God at the heart
of the process of ongoing creation, empowering and
luring all things into an unforeseeable future.*

Denis Edwards

With the UN drawing attention to the plight of indigenous peoples throughout the world through its declaration of the two decades of Indigenous Peoples (1990-2014), the church local, regional and universal has to generate a hermeneutics that is post-colonial and post mission-territorial. This hermeneutics enable the local churches to make sense of spirit-world that includes the Creator-Spirit, the ancestral spirits and shamanic spirits of nature, including the intermediary role of the shamans and healers. The first section will explain an emergent hermeneutics is post-colonial for reasons that the indigenous peoples around the world are living in nation-states that have gained independence from the North Atlantic colonial powers. At the same time, this hermeneutics is post-mission-territorial as the indigenous peoples who have embraced Christianity have become the members of the local churches. The second section deals with an understanding of the Creative Spirit (*ruah elohim*) through a critical correlational dialogue with indigenous religiosity, Chinese Cosmology, modern science, eastern and western cosmology. This conversation hopes to establish the rightful place of shamanic pneumatology amidst the multivocal discourses. The articulation of an emergent shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability will be offered in the final section.

1. Post-Colonial and Mission-territorial Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics involves a manner of interpretation and explanation of the literary texts from the lived-experience of the struggle of the marginalized and vulnerable in the local contexts of contestation of meaning, values and identities as impacted by the significant global trends. This hermeneutical exercise is pivotal in a process of theological reflection that generates a new discourse on an emergent understanding of the pneumatology of the primal religiosity of indigenous peoples. Post-colonialism and post mission-territory are two of such global trends that need to be examined in this section.

Post-colonial discourse requires a concerted effort at countervailing the residual effects of colonialism on peoples, cultures, continents and the living earth itself.¹ The discursive efforts involve “mobilizing the wisdom to identify and transcend the trappings of power and domination that still reap so much havoc in the contemporary world.”² Latent assumptions of the colonial narratives need to be unmasked in order to expose and deconstruct the racist, imperialist and positivist nature of these colonial narratives. In doing so the post-colonial discourses aim to neutralize the hegemonic power of persuasion and coercion of the colonial narratives. In many ways, this post-colonial discourse is also post-Eurocentric as it elevates the civilizational wisdom of the people and the wisdom-figures outside of North Atlantic, especially the wisdom embedded in the local knowledge of the marginal peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

A post-mission-territorial hermeneutics need to emerge out of the local church that is no longer understood as “mission countries” which comes under the curial administration of a sacred congregation of the Holy See known as current Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.³ This congregation exercises extensive canonical power over rites, appointment of bishops and regulars, marriage and subsidies in practical ways over ‘mission-territories’ subjected to its jurisdiction.⁴

The local church, on the other hand, are churches of particular contexts which realize that “they themselves must become increasingly truly responsible for the incarnation of the life of Christ and the insertion of the meanings and values of the Gospel within the total reality of the life of their people and of the societies whose life and concerns they share.”⁵ This dynamic movement into the future requires greater “decentralization in the administration of the church” and greater acceptance of “pluriformity ... in liturgy, theology, the organization of Christian communities and their ministries, the training of the clergy, the styles of religious life” leading to “the actualization of an authentic catholicity of the Church.”⁶ The local churches are no longer “the young churches” incapable of making their own prudent decisions” but they are Churches that come of

age through the leading and power of God's Spirit so that they enter into a true Catholic communion of sister-churches all over the world.⁷

The post-mission-territorial hermeneutics presupposes the antecedent presence of God in the "interior and mysterious workings of God's Spirit" "in the great religious and sapiential traditions of East and West."⁸ This pneumatological basis of the cultures and (primal and world) religions enables the Asian Church to state "over the centuries God has been speaking to indigenous peoples through their cultures,"⁹ and second, the "traditional beliefs, rites, myths and symbols of indigenous peoples provide material for developing indigenous theologies and liturgical ceremonies."¹⁰ The evangelizing mission of local churches is a proclamation of the antecedent presence of God and the church's collaboration with God through a threefold process: first, a critical reading of the signs of the times and second an attentive discernment of God's actions in our world and third, announcing pastoral strategies of that collaborates with God's Spirit to bring about the reign of God.

Of related importance is the call to exercise a preferential option for orality. This post-colonial and post-mission-territorial hermeneutics need to privilege the oral traditions and wisdom of the marginal communities, especially of the indigenous peoples. Longkumer posits that "today, the emphasis on written literature/text has sidelined and ignored the oral literature as non-literature or inferior to written literature" to the extent that "people do not regard it as an important literature" and "the missionaries ignored and proscribed the oral literature as heretical literature and listed them as banned books."¹¹ Furthermore Longkumer argues "condemning oral traditions means losing our cultural and religious values" and insists "we need to affirm that oral literature is authoritative literature for the tribes, the source of our culture and origin and also for theologizing process."¹²

Given this preference for orality, this proposed hermeneutics pays discursive attention to the religio-cultural beliefs of the indigenous peoples, especially the centrality of "the spirits as the mediators between God and the world" through whom "God relates to the people and world through the spirits."¹³ These spirits are differentiated as "malevolent and benevolent spirits such that the malevolent spirits were associated with misfortune, calamities, and illness while the benevolent spirits such as the house spirits, fertility spirits and ancestor's spirits were known for blessing people with good health, good crops, healthy relationships between and among people, and a good family and community life."¹⁴

For the indigenous communities of Northeast India, Gine believes that they "are spiritual in their own rites" due to their beliefs that "the spirit of God dwells in every human thought and expression, and word

and action.”¹⁵ The indigenous communities offer sacrifices to appeal to their sacred power, not out of fear as out of reverence and love. Gine adds “they worship every good spirit, which they encounter in their day-to-day life like, the god of the land, the god of harvest, the god of the waters, the god of the animal kingdom.”¹⁶ What is most quintessential is that the spirits are revered and venerated for their sacred power in creating and sustaining the earth and creation.

2. Understanding the Creative Spirit in dialogue with Science and Cosmology

A more comprehensive understanding of the ‘literary position’ and ‘theological potentiality’ of the orality of the indigenous Great Spirit depend on a process of critical and correlational reflection between the indigenous, biblical, eastern and western traditions. This reflection also attempts to establish the affinity between the Great Spirit, *ruah elohim*, *qi*, *energy* and the transpersonal Spirit of modern science.

2.1. The Indigenous Great Spirit

The religio-cultural traditions of the indigenous peoples of Australia, New Zealand, United States, Canada, Latin America, Africa and Asia believes that the “tangible sense of aliveness is foundational evidence for the existence of the Great Spirit.”¹⁷ Furthermore, the indigenous peoples “also intuit that it is that Great Spirit that energizes the aliveness and sustains its dynamic nature, although they do not speculate on how that happens.”¹⁸ This Great Spirit manifests a felt sacred power (even frightening and awesome at time), always mediated in the experience of empowerment.”¹⁹ In a perceptible sense, the indigenous peoples experience the presence of the Spirit as “ultra real, and mediated primarily through the surrounding creation that the consider to be alive, every bit as much as humans are alive.”²⁰ Finally, the Great Spirit is transpersonal yet it permeates all things created and embraces everything authentically human. Hence the religiosity of some indigenous communities, like the Karen of Northern Thailand, believes that each human being has 37 souls/spirits and all these spirits inhabit the land and any act of thievery on the land amounts to stealing the lives of these persons.²¹

In spite of the observable differences in the Great Spirit among these diverse indigenous communities, the foundational beliefs are remarkably similar. As Darmuid O’Murchu²² explains, the Great Spirit is believed to manifest the following features:

- All-pervasive
- Transcendent, yet totally immersed in creation
- Evoking creative potentials in every dimension of creation

- Awesome and at times frightening, yet intimately close to every aspect of life
- Life affirming, but operative in both the process of creation and destruction
- Close to humans, yet essentially transpersonal in itself
- Capable of being experienced in all motions of nature (e.g., wind and fire), and not merely in human feeling, emotion, or sentiment
- Captured in religious concepts like Christian notion of the Holy Spirit, yet predating and transcending all formal religions.

