

**Sharing Concern for Justice:
Becoming an Intercultural Church as a Postcolonial Mission Practice
in the Canadian Context of Integrative Multiculturalism**

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Emmanuel College
and the Theological Department of the Toronto School of Theology
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Abstract

Who is the Other? In a society so culturally and religiously diverse as Canada, how does the United Church of Canada (UCC) build just relations with the Other without breaching the Other's identity? In the context of Canada's current multicultural policy and the Church's vision to become an intercultural church, this study develops a missiology for the Church. This thesis claims that Canada's Integrative Multiculturalism promotes religious conflicts through the assimilation and the integration of difference into the dominant culture by discarding unwelcomed differences in the public sphere: difference, rather, is a gift for building just community. In order to develop the philosophical foundation for an intercultural theology, the thesis employs key concepts from the work of three scholars – Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida and Homi Bhabha. Rather than relying on common beliefs to carry out God's mission (*missio Dei*), the Church's report *World Mission* (1966) provides an historical and theological resource for developing a mutuality model of missiology and mission practice in which the church works justly with Others, sharing a common concern. To develop the model, several components are offered: the Aboriginal philosophy “*all my relations*,” the Six Nations' Two Row Wampum belt and Nam-dong Suh's *minjung* theology. This thesis proposes “all my relations” as a metaphor for the model of becoming an intercultural church and

its mission practice with Others whether they are the people of religious faith or not.

While sustaining their own identities, participants create a safe, welcoming in-between third space where dialogical dialogue takes place in the solidarity of Others sharing their concern for justice.

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Abbreviations

CWME	Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
DMC	Division of Mission in Canada
EMC	Ethnic Ministry Council
EMWU	Ethnic Ministries Working Unit
ICIF	Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Committee Relations
IMC	International Missionary Council
NEC	National Ethnic Committee
PRI	Policy Research Initiative
PROK	Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea
RTG	Ethnic Ministries Re-visioning Task Group
UCC	United Church of Canada
UCCA	United Church of Canada Archives
WCC	World Council of Churches
WMS	Woman's Missionary Society

Introduction

People still ask, “When will you go back to your homeland?” I have no answer, because I have no homeland to return to. I must find a way to make my dream a reality, and to help make this nation a promised land, where all kinds of people, small or tall, black and white, yellow or brown, male or female, can live in harmony.

– Jung Young Lee, “A Life In-Between: A Korean-American Journey”

1. Locating the Issue

In 2006, the year I began graduate study at Emmanuel College in the Toronto School of Theology, at its 39th General Council held in Thunder Bay, Ontario, the United Church of Canada (UCC) committed “to becoming an intercultural church.”¹ That vision was compelling to me and became the focus of my studies. As a member of a racial minority living in Canada I often found myself feeling a stranger in a largely Caucasian denomination. Once I had even been advised by my Presbytery Pastoral Relations Committee to leave my Pastoral Charge; a Committee member could see no way to reconcile a conflict which seemed to be related to my being of a different culture from that of the community, in particular from one family who had exercised power in the congregation for many years. I was concerned about the way the charge was being managed and decided to try to help the congregants to empower themselves to take on shared leadership. This way of doing ministry was not agreeable to the family so they complained to the higher church courts. Upon hearing the complaint, Presbytery and

¹ The United Church of Canada, *Record of Proceedings of the 39th General Council* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 2006), 748.

Conference took the easy way out: dismiss the newly settled pastoral staff. As soon as the people of the pastoral Charge heard I was being dismissed, every member except the complainant family petitioned Presbytery and Conference to rescind this action. In the process the members empowered themselves to take responsibility for the mission of God in their context. This experience enhanced my awareness of issues in church life such as power, prejudice, racism and attitudes towards difference. In this context, when I heard of the vision to be an intercultural church, I hoped it might address some of the realities I had experienced in my pastoral ministry. My painful experience led me to claim the church's vision as my own.

Initiated by the then Ethnic Ministries Unit of the General Council of the UCC, the vision was for a church “where there is mutually respectful diversity and full and equitable participation of all Aboriginal, Francophone, ethnic minority, and ethnic majority constituencies in the total life, mission, and practices of the whole Church.”² It imagined a church where all people, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, would be invited to participate equally in the building of mutual relations in its life and work. While the statement of its vision to become an intercultural church is exciting, there has

² Ibid., 580. When the Ethnic Ministries Unit presented a vision of being an intercultural church, one of the presenters used the metaphor of a “salad bowl” to describe that vision. The image of a salad bowl is similar to that of the “Canadian mosaic,” a key metaphor of the Canadian policy of multiculturalism from the 1970s. The metaphor of a salad bowl has the attraction that, since each culture keeps its own distinct values, there is no forced merger into what Edward Said calls a “metropolitan centre” (Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, New York: Vintage Books, 1992, 9). However, the salad bowl metaphor sounds static and does not suggest what happens with the mix: is it only for show and then to be devoured? The salad bowl metaphor seems inadequate when used as an image of an “intercultural church” where participants would be invited to open up their boundaries and be freed of power differences in order to fulfil the vision of the Church.

been little research on how, as faith communities, to achieve the goal.³ Research is needed to clarify the intention of the vision and direct its practice.