The Great Spirit is ultimately the sacred cosmic and personal energizing and sustaining power that articulate with the biblical *ruah elohim* which will be dealt with in the next section.

2.2. *Ruah Elohim*

The biblical *ruah* is the Spirit power that brings creation into being that comes forth from Yahweh (YHWH) the God-creator-liberator for the Israelites. According to Kwong Lai Kuen, the Jews understand *ruah elohim* at the cosmic level as “wind, breath, air, atmosphere, the great space between the heavens and earth.”²³ Geiko Muller-Fahrenholz explains *ruah* as “the motherly energy of God, the inexhaustible and creative power that is exceedingly tender in the soft breezes and wondrously fierce in the tempest’s blast.”²⁴ *Ruah* brings the world together as a united whole (principle of universal cohesion and unity of the whole universe) and it is the deepest core (interiority) of every being. At the microcosmic level, *ruah* is “the principle of life, the seat of knowledge, sentiments, will and the human character.”²⁵ *Ruah* is the “power” and effective “action of God in history and in the world” that is creative and transformative that enables God to bring about the salvation of humankind and the cosmos.

Ruah elohim remains transpersonal and personal in nature. Hence Kwong Lai Kuen posits that “its rhythmic dynamism, its creative flexibility, its sweetness and its vigor, its unity made up of diversity, and its harmonious diversity allows us to go beyond certain breaks that exist in the dualist and static regime of thinking.”²⁶ This is echoed by Philip Clayton, a scientist and theologian who argues that the “Spirit is set free from any metaphysical parameters and allowed to roam freely, immersing itself fully in the self-creating enterprise which is its natural birthright... Spirit is the creative, artistic impulse that rises on outstretched wings to soar above the objectifying forces of law-like explanation and prediction.”²⁷

The personal and transpersonal nature of *ruah elohim* makes it possible to correlate with the cosmic and personal *qi* of Chinese cosmol-

ogy that are present and active in giving life that sustains the *cosmos*, humans and all being.

2.3. Chinese Cosmology

The Chinese cosmology is inextricably linked to the notion of ‘*qi*’. The idea of *qi* dates back to Mencius, a disciple of Confucius. Mencius does not say *qi* is an overflowing but the outcome of one who is has clear conscience and whose life is ethical²⁸. According to Benoit Vermander, the Chinese term “*qi*” “is the vapor that emerges” like vapor from the rice that is cooking. So *qi* is the vapor, the expiration, the fluid, the overflow... the breaths.”²⁹

Caroline Fu and Richard Bergeon explains that “the ancient Chinese sages believed that cosmic energy-flow (known as Super Cosmic *qi*) affected inspiration, environment, and social interaction.”³⁰ Ancient Chinese sages used the 5,000-year old Tai-Ji (*ying-yan* symbol) which denotes the ‘Great Supreme’ reality. The *ying-yang* flows with each other, “rotate and transform each other – expressing variations of “being” – having no beginning and no ending, affecting Earth as formless Super Cosmic *qi*. Korean theologian Grace Kim Ji-Sun states that *qi* “is a vital dynamic, an original power that permeates the entire universe and leads to ultimate unity.”³¹ The cosmic *qi* interacts with each individual’s personal *qi* and thus amalgamates the personal energy-flow with the universal consciousness. In fact, “*qi* is the nature and consequence of being, energy-flow, and transformation.”³²

At the societal and cosmic dimensions, Vermander believes *qi* is related to two other terms ‘Virtue’ and ‘Way’ whose meaning is related to the water or river that digs its course. Like water, *qi* nurtures and sustains Virtues and the Way, circulates between Heaven and Earth, the human and the cosmos. Just as “water is the manifestation of the primordial energy which can be creative of life or of death”³³ so *qi* is the social energy to be harnessed and use to bring about Virtue and the Way - quest for the way of wisdom through learning and reflection, quest for the virtue of justice that brings about a right relationship with oneself, with fellow humans, with nature and creation or Heaven and Earth.

Qi without Virtues and the Way of wisdom and justice will bring death, destruction, injustices, oppression, unrest and violence in all spheres of life in society (social, cultural, economic, political and religious). The revolutions in China are seen as social energy (like water that breaks the dikes) that great leaders released in the Chinese people/masses to ‘wash away’ political obstacles and then closed to avoid or mitigate any destruction by such a massive release of social energy. Hence, the use of the Chinese terms “*feng*” (to open) and “*shu*” (to close) to denote the

cycle of ‘opening’ and ‘closing’ of the social energy at work in society in relation to the cosmic forces of the heaven and earth.³⁴

Commenting on the transpersonal nature, Kwong Lai Kuen adds that *qi* is “a vital overflowing force” like air and water flowing everywhere, linking heaven and earth, the humans and all beings, “affecting many dimensions: cosmic, ethnic, spiritual, social, medical, esthetic, linking matter and spirit, heart and body, physics and metaphysics, emptiness and fullness, nothing and everything.”³⁵ Furthermore, “what unifies and makes possible communion between all is the one and only *qi*. Being empty, it receives everything. It reaches the depths of every being and, at the same time, it is large enough to embrace and cover the whole universe.”³⁶ As a transpersonal force, the Chinese *qi* “allows us to seize better and more subtly the active and creative presence of the Spirit in the world, the mutual communication between Heaven and Earth.”³⁷

This cosmological explanation of *qi* articulates with Kim Ji-Sun’s postulation that *qi* as “the Spirit which is part of the universe and permeates all living things as it gives life and energy” and this “same Spirit is bridging all life-force between Creator and creature” to the extent that this selfsame Spirit “is not an energy proceeding from the Father, or from the Son” as “it is a subject from whose activity the Son and the Father receive their glory and their union, as well as their glorification through the whole creation.”³⁸

The cosmological explanation of *qi* finds an affinity with the understanding of the Spirit in modern science and cosmology of the west.

2.4. Western Modern Science and Cosmology

Modern science and cosmology in the west acknowledge that the multiverse came into being about 13.7 billion years ago as a result of the sudden bursting forth of energy often described as the big bang or “the great radiance” that resembles a cosmic microwave background radiation.³⁹ Others describe this phenomenon as the “eternal inflation”⁴⁰ which left an “afterglow” with an evolutionary expansion of great velocity.

The cosmos is being presented as a self-directed ‘process of complexification’ toward an eternal future of infinite openness. The cosmos is indeed an infinite open multiverse⁴¹ caught up in an ongoing forward process of being created out of the creative vacuum, which signifies depths of profundity. The emergence of the multiverse out of such profound depths was never a ‘creation out of nothingness’ (*creatio ex nihilo*) as an emergence out of the profundity within the chaos (*creation ex profundis*).⁴²

The multiverse is charged with a primordial energy that “moves within self-organizational forms known as fields”⁴³ which are “constellations of energy, with assuredly functional properties and influences, but

also endowed with potentialities,” thriving “on relationships, always pushing forward toward enlarged horizon,”⁴⁴ also known to “flow in patterns (sometimes chaotic), and the patterns seem to have a preferred sense of direction.”⁴⁵ These fields of energy, according to the spirituality of John of Damascus, is identifiable with the energy of God and thus with the energizing Spirit.

Modern science and cosmology offer a more compelling evidence of the energizing Spirit than the spiritual or theological tradition.⁴⁶ Two leading scientists, Isaac Newton and Albert Einstein have engendered two different pneumatologies. Newton coined the term ‘ether’ to denote the “vehicle for the activity of the living Spirit.”⁴⁷ Wolfgang Vondey offers a concise description of the Newtonian Pneumatology:

- (1) Spirit is a necessary component for a philosophy of nature.
- (2) Spirit is an intermediate agent of transcendent God in creation.
- (3) Spirit is a universal principle present in all natural phenomena.
- (4) Spirit is an internal medium of infinite duration (time) and extension (space).
- (5) Spirit is a cohesive and conforming force in nature.”⁴⁸

On the other hand, Einstein believes that the Spirit “is the rationality at work in the cosmic order, endowing the laws of nature with meaning and order, and bestowing an overall sense of unity and coherence in the workings of nature.”⁴⁹ In summary, Einsteinian Pneumatology offers a different explanation:

- (1) Spirit is a necessary component in the scientific endeavor.
- (2) Spirit is the rational order of the universe.
- (3) Spirit is a universal principle present in all natural phenomena.
- (4) Spirit is the symmetry of the space-time continuum.
- (5) Spirit has no physical, material reality.”⁵⁰

How do these “scientific” pneumatologies articulate with the biblical understanding of *ruah elohim*? At the onset it must be clear that both Newtonian and Einsteinian pneumatologies fail to link with the personal and embodied identity of the Spirit of Christianity. Their envisaged articulation lies in the transpersonal nature of the Creative Spirit. *Ruah elohim* is arguably the energizing Spirit of God that emerges out of and cocreates within the same foundational energy that has suffused the multiverse with an emergent orientation to “flourish, blossom forth and grow in complexity.”⁵¹

Given the personal yet transpersonal nature of *ruah elohim* that is completely transcendent yet totally immanent in creation, it is best to speak of the Spirit’s divine creativity that suffuses creation with its sacred

power. The Creative Spirit is completely caught up in the mystery of life that “comes forth to thrive and complexify through relationships.”⁵² This is the Creative Sprit that is at the heart of cosmic creativity or the self-creativity of the cosmos that exhibits an ecosytemic capacity for self-organization and “a preferred sense of direction.”⁵³ With unprecedented mystical courage, Teilhard de Chardin extrapolated a pneumatological insight:

Besides the phenomena of heat, light and the rest studied by physics, there is, just as real and natural, the phenomenon of spirit ... [which] has rightly attracted human attention more than any other. We are coincidental with it. We feel it within. It is the very thread of which the other phenomena are woven for us. It is the thing we know best in the world since we are itself, and it is for us everything (Teilhard de Chardin 1969, 93) ⁵⁴

Teilhard's insight further the understanding of modern science and cosmology of a multiverse that is evolving, emergent, pervasively infused with patterns and a dynamic sense of direction for reasons that “the cosmos, in this sense, is overflow with spirit because it is interactive, pan-relational, and creative.”⁵⁵

This primordial Spirit enfolds and permeates the entire cosmos with aura of sacredness to the extent that all *anthropos* and the cosmos enjoy their existence through the sustaining presence of the indwelling Spirit whence came its primordial sacredness.⁵⁶ This indwelling Spirit who fulfills that primordial role articulates with the biblical *ruah elohim* who is known to Christian theology as the Holy Spirit.⁵⁷

A primordial sacredness due to the indwelling of the sustaining indwelling of *ruah elohim* articulates with the transpersonal-personal nature of the Great Spirit, the *qi* Chinese cosmology and the Spirit of modern science and cosmology. Essentially these are the mystical-contemplative yet contextual articulation of the ultimate mystery of life. In spite of the observable difference in the diverse systems of explanation, there is an “epistemological affinity” between the different contextualized articulations of the pervasive mystery of life.

Such an interrelated understanding of the sacred mystery that sustains the cosmic web of transpersonal and personal life promotes the discursive legitimacy of the orality and civilizational wisdom of the indigenous peoples that were de-legitimized by the hegemonic colonial power and narratives. Second this critical correlation establishes the “theological potentiality” of the indigenous Great Spirit. Third, the legitimacy and authority conferred on oral narratives and indigenous wisdom in turn elevates the role of the indigenous wo/men shamans, sages, healers and elders as well.

This interrelated and interdisciplinary conversation opens up a discursive space of pluriformity for additional contextual theologies to be generated. Claiming this ecclesial-theological space makes it possible for the emergence of a liberative shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability.

3. An Emergent Shamanic Pneumatology of Sacred Sustainability

This section begins with an explanation of sustainability as articulated by the United Nations that becomes the platform for a theological discourse on sacred sustainability.

3.1. Sustainability: An Overview

In a general sense, sustainability bespeaks of humankind's relationship with Mother Earth. Sustainability is understood particularly in relation to responsible stewardship of the earth and management of the planet's human and natural resources. Since March 20, 1987, the Brundtland Commission of the United Nations linked sustainability to the concept of sustainable development which specifies the kind of "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."⁵⁸

The Earth Charter Initiative of 2000 portrays "a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace."⁵⁹ In 2005, the UN World Summit mentions the "three pillars" of sustainability : (a) ending extreme poverty; (b) ensuring that prosperity is shared by all, including women, youth and minorities; and (c) protecting the natural environment. These three goals can be termed the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development, or, more simply, the "triple bottom line" of sustainable development.⁶⁰ The "triple bottom line" is not mutually exclusive as they are mutually reinforcing.⁶¹

This UN definition on sustainability has by no means achieved the intended consensus. The terms sustainability and sustainable development, the goals intended and the manner of achieving these goals remain open to interpretation and debate. To the environmentalists, there can be no sustainable development without the concomitant degradation of the environment, the depletion of resources, and a massive extinction of species.⁶² Others argue that sustainability must have quantifiable limits and intergenerational perspective for all humans and life forms. Most will agree that sustainability embraces a call to action, a task in progress, a political process aimed at the gradual realization of some envisioned goals and values for attaining a sustainable community of life on earth.

3.2. Sustainability: A Pneumatological Insight

Sacred sustainability is a pneumatological insight that emerges out of a dialogue with a few renowned indigenous shamans and a subsequent reflection on the initiatory experience of the sacredness of the mystery of life that pervades all of creation.⁶³ This shamanic pneumatology elevates the civilizational wisdom inherent in the indigenous cosmology of sustainability. Many renowned elders, sages and shamans around the world expound this cosmology of sustainability in relation to the sustainability of life on earth. This emergent insight explains sacred sustainability in relation to the tenet of the omnipresence of God's Creative Spirit in creation.