At a later point the Task Group on Intercultural Ministries interpreted intercultural church as “welcoming, relational, adaptive, justice-seeking, intentional and missional.”⁴ While in 2006 the vision of intercultural church focused primarily on racial, linguistic and cultural minority communities, the Task Group developed the meaning considerably:

To become an intercultural church is to respond to the call to live together in intentional ways that engage in mutual recognition, respect, and understanding of difference; and, through intentional self-examination, relationship building, and equitable ... access to power, we as the church seek to be fully committed and faithful in our response.⁵

For the Task Group, becoming an intercultural church means intentionally engaging with difference and shifting the power dynamics to create an equitable community. The vision of becoming an intercultural church emphasizes difference as a key to the building of community. Honouring difference in an intercultural church opens relationships with others of various social, cultural and interfaith connections. Accordingly, this thesis aims to develop the concept of difference in order to contribute a theological foundation for the practice of mission not only within the denomination, but also with other faith

³ Steve Willey, “Defining Intercultural Ministries,” *Seeing Ourselves, the Ethnic Ministries Newsletter* (Fall/Winter 2006); *Communities in Ministry*, “What Is the Intercultural Church?” (2009), accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.united-church.ca/files/intercultural/what-is.pdf>; *Communities in Ministry*, “Defining Multicultural, Cross-cultural, and Intercultural,” accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.united-church.ca/files/intercultural/multicultural-crosscultural-intercultural.pdf>; Susan Patricia Howard, “Co-constructing Relational Spaces of Grace: Downsview United Church’s Being/becoming Intercultural Church” (DMin diss., Toronto School of Theology, 2012).

⁴ Task Group on Intercultural Church, Permanent Committee on Programs for Mission and Ministry, “Intercultural Ministries: Living into Transformation,” *Executive of General Council* (March 24-26, 2012), 143-144.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 146.

communities and with people who may claim no religious affiliation such as humanists, environmentalists and secularists in this pluralistic society of Canada.

Before the UCC declared the church must be intercultural in its mission practice, acts of violence based in religious extremism took place in London, England and Toronto, Canada in 2005 and 2006 respectively.⁶ After those events the Government of Canada renewed its multicultural policy called Integrative Multiculturalism in order to effectively integrate “different cultural heritages”⁷ into a mainstream culture and to address the rise of “home grown terrorists.”⁸ The new multicultural policy in the 2000s attempted to combat religious youth extremism so that they would be successfully *integrated* into society. The following table shows how Canadian multicultural policies have evolved since the inception of multiculturalism in 1971.

Table 0.1. The evolution of Canadian Multiculturalism

	Ethnicity Multiculturalism (1970s)	Equity Multiculturalism (1980s)	Civic Multiculturalism (1990s)	Integrative Multiculturalism (2000s)
Focus	Celebrating differences	Managing diversity	Constructive engagement	Inclusive Citizenship
Reference Point	Culture	Structure	Society building	Canadian identity
Mandate	Ethnicity	Race relations	Citizenship	Integration
Magnitude	Individual adjustment	Accommodation	Participation	Rights and Responsibilities
Problem Source	Prejudice	Systemic discrimination	Exclusion	Unequal access, “clash” of cultures
Solution	Cultural sensitivity	Employment equity	Inclusiveness	Dialogue/Mutual understanding
Key Metaphor	Mosaic	Level playing field	Belonging	Harmony/jazz

⁶ The references are to the attack on the subway system in London, England on July 7, 2005 and to the arrest of 17 terrorist suspects in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in June 2006.

⁷ Since the word ‘ethnic’ has become a derogatory term, I use ‘diverse cultural heritages’ instead in this thesis. I will elaborate the meaning of ethnic in Chapter 2.

⁸ Jean Lock Kunz and Stuart Sykes, *From Mosaic to Harmony: Multicultural Canada in the 21st Century – Results of Regional Roundtables* (Ottawa: Policy Research Initiative, 2007), 7.