The insight postulates that the indwelling Creative Spirit pulsates through the whole of creation with the sacred power that makes all things, all life forms, all spaces and all persons sacred. This pulsation of the sacred power of the Creative Spirit sustains life in creation. In other words, the abiding presence of the Creative Spirit is the basis for the possibility of sustainability of life in creation. God's Creative spirit is responsible for making creation sacred (hence socializes creation) so that creation is suffused with the sacredness of God's sacred power. Conversely, when creation is desecrated and violated by greed it is devoid of this sacred power of the Creative Spirit, sustainability of life in creation is no longer tenable and viable.

This shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability hinges on three theological extrapolations premised on Scripture. The first presupposes the participation of the shamanic spirits in the sacred power of the Creative Spirit and the second a theological understanding of Yahweh as co-governing and co-sustaining the cosmos with other spirits.

3.2.1. Participation in *ruah elohim*.

A shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability postulates that sustainability of life in God's creation is possible because the shamanic spirits participate in the spirit power of *ruah elohim* (Psalm 139:7). By their intimate participation, the shamanic spirits' indwelling presence in nature makes the trees, the forests, the rivers, the rice grains, the water, the mountains and human beings and creation sacred. Based on this cosmic sacredness, sustainability of life on earth and creation is attainable by the creative power of *ruah elohim*. In Genesis (1:1-2) *ruah elohim* is depicted as hovering over the waters, transforming the primal chaos (*tobu va-vobu*, a description of whence the earth was wild and waste)⁶⁴ into a cosmos that befits all human and bio-species on earth. This is the *ruah elohim* that suffuses creation with God's sacred power and goodness (Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31) and that reflects the grandeur and splendor of God.

3.2.2. *Ruah Elohim as omnipresent.*

The pneumatology of sacred sustainability advocates that sustainability of life with the sacred power of *ruah elohim* is attainable due to the participation of the shamanic spirits in the Omnipresent *ruah* (Jer 23:24). This *ruah* is present in creation, which the biblical authors acknowledged as the imperishable spirit that is in everything (Wis 12:1).⁶⁵ This *ruah* fills the heaven and the earth (1 King 8:27; Amos 9:2-3), indeed the whole world (Wis 1:7). By the act of creation, the uncreated Creator infused in everything, a living soul or living spirit (Wis 15:11) and thus God's *ruah* is acknowledged for its universal and life-giving and sustaining activity (Jb 34:14-15; Ps 104:30) that makes creation sacred.⁶⁶ By participation in the Creative *ruah* that suffuses creation with God's presence and makes it sacred, the host of shamanic spirits, presided over by the Omnipresent *ruah elohim*, enables the sustainability of life in creation and ascertains that sacred sustainability is a realizable possibility. The host of shamanic spirits shares in the task of co-governance with the presiding *ruah elohim*. The co-creation, co-governance and co-sustenance of the Creative Spirit together with the shamanic spirits in God's creation has made possible the sacred sustainability of creation and our planetary home earth with all its life forms.

3.2.3. *Ruah Elohim: Spirit power of the Shamans.*

Since the Omnipresent *ruah elohim* co-creates, co-governs and co-sustains creation with the shamanic spirits, and by virtue of the intimate participation of the shamanic spirits in the sacred power of *ruah elohim*, it is safe to conclude that *ruah elohim* 'instrumentalizes' the shamans for purposes exemplified by the biblical shamanic types.

The intermediary role of the shamans are akin to that of biblical Patriarchs Abraham (Gen 12:7; 15:1; 18:1), Jacob (Gen 28:11-17) and Moses who mediated the spirit power of *ruah elohim* to part the red sea (Ex 14:16), induce water from the rock (Ex 17:5; Nm 20:11) and work "nature miracles" free (Ex 7-11; 15:22-25; 16) to set the oppressed Israelites free (Ex 5ff). Finally, the shamans find a type in the Spirit-possessed and Spirit-driven Jesus (Lk 4:18-19) who identifies himself with the struggle of the populace in early Palestine.

Driven and possessed by *ruah elohim*, the shamans too immerse themselves totally in the daily grind of economic poverty and political marginalization of the indigenous communities. Their shamanic rituals bring healings to the sick, deliver and set free those who are influenced by bad spirits, and recreate sacred space. Their presence, knowledge and wisdom have inspired the communities to share what they have, like the miracles of the fish and loaves (Mk 6:30-44, 8:1-10; Mt 4:13-21; Lk 9:10-

17, Jn 6:1-13), in order to attain a more sustainable livelihood in their ancestral homeland.

Indeed *ruah elohim* is the spirit power of the shamans for harmonizing the cosmic and planetary web of relations, empowering the communities in their struggle for sustainable livelihood and reconciling ruptured interpersonal relations and healing of personal ailment.

3.3. Sustainability: A Pneumatological Response

This pneumatological insight correlates with a spirit-inspired response to God's sacred creation. Sacred sustainability calls forth a conversion of heart with a resultant felt-conviction that sustainability of life on earth and in God's creation is qualitatively possible with an emerging civilization of *profound reverence and respect* for all things, all life forms, all spaces and all persons. This reverence is grounded in God's all-pervasive Creative Spirit that is intuitively and mystically experienced as *sacredly alive* in all of creation. It is this omnipresence of God's Creative Spirit that *sacredly sustains* all of God's creation.

Living in the spirit power of *ruah elohim*, humankind renders to creation a "dialogic reverence" which calls on all humans to reverentially behold and respect all things, all life forms, all spaces and all persons in our planetary home due to the pulsating presence of the sacred power of the Creative Spirit. Every breath is a felt-experience and every perceivable presence of life is notional conviction that God's Creative power is sacralizing and sustaining all human lives and all life forms on earth. In this dialogic reverence for creation, human engagement in agriculture, pottery and weaving is as sacred as human involvement in worship as all these apparently mundane activities are actually ways of expressing and manifesting reverence to the all- pervasive sacred mystery.⁶⁷

Reverence for the sacredness of creation will dictate an ethical level of human consumption of the earth's resources that is sustainable of life on earth for all life forms. It will be based on a communal ethics of need-to-use rather than greed-for-profit, resembling the "*Sumaj Kawsay*,"⁶⁸ a concept of the indigenous peoples of Bolivia that resonates with the Kari-Oca 2 understanding of "living well" or living in harmony with nature and people, rather than the current focus on producing more goods and stimulating consumption.⁶⁹ Only a need-based ethos between humankind and the earth will sustain human livelihood with dignity and security, both for current and future generations. Ultimately only a spirit-drive need-based reverential relationship, rooted in the sacredness of creation, ensures the sustainability of life for humankind, all the other life forms and most significantly, planet earth.

This emergent shamanic Pneumatology of sacred sustainability is premised on two presuppositions. First, the established "theological

potentiality” of the Indigenous Great Spirit; second, the intimate participation of the shamanic spirits in the co-creative, co-governing and co-sustaining power of *ruah elohim*. This omnipresence spirit power suffuses all of creation and thus sacralizes the entire *cosmos*, *anthropos* and all life forms in the multiverse. In short, the sacred sustainability of creation is the primordial and ongoing activity of *ruah elohim* within the self-organized patterns, relations and a preferred sense of direction within the multiverse.

3.4. *A Shamanic Pneumatology: A Liberative Discourse*

Sacred sustainability is a liberative pneumatological discourse premised on three shamanic beliefs of the marginalized peoples of the primal religions. These three beliefs (see 4.4.1.-4.4.3. below) echo with the Biblical God who has entered into a covenantal partnership with the poor of history.

3.4.1. *Theological presupposition.*

The Yahweh of the covenant heard the suffering of the people Israel who “groaning in slavery, cried out for help and from the depths of their slavery their cry came up to God.” (Ex 2:23) *Yahweh’s* heart descended with empathy: “I have seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying for help... Yes, I am aware of their sufferings. And I have come down to rescue them from the clutches of the Egyptians and bring them up out of that country...” (Ex 3:7-8). This is *Yahweh* who remembered the covenant with the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and *Yahweh* promised to descend and liberate the people through Moses. Yahweh is the God of righteousness and justice for the aliens, the poor and the slaves (Ex 23:1-9) groaning under the oppression of empires. Yahweh ensures that life is sustained - symbolized by the promised land (Ex 3:8-9)- so that the violated people come under the rule of a non-desecrating and liberating God. Yahweh who liberated the desecrated Israelites does not want a poor destitute global underclass since *Yahweh* has enjoined that “there must, then, be no poor among you” (Dt 15:4). This is the God who descends in aid of the oppressed people upon hearing invocations during rituals to liberate them in their struggles against idolatrous power of domination and slavery.

3.4.2. *Christological presupposition.*

God’s creative *ruah* is the indwelling *ruah* (Jn 1:14) that is the creative-salvific power within Jesus, guiding his ministry of Kin(g)dom liberation for all who are in need of God and God’s salvific liberation. Jesus proclaimed God’s Reign and demonstrated by word and deeds that

it is at hand (Mk 1:15) through the liberation of persons suffering from bodily ailments and poverty, violated and desecrated by the oppressive system of taxation of the Jewish Temple-State and the Roman Empire.⁷⁰ The healing and deliverance by Jesus are manifestations of the supernatural power of the God-with-and-within-us who sets free the human spirit and body from all violence, be it physical or structural or both.

In his ministry in early Palestine, Jesus pronounced the marginalized as heirs of Abraham (Mt 8:29; Lk13:16) because of their inviolable dignity as persons made sacred in God's image and likeness (Gen 1:26). Through his ministry, Jesus defended their inviolable rights to be revered as sacred, not to be violated by any cultural, religious, political or invisible powers. The Christ-event seals God's everlasting covenant (Mk 14:24; Mt 26:28; Lk 22:20; 1 Cor 11:25) with creation. The outpouring of God's Spirit (Acts 2:1-13) is the definitive assurance of God's everlasting and recurrent actions of making sacred (a "divine sacralization") God's creation.

This ever-binding covenant sealed on the cross and soaked in the blood of the Crucified Jesus, ensures that sacred sustainability becomes translated into a praxis of committed disciples through whom the Crucified Lord continues to liberate the global underclass, victims of global capitalism who represent 40 percent of the world's population (see Appendix C). The covenantal blood seals the pact with the global underclass, consecrates them as sacred in God's sight so that liberation brings about the state of sacred sustainability for the marginalized in our world – a desired sustainability of life where there is reverence for the sacredness of persons and the earth. This is the Christological basis of an Asian liberation theology of sacred sustainability.

The God who descends as Immanuel (Mt 1:23) is the God who is a liberator in person whose liberative efforts are being continued by shamans who create space of resistance for their ancestral homeland in the name of sustainable livelihood for the marginalized indigenous communities.

3.4.3. Pneumatological presupposition.

The liberative power of the shamanic spirits who participate in the sacred power of the Creative Spirit finds a home in the Risen Lord, the *ruah-made-flesh-now-liberated* from the death-dealing imperial power of Roman and the Temple-States. This *ruah* is now universalized to become the omnipresent Pentecostal Spirit. This Spirit breaks forth from a mono-cultural to a multi-cultural manifestation as attested to in the multi-glossarial phenomenon of Acts 2: 1-13. God's Spirit is now present and active in many regions outside of Judaism and the Jewish territories

through the early missionary work of the nascent church. The indwelling Spirit acts as the dynamic power within the apostles and disciples (Luke 3:22; 4:1, 18; 10:21; Acts 1:2) who continued Jesus' Kin(g)dom-ministry of liberating peoples from the imperial forces in the Graeco-Roman world who violated the sacredness and dignity of the human persons and God's creation.⁷¹

By virtue of the shamanic spirits participate in the primal *ruah* (see 4.2.1), then the indwelling spirits also participate in the omnipresent Pentecostal Spirit of the Risen Lord. As shamanic spirits that bring healing to sick persons and restore balance to the ruptures between creation and humankind, these spirits are the soma-cosmic liberating spirits of God. Their indwelling as spirits of the mountains, rivers, animals, water-source and forests suffuses nature with a cosmological or eco-sacredness which further reinforces the organic value that God has endowed creation by virtue of being created sacred in God's sight. This value of sacredness commands our human reverence and resolution to realize a sustainable use of the earth's resources as responsible stewards of the earth. The presence of God's Omnipresent Spirit and the indwelling spirits in nature continues to liberate humankind from the greed to exploit earth's resources. The *pneuma* is the liberating power in creation to the cosmos from the relentless and destructive depletion of non-renewable resources that threatens the survival of the earth.

These three theological understanding lays the pneumatological foundation of a liberative pneumatology of sacred sustainability.

3.5. *Liberative Praxis for the promotion of Sacred Sustainability*

This shamanic pneumatology has its ensuing liberative praxis that calls for the promotion of a sustainable relationship, especially in relation to global capitalism and in the context of Asia. 3.3.1 Liberative Praxis for sustainable relationship.

3.5.1. *Liberative Praxis for sustainable relationship*

This pneumatological discourse calls for the promotion of a sustainable relationship of space and beings because they are sacred. The space in discussion is inclusive of the space within the human body or "body-space" and space as the entire earth or earth-space, even outer space as in the entire universe. If space is sacred, then the human body, the earth and the universe are all sacred. Similarly the beings in deliberation refer to all organic and non-organic things on earth. Any violation of spaces and beings on the earth, defies the notion of sacred sustainability. Insofar as nature and culture are desecrated, life on earth is at stake and human livelihood in the world can no longer be sustainable. This

discourse advocates sustainability of life on earth for all biospecies and humankind premised on the theological notion that both the indwelling of God's Spirit and the shamanic spirits in everything and everyone make all things and all beings sacred.

3.5.2. Liberative Praxis in relation to global capitalism.

In the light of deplorable desecration by global capitalism, this shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability denounces the prevalent system of neo-liberal capitalism for its destructive impact on human civilization, on society and above all, its irreparable damage on the environment. This liberation theology regards the detestable consequences of global capitalism as an affront against God and a hideous crime on humanity. In effect, it has caused a genocidal impact on future generations and mother earth. Humankind and the earth are in need of liberation from such inhumane desecration of human dignity and blatant violence against God's creation.