Source: Policy Research Initiative, *From Mosaic to Harmony: Multicultural Canada in the 21st Century* – PRI (Policy Research Initiative) Project: Cultural Diversity, edited by Jean Lock Kunz and Stuart Sykes (Ottawa: Policy Research Initiative, 2007), 21.

The ideal of integration was not unique to Canada, and was being considered in European countries such as Germany and England in their multicultural contexts. More recently, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and England's Prime Minister David Cameron have stated on different occasions that their efforts to build multicultural societies have failed and that their countries needed to integrate migrants and immigrants into their societies.⁹ Government leaders in Germany and England suggest they need new policies on multiculturalism to attain the ideal of integration. Even though Germany's and England's multicultural backgrounds and policies are different from Canada, a current theme among them is that they are seeking the integration of Muslim groups into their societies. They want to succeed in rebuilding their "failed" multicultural societies through the ideal of an Integrative Multiculturalism, which is the term now used by the Canadian multicultural policy.

In this thesis it is argued that Canada's Integrative Multiculturalism is not a solution for combating religious extremism, and in fact may rather promote further cultural and religious conflict. By fostering Integrative Multiculturalism, the policy

⁹ In her address to a meeting of young members of the Christian Democratic Union party in October 2010, German Chancellor Angela Merkel remarked, "'Let's adopt the multicultural concept and live happily side by side, and be happy to be living with each other.' But this concept has failed, and failed utterly." She put the onus on immigrants to build a successful multicultural society by doing more to integrate into German society including the learning of the German language. Several months after Merkel's address on multiculturalism, in the Munich Security Conference of February 2011, British Prime Minister David Cameron stated, "under the doctrine of state multiculturalism, we have encouraged different cultures to live separate lives, apart from each other and apart from the mainstream. We've failed to provide a vision of society to which they feel they want to belong." According to Cameron, Islamist extremism expressed in terrorism in his country was an example of failed multiculturalism. A new vision for the country's failed multiculturalism and for the Government's new anti-terrorism strategy was the integration of minority groups, especially Muslims, into the dominant society.

claims to facilitate the integration of different cultures into a mainstream Canadian one: the perspective of this thesis is that, in actuality, it invites conformance to a dominant one. The claim here is that cultural integration is a new expression of the traditional colonial method of assimilating different cultural heritages into a dominant culture.

2. The Argument of the Thesis

Within the contexts of the UCC's efforts to become an intercultural church and Canada's integrative multiculturalism, in this thesis the concept of difference is explored in order to contribute to an expanded vision of the mission practice of the church. That vision reaches beyond the church's denominational boundaries to work with others. To build upon precedent, the study draws on the work of the UCC's almost 'forgotten' document *World Mission*, approved at the 22nd General Council in 1966. This report, then the most extensive mission consultation in the history of the UCC, became a salient foundation for its ecumenical relations and mission practice.¹⁰ Specifically, *World Mission* introduced a "mutuality model"¹¹ of sharing concern for justice as the basis for working together with different communities: any individual or group which shared a

¹⁰ Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Committee Relations (hereafter ICIF), *Mending the World: An Ecumenical Vision for Healing and Reconciliation* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1997), ICIF, *Bearing Faithful Witness: United Church – Jewish Relations Today* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 2003) and ICIF, *That We May Know Each Other: United Church –Muslim Relations Today* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 2004).

¹¹ I think Knitter would classify this approach as a "mutuality model." See Paul F. Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2002): 109-169. This model will be presented along with Knitter's in Chapter 4.

concern for justice in the local, national or world community was invited to dialogue and work together.¹²

In this thesis the meaning of justice is drawn from the Levinasian concept of responsibility to the Other. In his book, *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas defined the difference between his concept of justice and a conventional concept of justice called “the straight line of justice.” He writes:

In reality, justice does not include me in the equilibrium of its universality; justice summons me to go beyond the straight line of justice, and henceforth nothing can mark the end of this march; behind the straight line of the law the land of the goodness extends infinite and unexplored, necessitating all the resources of a singular presence.¹³

According to this definition the “straight line of justice” seeks an equilibrium or balance of fairness, which is similar to John Rawls’ concept of justice. Rawls coined the term “reflective equilibrium” in his classic, *A Theory of Justice* (1955) as the desired state of the principle of justice.¹⁴ Whereas Rawls defined justice as fairness, Levinas makes a move “beyond the straight line of justice” toward exploring the “land of goodness.”¹⁵ He suggests that the concept of justice is to be found in the infinite unknown realm of the relationship to the Other: “Justice consists in recognizing in the Other my master.”¹⁶ This locates justice not in an equilibrium, but in a “dissymmetry of intersubjective space” that

¹² Hyuk Cho, “‘To Share in God’s Concern for All’: The Effect of the 1966 Report on World Mission,” *Touchstone* 27, no 2 (May 2009): 39-46.