At the same time, this liberative shamanic pneumatology calls for global solidarity with the God-in-action in the ongoing struggle of the marginalized, liberating them and the world from the idolatry of profit, pleasure and power inherent in the logic of global capitalism.⁷² This solidarity calls for a "dialogic reverence" due to persons and all of creation in their sacredness in order to attain greater sustainability of life for ALL in God's creation. The attainment of greater sacred sustainability is aptly captured in the Johannine metaphor "fullness of life" (John 10:10), a theological vision of the integral salvation for all of God's creation. For the indigenous peoples and the global underclass whom they are a part of, "fullness of life" means rightful access to sufficient natural resources, integral relations with the land, overall balance between nature and culture, intergenerational cultural identity and security that their future generations can truly lead lives with intimate knowledge of their language and practices like dance, song, livelihood crafts, and ritual communication with the Creator and spirits.

In short, it is a personal life with dignity made possible through a community enjoying sustainable livelihood. The biblical notion of "fullness of life" (John 10:10) also enjoins the need for sustained liberation of the marginalized from the systemic oppression inflicted on the majority of the have-nots by global capitalism. A sustained liberation in society is possible with a liberation from an oppressed body-space directed to the conversion of heart, mind and relationship. Only the liberating power of God's saving justice brings humankind to foster a just relationship with God, neighbors of other cultures and faiths (including indigenous shamanism), and the environment.

In addition, this liberative praxis advocates an alternative post-global capitalism discourse that “recognizes the wonderful result of God's creative activity” in nature and the world, and promotes with greater urgency that the earth's resources are “a common good, destined for all” and therefore “the goods of the earth were created by God to be used wisely by all... shared equitably, in accordance with justice and charity,” “while respecting the intrinsic balance of creation.”⁷³

3.5.3. Liberative praxis in relation to Asia

In the plural context of Asia, this liberative praxis is always inter-religious, public and global. There is no denial that the “relationship among religions is a matter of public interest in Asia today” (Wilfred 2010, 104). The contestation of space that entails negotiations with the nation-state is carried out for the good of *all* in society. This common concern requires collaboration of the religious leaders of Asia. Local religious leaders need to collaborate and network with regional and global agents of liberation in such movements as the global justice movements, be they anti-war, anti-poverty, human rights, ecological, women/feminists, and Asian/World Social Forum movements. All these liberative movements advocate a world where sustainability is possible because the *cosmos* and *anthropos* are suffused with sacredness, splendor and the grandeur of the Creator.

Yet amidst such possibilities, an increasingly secularized Asia impacted by economic globalization, has moved to the edge of a manifest incapacity to be opened and surprised by the sacred. An Asian liberation theology of sacred sustainability has the urgent task of elevating this indigenous logic of the sacred and the potency of that sacred power. Only such elevation can convince a secularized world to remain open to the promptings of the creative *ruah* already at work in all beings and all spaces through the indwelling Spirit and shamanic spirits.

Such liberative praxis involving negotiation and resistance which is mediated by the shamans, calls for an inclusive collaboration among shamans and religious leaders, both women and men (monks, pastors, Hindu and Catholic priests). Together, they need to ritually celebrate the descent of the power of the Creator, implode the sacred power from within individuals and communities, and concertedly, recreate space, ordain and make sacred everything and everyone in the communal efforts of negotiating social changes. The implosion of the latent power ‘within’ makes possible the promotion of sacred sustainability in the ancestral homeland of indigenous communities and in the *cosmos* as well. The power from “beyond” that descends amongst the marginalized becomes a liberating power from “within” that enables the marginalized communities, both indigenous and otherwise, to negotiate and resist the systemic violence of global capitalism.

This liberative praxis, motivated by the different Asian faith traditions, for the promotion of sacred sustainability in Asia calls for a conviction that “when things are most incredible that *faith* is most required” and “when things are most hopeless that we really need *hope*” and “the impossible love becomes the real love” (Neelankavil 2010, 96). With deep faith, real hope and love in the sacred power of *ruah elohim*, sacred sustainability is attainable based on affective experience that deepens a “felt-presence” and the subsequent en-fleshed conviction of the sacredness of all spaces and beings. With this glow of sacredness within the beings of the *anthropos* that commensurate with the sacredness pervasively present in the cosmos, the attainment of sacred sustainability in our world remains a realizable goal of humankind.

Finally, a liberative shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability announces God’s actions behind the inner dynamism oriented towards the liberation of creation. With the free offer of the graces of salvation, the many poor of the many world and primal religions of Asia will be able to collaborate with all theological symbols of liberation to bring about a “new creation” (2 Cor 5:17). This liberation directed at the “new creation” will become a reality at the *eschaton* when the final realization of “a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev. 21:1) takes place.

Conclusion

The UN Declaration of the two decades of indigenous peoples and the UN discourse on sustainability has spurred this need to generate a post-colonial and post-mission-territorial hermeneutics for establishing the “epistemological affinity” between the indigenous Great Spirit, the biblical Creative Spirit, the Chinese perception of *qi*, the Spirit of modern science and cosmology of the west. This hermeneutics privileges the civilizational wisdom and the lived local oral knowledge of indigenous communities that the reputable shamans, healers, elders and sages embodied and practiced. These different epistemological systems lure humankind to a mystical state of awe and wonder that opens up the heart to a gradual realization that the Creative Spirit is unmistakably the ongoing cosmic activity in the complexification process of the eternally open and infinite multiverse.

This hermeneutical effort establishes the “theological potentiality” of the indigenous Great Spirit for an Asian shamanic pneumatology. Through a process of “contextual theologizing” from the lived-experience of the indigenous peoples, this emergent hermeneutics has generated a shamanic pneumatology of sacred sustainability that is context-specific to Asia. This Asian shamanic pneumatology aims to grapple with the crises of sustainability exacerbated by global capitalism and thus draws human-

kind into the very activity within the emerging, flourishing, self-organizing and purpose-directed complexifying process of life in the multiverse.

This liberative shamanic pneumatology calls for an inclusive recognition of the intimate participation of the shamanic spirits of in the spirit power of *ruah elohim* and advocates the shamans and healers as the pneumatological intermediaries of the co-creative, co-governing and co-sustaining *ruah elohim*. At the same time, this liberative shamanic pneumatology claims the discursive space of theological pluriformity to be a rightful local theology within the catholicity of contextual theologies of the Church universal.

May the liberative praxis of this emergent shamanic pneumatology conjoin all believers of the primal and world religions, including all people of goodwill to be open and be lured by the primordial Spirit into the infinite future whence sacred sustainability of the infinite and open multiverse becomes a perennial experience of the eternal activity of the Creative Spirit.

Notes

¹ See Mark Hathaway and Leonardo Boff, *The Tao of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009).

² Diarmuid O' Murchu, *Christianity's Dangerous Memory: A Rediscovery of the Revolutionary Jesus* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications 2012), 9.

³ *Propaganda Fidei* is the Congregation of the Holy See founded on 22nd of June, 1622 by the Bull *Inscrutabili* issued by Pope Gregory XV with the double aim of spreading Christianity in the areas where the Christian message had still not arrived and of defending the patrimony of faith in those places where heresy (Protestantism in terms of Lutheranism, Calvinism and Anglicanism) had caused the genuineness of the faith to be questioned. *Propaganda Fidei* was thereafter, basically the Congregation whose task was to organize all the missionary activities of the Church. Through a provision of the late Pope John Paul II (in order to better define its task), *Propaganda Fidei* has been called the "Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples." See mv.vatican.va/3_EN/pages/x=Scede/METs/METs-Main_06.html Accessed on February 5, 2013.