¹³ Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay in Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 245.

¹⁴ John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, rev ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

¹⁵ The concept of goodness (*boné*) for Levinas refers to one’s responsibility for the Other.

¹⁶ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 72.

marks a fundamental obligation and responsibility.¹⁷ In the Judeo-Christian tradition, such a concept of justice can be found in many scriptures, such as Jeremiah 22, Isaiah 58, Matthew 25 and Luke 4, to name a few. These passages express concern for the weak, the hungry and the needy, and summon readers to respond to the Other in the practice of justice.¹⁸ Without disparaging Rawls' theory of justice, this thesis takes a different path to develop its main argument. Here, the concept of justice signifies more than the straight line of the law as relevant to the court; instead it highlights the lived reality of the Other as having the right to live without discarding his or her cultural heritage.

The Levinasian concept of justice is helpful in critiquing the notion of integration, which functions in ways that may be *totalizing*. Canada's current multicultural policy of Integrative Multiculturalism promotes the notion that different cultural heritages are to be fully integrated into Canadian society. Unlike the notion or policy of assimilation, integration claims to allow different cultural heritages to retain their different cultural characteristics. However and ironically, in the very process of integration, different cultural heritages are actually encouraged to give up their differences or hide them or leave them at home in order to participate fully in the political, economic, social, and cultural life of the country.¹⁹ Integration is an ideal serving to fuel a subtle process of assimilation that promotes the adoption of a dominant culture.

¹⁷ Emmanuel Levinas, *Outside the Subject*, trans. Michael B. Smith (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 45. See also Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo*, trans. Richard A. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1985), 98.

¹⁸ In her book, *The Other Side of God*, Mary Jo Leddy illustrates the concept of justice in the Levinasian perspective. Leddy finds justice in the face of Teresita, one of refugees at *Romero House*. See Mary Jo Leddy, *The Other Side of God: When the Stranger Call Us Home* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2011), especially 10-18.

¹⁹ Richard J. F. Day, *Multiculturalism and the History of Canadian Diversity* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2000), 195; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*

Various uses of the notion of integration are found in interdisciplinary discussions. Intercultural communication scholar Milton J. Bennett, creator of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) scale, suggests that integration is a desirable stage of intercultural communication.²⁰ In his scale Bennett describes a movement from ethnocentrism (Denial → Defense → Minimization) to ethnorelativism (Acceptance → Adaptation → Integration).²¹ This development indicates the process of decentralizing one's own beliefs and behaviours in order to better communicate across cultural boundaries. Bennett's last stage, Integration, is "the stage in which one's experience of self is expanded to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews."²² This stage requires extensive experience in cultural interaction; it may not be a realistic goal for those with insufficient intercultural experience.

Bennett's use of the term "integration" includes the work of adapting to other cultures while keeping one's primary cultural identity. Ironically, his stage of Integration may deny the value of cultural difference and encourage the false belief that other cultures will come to be known and valued only if people choose the most appropriate

(New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), Chapter 5; Will Kymlicka, *Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), Chapter 2.

²⁰ Bennett J. Milton, "Becoming Interculturally Competent," in *Toward Multiculturalism: A Reader in Multicultural Education*, ed. James S. Wurzel, 2nd ed. (Newton: Intercultural Resource, 2004), 62-77.

²¹ The six-stages of Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity are: 1) Denial: denying the existence of cultural differences among people, 2) Defense: attempting to protect one's world view by countering the perceived threat, 3) Minimization: attempting to protect the core of one's world view by concealing differences in the shadow of cultural similarities, 4) Acceptance: beginning to accept the existence of behavioral differences and underlying cultural differences, 5) Adaptation: becoming empathic to cultural differences and become bicultural or multicultural, and 6) Integration: expanding one's worldview to include the movement in and out of different cultural worldviews. Milton, "Becoming Interculturally Competent."

²² *Ibid.*, 72.

cultural context as the basis for their behaviour and become empathetic to other cultures. Integration for Bennett is the mode and process of expanding one's horizon to include different cultural worldviews. He does not emphasize complex cultural negotiations and collaboration with other cultures. His ideal of integration may naively promote superficial judgements about other cultures and lead to a false understanding of them.

Recently Bennett's point of view on intercultural development has been echoed in the circle of Canadian Muslims. In the Canadian Islamic Congress of 2005, Mohamed Elmasry suggested that Muslims in Canada were encouraged to adopt "smart integration."

Unlike [assimilation], "smart integration" offers a happy medium that enhances positives and minimizes deleterious extremes. Although it is difficult scientifically to define it, smart integration promotes the preservation of one's identity in matters of religion, culture, language and heritage, while simultaneously encouraging full participation in the country's political square and promoting both individual and collective contributions in all fields to its well-being. This positive hybrid model follows the ancient wisdom which recognizes that as minorities adapt, countries should adopt.²³

Imam Zijad Delic calls the above model "constructive integration," suggesting that Muslims selectively adopt Western cultural norms to participate in the political arena.²⁴ For Elmasry and Delic, the concept of integration means involvement in nation-building by embracing Canadian culture while at the same time staying faithful to Islam as a religion. Integration means to adopt Canadian culture and participate in public life, especially through active political engagement such as voting in elections.²⁵

²³ Mohamed Elmasry, "Towards Smart Integration: The Choice of Canadian Muslims," The Canadian Islamic Congress, Ontario, a paper presented at the 10th International Metropolis Conference (Toronto, October 19, 2005).

²⁴ Zijad Delic, "Constructive Integration of Canadian Muslims: Comparison with Canada, Bosnia and France," *Canadian Diversity* 6, no. 1 (Winter 2008): 96-97.

²⁵ Elmasry, "Towards Smart Integration."

Obviously, the notion of integration has been translated in various ways; but no interpretation of integration adequately suits the vision of becoming an intercultural church. Instead, in this thesis the notion of the *solidarity of Others* is promoted as it is also theologically more appropriate to the practice of mutuality in mission. Solidarity of Others suggests that the participants seek justice together toward the carrying out of the common task.

3. Mapping the Thesis

In this thesis, the Canadian government's current multicultural policy, Integrative Multiculturalism, is examined and critiqued. Then a missiology of what it means to become an intercultural church, particularly in response to the UCC's 2006 General Council resolution that the "church must be intercultural" is developed. Selected Canadian government and church documents will be investigated for their contextual and salient doctrinal assertions and compared and evaluated for their significance for the contemporary Canadian context. The research methodology will be a critical hermeneutics of difference. A range of recognized scholars from a variety of relevant disciplines will be explored with a view to contributing to the development of the church's understanding and practice of the mission of God (*missio Dei*) in a pluralistic Canada. In framing the thesis theologically, a pneumatological approach is used to interpret the work of the Holy Spirit in and through cultural difference.

In Chapter 1, Canada's new policy of integrative multiculturalism will be reviewed and compared to the province of Québec's unique approach to multiculturalism as presented in the final Report of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission. The purpose is to

build a foundation for the critique of federal government policy and to develop an appropriate concept of difference for the church's missiology and mission practice as an intercultural church. An exploration of the ideal of integration, Québec's interculturalism and religion's role in the public sphere will serve to open further discussion in the following chapters.

In Chapter 2, the discussion focuses on how the acknowledgment and respect of difference may be used as a power to subvert the ideal of integration and to become a gift for building community. A theoretical foundation for becoming an intercultural church is explored through a variety of philosophical sources: 1) Emmanuel Levinas, who argues that the Other is not an object to be assimilated into "the same" – a term denoting a reductive or homogenizing intentionality swallowing everything into itself – but is a summons to be ethically responsible to the vestige of the infinite; 2) Jacques Derrida, whose deconstructive programme employs *différance* in order to liberate the homogenizing intentionality from containing the Other in the same; 3) Homi Bhabha's postcolonial study, whose concept of cultural difference provides a useful tool for investigating Canada's Integrative Multiculturalism and particularly, his cultural difference and the "Third Space" which will serve as a foundation for articulating what it means to become an intercultural church.

Building from the conceptual framework of Chapter 2, in Chapter 3 a constructive proposal for the vision of the UCC is developed by first tracing its historical journey of becoming an intercultural church. The focus is on the 1966 UCC Report *World Mission* which presents a new vision of the church's relations with Others; it offers a "mutuality model" of mission practice to better engage in a religiously and culturally pluralistic

world. Paul Knitter's typological approach to interfaith dialogue will prove helpful in evaluating the relevant UCC ecumenism and interfaith documents. After reviewing Knitter's Mutuality and Mark Heim's Acceptance models, the need for a more nuanced mutuality model, "all my relations," will be suggested; it will be fully developed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4 proposes resources for the UCC's practice of mission with Others. The meaning of being an intercultural church is explored through the early thinkers of intercultural theology and through Bhabha's concept of the Third Space. To exemplify intercultural engagement, two cultural conceptions from different communities will be highlighted: the philosophy from Aboriginal communities, "all my relations," and the Two Row Wampum belt, both helpful guides for discerning how different cultures should interact with each other with respect. The second comes from the Korean theologian Nam-dong Suh, namely, his *minjung* theology, which explores how faith and culture converges and journeys toward intercultural engagement for a common good.