⁴ 'Mission territories' or 'mission countries' that *Propaganda Fidei* oversees consists of dioceses, vicariates, prefectures, simple missions, and colleges administer through its delegates. The Apostolic delegations are established to maintain immediate representatives of the Holy See in places where they seem to be needed by reason of the growth of the Church organization and in numbers. This Congregation is authorized to deal with matters peculiar to the other congregations, when such matters are presented as practical cases, i.e. when they do not raise questions of a technical character, or of general bearing, or are not of a class specifically reserved to some other department of the pontifical administration.

⁵ Francisco F. Claver, S.J., *The Making Of A Local Church* (Manila: Claretian Publications and Jesuit Communications, 2009), 219.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 219-220.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 220.

- ⁸ See the 34th General Congregation document, Decree 4, *Mission and Culture* which states, "The ministry of dialogue is conducted with a sense that God's action is antecedent to ours." and the 1993 encyclical of John Paul II entitled "Veritatis Splendor," no. 94.
- ⁹ This is part of a statement of a conference in Hua Hin, Thailand, In September 1995, entitled *Evangelization Among The Indigenous Peoples Of Asia*. It was organized by the Office of Evangelization, participated by forty-five participants, bishops, priests, religious and lay people of Asia, all of whom belonged to indigenous groups or were working with them, reflected on the theological significance of the religious heritage of the indigenous peoples. For details, see Franz-Josef Eilers. *For All the Peoples of Asia*. Vol. II. *Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences Documents from 1992 to 1996* (Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications, 1997), 212.
- ¹⁰ The document entitled *The Spirit At Work In Asia Today* is a paper published in 1997 by the FABC Office of Theological Concern in the edition of the *1998 FABC Papers*.
- ¹¹ Limatula Longkumer, "Hermeneutical Issues in Using Traditional Sources – Where do We Draw Our Spiritual Sources for Our Liberation?" *Journal of Tribal Studies* 13, no. 2 (July-December 2008), 39.
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Yangkahao Vashum, "Jesus Christ as the Ancestor and Elder Brother: Constructing a Relevant Indigenous/Tribal Christology of North East India," *Journal of Tribal Studies* 13, no. 2 (July-December 2008), 27.
- ¹⁴ Ibid.
- ¹⁵ See Pratap Chandra Gine 2005, "Countering Aggressive Majoritarian Constructs of Nationhood: Dalits and Hindu Religious Fundamentalism in India," *JTCA – The Journal of Theologies and Cultures in Asia*, 4 (2005), 96
- ¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁷ Ibid., 12.
- ¹⁸ Ibid., 11. O' Murchu posits that "the Great Spirit is more foundational to spiritual/religious meaning than the Christian notion of the Trinity, or indeed the theistic constructs of any of the great religions." (2012, 11).
- ¹⁹ Ibid., 197.
- ²⁰ Ibid., 11.
- ²¹ See Prasert Trakansuphakon, "Space of Resistance and Place of Local Knowledge in the Northern Thailand Ecological Movement," Ph.D. Dissertation, Chiangmai University, 2007, 214. This religious belief is sufficient motif to inspire the Karen to stand up and resist the Thai government's attempt to convert the Karen ancestral homeland to a reforestation project and transfer the ownership from the Karen communities to the government.
- ²² Ibid., 85-6.
- ²³ Kwong Lai Kuen, "The Chinese Qi and Christian Anthropology," *Ignis*, Vol. XLII, no. 3 (2012.3), 38. Also see Richard J. Clifford, and Roland E. Murphy, "Genesis," in *The New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary*, Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Roland E. Murphy, Ed., (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1993), 10.
- ²⁴ Geiko Muller-Fahrenholz, *God's Spirit: Transforming a World in Crisis* (New York: Continuum), 9.
- ²⁵ Kwong Lai Kuen, "The Chinese Qi and Christian Anthropology, 38.

- ²⁶ Ibid., 25.
- ²⁷ Philip clayton, *Adventures in the Spirit* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008), 153, 248. Also see Darmuid O' Murchu, In *The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 11.
- ²⁸ Benoit Vermander, SJ "Qi (Energy) In Chinese Tradition," *Ignis*, Vol. XLII, no. 3 (2012.3), 26.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 24.
- ³⁰ See Caroline Fu and Robinson Hickman, Caroline Fu and Richard Bergeon, "A Tao Model: Rethinking Modern Leadership for Transformation," in JoAnn Danelo Barbour and Gill *Leadership For Transformation*. San Francisco, Jossey-Bass, 2011), 17.
- ³¹ See Grace Kim Ji-Sun, "In Search of a Pneumatology: Chi and Spirit" *Feminist Theology* 18 (2009) 122; also see her work, *The Holy Spirit, Chi and the Other* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2011), 121.
- ³² Ibid., 18.
- ³³ Benoit Vermander, SJ "Qi (Energy) In Chinese Tradition," 32.
- ³⁴ Benoit Vermander, SJ, "Qi (Energy) In Chinese Tradition," 34.
- ³⁵ See Kwong Lai Kuen, "The Chinese QI and Christian Anthropology," 39.
- ³⁶ Ibid. Kwong Lai Kuen also adds (2012, 39) that the Chinese Qi, "insofar as it is finite fineness and unlimited movement, to and fro, of *ganying* (stimulus-resonance, the response "of qi to qi") is at the same time the milieu and the dynamism of mutual interaction and intercommunication and it always present between Heaven and Earth. It is in this way that the Chinese qi, because of its rhythmic dynamism, its creative flexibility, its sweetness and its vigor, its unity made up of diversity, and its harmonious diversity, allows us to go beyond certain breaks that exist in the dualist and static regime of thinking, allows us to seize better and more subtly the active and creative presence of the Spirit in the world, the mutual communication between Heaven and Earth."
- ³⁷ Ibid., 39.
- ³⁸ See Grace Kim Ji-Sun, "In Search of a Pneumatology: Chi and Spirit", 4, 54.
- ³⁹ In 1965, two young astronomers located at the Bell Labs at Holmdel, New Jersey, Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson, discovered the cosmic background radiation. See Marcus Chown, *Quantum Theory Cannot Hurt You* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), 147. The eternal radiance was extrapolated ed by Michael Dowd. See his work, *Thank God for Evolution* (San Francisco: Council Oak Books, 2009).
- ⁴⁰ Inflation become a more acceptable cosmological explanation in the 1980s due to the research of Alan Guth, Andrei Linde, Paul Steinhardt, and Andy Albrecht and latter and gained further inroads in the 1990s due to the efforts of Paul Davies and John Gribbin.
- ⁴¹ The insight of British physicist Neil Turok regarding an infinite open universe has recently been developed into the recent Hawking-Turok Instanton Theory (Steinhart and Turok 2007). The multiverse theory of Gribbin postulates the universes are continuously being created and that we engage with billions of galaxies in the multiverse of staggering complexity and profundity. See John Gribbin, *In Search of the Multiverse* (New York: Allen Lane, 2009).
- ⁴² For details on *creatio ex profundis*, see Catherin Keller, *Face of the Deep: A Theology of Becoming* (New York: Routledge, 2003).
- ⁴³ Darmuid O' Murchu, In *The Beginning Was The Spirit: Science, Religion and Indigenous Spirituality* (New York: Orbis Books, 2012), 72.