The discussion in Chapter 5 draws on the implications from Chapter 4 to propose a mutuality model, "all my relations," that contributes to a missiology and mission practice for becoming an intercultural church. The model, "all my relations," is revisited along with contributions from Indigenous culture as a foundational metaphor for the vision the church. For the process for practising mission with Others, the original concept of solidarity will be traced and Anselm Min's concept of "solidarity of others"²⁶ will be explored as a way of cultivating a "we community." By insisting on retrieving the concept of mutuality in mission from the UCC's largely forgotten document, *World*

²⁶ Anselm Min, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World: A Postmodern Theology after Postmodernism* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2004).

Mission, the conclusion of this thesis seeks to reimagine the metaphor “all my relations” as mission practice.

4. Thesis Statement

In this culturally and religiously pluralistic society where many religious communities are growing fast, Canada’s current Integrative Multiculturalism is not an appropriate solution for living together, since it may promote further religious conflict. A proposed mutuality model “all my relations” for the United Church of Canada’s vision for becoming an intercultural church suggests an alternative approach to the way different cultures and faiths work together for a common good. An intercultural church fulfills God’s mission practice with Others by sharing a common concern rather than a common belief, a way of doing mission among peoples of different cultures and faiths or of no faith. While sustaining their own identities, participants create a safe, welcoming in-between third space where dialogical dialogue takes place in the solidarity of Others sharing their concern for justice.

Chapter 1

From Multiculturalism to Integrative Multiculturalism:

The Historical Development of Canada's Policies on Governing Diversity

Canada never defined itself as a unified society.

– Northrop Frye, *Divisions on a Ground*

Civilization is not a gift, it is an achievement – a fragile achievement that needs constantly to be shored up and defended from besiegers inside and out.

– Roger Kimball, “Tenured Radicals: A Postscript”

The United Church of Canada (UCC) has a long history of developing its missiology in the context of the contemporary Canadian society. About 30 years ago various courts of the Church responded to a reality of Canada¹ when the census showed that 37.5 % of the total population consisted of visible minorities.² Reflecting this changing context the 32nd General Council in 1988 focused on the concept of multiculturalism “to foster multicultural emphases in the Church’s ministry” and to recommend that “the Division of Mission in Canada convene a national consultation on strategies to strengthen and expand our multi-cultural ministry and witness.”³ Mandated

¹ The Ethnic Ministries Working Unit (EMWU) in the Division of Mission in Canada deeply reflected the reality and raised its voice to meet the rapidly changing situation of a multicultural society. In response to the work of the EMWU, Hamilton and Toronto Conferences conducted a survey in 1987 in order to discover the approximate ratio of the presence of peoples of different cultural heritages in the UCC within their Conference boundaries. As a result, four Conferences sent petitions regarding “multiculturalism concerns” to the 32nd General Council 1988.

² Augie Fleras and Jean L. Elliott, *Multiculturalism in Canada* (Scarborough: Nelson, 1992), 29.

³ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 32nd General Council* (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1988), 162. The 1989 – 1990 mission theme of the UCC was “Multicultural Canada.” The special

by the 1988 General Council, a National Consultation on Multiculturalism in 1991 was held to develop strategies to engage in multicultural ministry in a changing Canada⁴; several policy statements were produced to embrace Canada's multiculturalism in the Church's ministry and mission.⁵

As a result of living for two decades in the vision and practice of multiculturalism such as fostering diversity in its life and work, the UCC realized something was wanting: "Maintaining or continuing to build a new hierarchy of 'exoticized' gifts, raising up one ethnic group over another to be closer to the ethnic majority colour or culture, has not, and will not be constructive, for the Church's mission and ministry."⁶ Wanting to "go one step further" to overcome the hindrances of multicultural ministries and try "to become more intercultural,"⁷ the Church expressed its vision to move from a multicultural to an intercultural church. This movement raised three questions: 1) What are the drawbacks of multiculturalism that prompts the UCC to move away from the practice of multiculturalism? 2) What, then, is the intercultural theology which provides the foundation for the practice of intercultural ministry and mission? 3) How does the Church

edition of the 1989 *Mandate* dealt with "Canada's Cultural Mosaic." (UCC, *Mandate* vol. 20 No. 4, 1989). In this issue, the Rt. Rev. Sang Chul Lee, Moderator of the UCC, wrote that, "In Canada's multicultural society, this means the church must, to some extent, become a multicultural church." The UCC magazine *Observer* also dealt with the same issue of multiculturalism, in June of 1990. The *Observer* quoted Pierre Goldberger, then principal of Union Theological College, Montreal: "The whole fabric of Canada is changing. Yet the face of the United Church hasn't changed. We are ill-equipped to deal with ethnic realities. We could end up being chaplains for the shrinking white Protestant church" (Bob Bettson, "Canada's Changing Face," *The Observer*, June 1990, 18).

⁴ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 34th General Council* (1992), 491.

⁵ In those year the UCC created the All Native Circle Conference (1988), approved the ordination of gay and lesbian peoples (1988), created Ethnic Ministries (1996) and adopted the anti-racism policy "That All May Be One" (2000).

⁶ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 39th General Council* (2006), 582.

⁷ UCC, "What Is the Intercultural Church," (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 2009), 2.

become an intercultural church in which the shortcomings of multiculturalism will be overcome? These questions will be discussed in this thesis in Chapters 1, 4 and 5 respectively.

To address the first question, in this chapter the historical development of Canada's multiculturalism up to the present integrative multiculturalism policy will be reviewed and then it will be compared to Québec's unique approach to interculturalism the term the UCC wishes to embrace to further the Church's vision to become an intercultural church. The importance of religious identity and religious participation in the building of community will be discussed to lay a theological foundation for becoming an intercultural church. Finally, Canada's current policy of integrative multiculturalism will be critiqued in order to overcome its shortcomings and to identify themes to be discussed in later chapters.

1.1. The Evolution of Canada's Policy of Multiculturalism

A brief history of the evolution of the Canadian policy of multiculturalism is essential to help set the stage for the critical proposals to follow. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism was appointed in 1963 by Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson to recommend the steps that should "be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of equal partnership between the founding races" and to include "the contribution made by other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution."⁸ The Commission reported its sixteen recommendations in the 1970 publication of Book IV:

⁸ Canada. *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Final Report, Book IV: The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970), 3.

The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups. Therein the Commission dealt with a variety of practical matters, such as legislation related to provincial human rights, the teaching of heritage languages other than English and French and multilingual broadcasting.⁹

The then Prime Minister Pierre E. Trudeau responded to the recommendations of the Commission in two ways: he accepted them, but then proceeded to announce a new concept of multiculturalism. In 1971 in the House of Commons, he announced the implementation of a policy of “multiculturalism within a bilingual framework.”¹⁰ The affirmation of multiple cultures in Canada is boldly stated: “Cultural pluralism is the very essence of Canadian identity. Every ethnic group has the right to preserve and develop its own culture and values within the Canadian context. To say we have two official languages is not to say we have two official cultures, and no particular culture is more ‘official’ than another.”¹¹ This declaration marked a historical contribution to the transition from biculturalism to multiculturalism. However, the policy limited the practice of multiculturalism to the confines of a bilingual framework; conformity to the latter governed the viability of the former. This policy was developed, then, not simply to affirm but also to manage cultural diversity, allowing the anglophone and francophone cultures to continue to govern the country within a geopolitical territory by representing Canada’s various cultures.¹² In Trudeau’s multiculturalism, the francophone community

⁹ Ibid., 228-30.

¹⁰ Canada, *House of Commons Debates*, vol. 3 (October 8, 1971), 8545.

¹¹ Ibid., 8580-1.

¹² Sneja Gunew, *Haunted Nations: The Colonial Dimensions of Multiculturalisms* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 16.

was granted official status as a nation and acquired equality with that of the anglophones. Once again, as at Confederation in 1867, the First Nations were not named as one of the founding nations and that other cultural heritages were to be integrated into the dominant cultures.¹³

A new method of managing cultural diversity called *integration* emerged from the Department of Citizenship and Immigration in the late 1980s. The concept of integration was adopted as one of the eight principles of a new multicultural policy in 1987 and began to be used in various government documents.¹⁴ In its Glossary of Key Terms, *Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic* (1987) is a definition of integration and how it differs from assimilation.

¹³ A similar claim was made by Shawn A-in-chut Atleo (National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations) in the 11th LaFontaine-Baldwin Symposium lecture on August 10th, 2013, “First Nations & the Future of Canadian Citizenship,” accessed October 5, 2014, https://www.icc-icc.ca/en/lbs/docs/2013/Chief%20Atleo%20Symposium%20Remarks_Offical.pdf

In the mid nineteenth century there was a conflict between Upper and Lower Canada. In Canada East, formerly Lower Canada - nowadays the Québec area - people spoke French and the dominant religion was Roman Catholic. However Canada West, formerly Upper Canada – nowadays Ontario - was different; the people were largely Protestant Anglophones. The different religious and ethnic backgrounds of the immigrant populations contributed to political conflict. Finally, representatives of the two sides gathered together to solve the problem in 1867 and the two ethnic groups signed an act of the British Parliament to establish the Confederation.