- ⁴⁴ Ibid., 46.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 73.
- ⁴⁶ Diarmuid O' Murchu believes that "only the contemplative, mystical gaze can hope to plumb such depths, and today, science rather than religion leads the way" while Andrew Pinsent, a former particle physicist working on the DELPHI experiment at CERN, is now a Catholic diocesan priest of Arundel and Brighton diocese and Research Director of the Ian Ramsey Centre for Science and Technology in the Theology Faculty of Oxford, alludes to the fact that in science "most discoveries today are on the basis of theories formed decades or even centuries ago, and it is not yet clear how to make further progress in many areas." See his article "Jesuits and the 'God Particle'" *Vagdevi* 13, 7 (January 2013), 7. Also see Diarmuid O' Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 30.
- ⁴⁷ Diarmuid O' Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 52.
- ⁴⁸ Wolfgang Vondey, "The Holy Spirit And The Physical Universe: The Impact Of Scientific Paradigm Shifts on Contemporary Pneumatology" *Theological Studies* 70, no. 1 (March 2009): 22.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., 53.
- ⁵⁰ Wolfgang Vondey, "The Holy Spirit And The Physical Universe," 26.
- ⁵¹ Diarmuid O' Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 40.
- ⁵² Ibid., 72.
- ⁵³ Ibid., 68, 72, 198. Also see Stuart A. Kauffman who argues that "the creativity in nature is God enough... God is our name for the creativity in nature ... Using the word God to mean creativity in nature can help to bring us to the care and reverence that creativity deserves" in his work, *Reinventing the Sacred* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 142, 248.
- ⁵⁴ Emphasis in Italics is mine. See Teilhard de Chardin, *Human Energy* (London, Collins 1969) and *Activation of Energy* (London: Collins 1970).
- ⁵⁵ See Mark Hathaway and Leonardo Boff, *The Tao of Liberation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 316.
- ⁵⁶ For detail on primordial sacredness, read Thomas Berry, *Evening Thoughts: Reflecting on Earth as Sacred Community* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2006), 118
- ⁵⁷ Diarmuid O' Murchu, *In The Beginning Was The Spirit*, 26.
- ⁵⁸ See article "sustainability" [Online] Retrieved from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sustainabilitylopedia> [Accessed on Oct 2, 2012]
- ⁵⁹ The Earth Charter Initiative (2000). "The Earth Charter." [Accessed on November 21, 2012]
- ⁶⁰ See article "Sustainable humanity: Need of the Hour," [Online] Retrieved from <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/02/20122195052606548.html> [Accessed on Feb 12, 2012]
- ⁶¹ See United Nations General Assembly (March 20, 1987). *Report of the World Commission on Environment and "Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*; Transmitted to the General Assembly as an Annex to document A/42/427 - Development and International Co-operation: Environment; Our Common Future, Chapter 2: Towards Sustainable Development; Paragraph 1" United Nations General Assembly [Online] Retrieved from <http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm> [Accessed on November 21, 2012]
- ⁶² Little wonder, eecological economist Herman Daly asked, "what use is a sawmill without a forest?" See Herman Daly and John Cobb Jr., *The Common Good: Redirecting the*

Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future, Boston: Beacon Press, 1989.

- ⁶³ I was initiated by a renowned shaman by the name of Garing Bin Muntalan of the Murut ethnic community of Sabah, East Malaysia, from July 19-21, 2001 in a stream near to his village called Bantul.
- ⁶⁴ See the works of Everett Fox, *The Five Books of Moses* (New York: Schocken, 1983), 11.
- ⁶⁵ Addison G. Wright, in his commentary on the imperishable spirit in Wisdom 12: 1 as "either Wisdom as the agent of God's immanence (Wis 1:7; Wis 7:24; Wis 8:1) or the breadth of life (Jdt 16:14) put in creatures by God (Gen 2:7; Wis 15:11). See Addison G. Wright, "Wisdom" in *The New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary*, Raymond E. Brown, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Roland E. Murphy, Eds. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1993: 510-522.
- ⁶⁶ The Badjaos of Southern Philippines subscribe to a pneumatology that describes the absolute creator known as Tuhan who enjoys radical transcendence as a "wind" and therefore Tuhan is everywhere, be it the heavens or the sea or the forest. See Bruno Bottignolo, *Celebrations With The Sun: An Overview of Religious Phenomena Among The Badjaos* (Manila: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1995), 38-57.
- ⁶⁷ See Bede Griffiths. *A New Vision of Reality: Western Science, Eastern Mysticism and Christian Faith*, ed. Felicity Edwards, London: HarperCollins Publishers, 279.
- ⁶⁸ The same concept of the Bolivian indigenous peoples is known as *sumak kawsay* in Quechua (Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia) and *Suma qamaña* in Aymara (Bolivia and Peru), thanks to the August 16, 2010 email communication of Xavier Albó sj. [Accessed on August 16, 2010]
- ⁶⁹ Interestingly, the law would give nature legal rights, specifically the rights to life and regeneration, biodiversity, water, clean air, balance, and restoration. Bolivia's law mandates a fundamental ecological reorientation of Bolivia's economy and society, requiring all existing and future laws to adapt to the Mother Earth law and accept the ecological limits set by nature. In practical terms, the law requires the government to transition from non-renewable to renewable energy; to develop new economic indicators that will assess the ecological impact of all economic activity; to carry out ecological audits of all private and state companies; to regulate and reduce greenhouse gas emissions; to develop policies of food and renewable energy sovereignty; to research and invest resources in energy efficiency, ecological practices, and organic agriculture; and to require all companies and individuals to be accountable for environmental contamination with a duty to restore damaged environments. For more information, kindly see "The Law of Mother Earth: Behind Bolivia's Historic Bill," published in *Truthout*, Friday 22 April, 2011. [Online] Retrieved from <http://www.truth-out.org>; accessed on August 20, 2010. [Accessed on November 22, 2011].
- ⁷⁰ For further details, see Peter Garney & Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987); Richard A. Horsley, *Sociology and the Jesus Movement* (New York, N.Y.: Crossroad Company, 1989); Gerard Theissen, *Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity*, trans. John Bowden, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978). For a more feminine critique, see Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, "You Are Not To Be Called Father": Early Christian History in a Feminist Perspective," in *Discipleship of Equals: A Critical Feminist Ecclesiology of Liberation* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1994).
- ⁷¹ See Richard J. Dillon, "Acts of the Apostles," in *The New Jerusalem Biblical Commentary*, 731 and William S. Kurz, "The Acts of the Apostles," in Dianne Bergant and Robert J. Karris, Eds., *The Collegeville Bible Commentary* (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1988), 1039.
- ⁷² For more information on Asian Liberation theology, see Aloysius Pieris, especially the section "The Way Toward Ecclesiological Revolution: The double Baptism in Asian Religion

and Poverty” in his article “Asia’s Non-Semitic Religions and the Mission of the Local Churches,” in *An Asian Theology of Liberation* (New York: Orbis Books, 1992), 45-50.

⁷³ See *Compendium of the Catholic Social Doctrine*, nos. 466 and 270.