Both groups had different expectations about what the new federation would accomplish. While Ontario business leaders and farmers saw it as a chance to expand their markets and take a lead in developing the western plains, leaders of the church and state in Québec saw it as an opportunity to create a province with a Francophone and Roman Catholic majority. Note that only two ethnic groups were invited to the table to build the country of Canada. The First Nations were not invited; they were excluded from the beginning even though Canada was their homeland. The First Nations peoples have lived here since long before recorded history and welcomed other people who came from across the ocean. The newcomers would have died had not the First Nations peoples helped them learn how to live in the harsh winter climate. See Margaret Conrad and Alvin Finkel, *History of the Canadian Peoples*, vol. 2, *1967 to the Present*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Copp Clark, 1998); Arthur J. Ray, *I Have Lived Here Since the World Began: An Illustrated History of Canada's Native People*, rev. ed. (Toronto: Key Porter, 2005).

¹⁴ Canada. Report of the Standing Committee on Multiculturalism, *Multiculturalism: Building the Canadian Mosaic* (Ottawa: Supply and Services, 1987), 47-8. The Committee recommends that the new multiculturalism policy embody the following eight principles: multiculturalism for all Canadians, advancement of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework, equality of opportunity, preservation and enhancement of cultural diversity, elimination of discrimination, establishment of affirmative measures, enhancement of Heritage Languages and support for immigrant *integration*.

Assimilation: A process, clearly distinct from integration, of eliminating distinctive group characteristics; this may be encouraged as a formal policy (e.g. American “melting pot”).

Integration: A process, clearly distinct from assimilation, by which groups and/or individuals become able to participate fully in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the country.¹⁵

In assimilation, different cultural characteristics would be eliminated, but with integration, individuals and groups would retain their distinctness yet “become able” to participate fully in the life of the country. In both processes, however, immigrants from different cultural heritages considered problematic because of features deemed to offer less useful contributions to Canadian life would be required to discard differences in order to be blended into the non-problematic British or French Canadian culture.

Generally, in a process of assimilation, individuals and groups are forced to discard their cultural differences and adopt a hegemonic culture. In integration, the process is rather more subtle; groups are supposed to adopt a dominant culture without giving up their particular cultural differences in order to participate fully in the political, economic, social, and cultural life of the country.¹⁶ Even though the processes sound different, the results are the same, for eventually, different cultural heritages would be fused into a dominant culture. Otherwise, they would be eliminated from participation in the life of

¹⁵ Ibid., 87.

¹⁶ For further discussion, see Richard J. F. Day, *Multiculturalism and the History of Canadian Diversity* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2000), 195; Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), ch. 5; and Will Kymlicka, *Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), Chapter 2.

the state.¹⁷ Cultural differences would not be deemed “acceptable” or “allowable” according to criteria meted out by a normative culture.

The 1991 Federal Government document, *Multiculturalism: What Is It Really About?* asks the question, “How do we make sure that immigrants integrate and become Canadians?”¹⁸ The answer: “The new federal strategy for integrating immigrants ... emphasizes language training and helping immigrants learn about Canadian values.”¹⁹ In the answer, the dominant cultures require significant changes from new immigrants – i.e., the immigrants “need to fit in[to]” their adopted state and accept values deemed appropriate to Canada.²⁰ The cultural hegemony here is notable, as certain normative cultural frames set the standards and expectations of integration to which new immigrant cultures must conform. Accordingly, becoming a Canadian means to deem my Korean cultural heritage, for instance, as inferior so that I need to hide it in the public sphere or discard it in order to participate in Canadian life. The result is that new immigrants and their descendants must *fit* into the expectations of the normative culture in order to survive. To fit into the dominant culture, different cultural heritages are required to modify significantly their differences.

¹⁷ See Iris Marion Young, *Inclusion and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 216-221.

¹⁸ Canada. Ministry of State for Multiculturalism and Citizenship, *Multiculturalism: What Is It Really About?* (Ottawa: Supply and Services, 1991), 16.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

In 2008 the Canadian Heritage Department of the federal government expressed some concern about religious radicalization in Canada.²¹ Department officials responsible for national policies and programmes promoting Canadian citizenry went on to point out that the country had moved beyond the ‘mosaic’ model of the 1970s and entered an era of ‘integrative multiculturalism’ that required, in part, a battle against youth extremism.²² They explained further that the Heritage Department had determined that one problem facing Canada today was a clash of cultures and suggested that the government take action to combat religious extremism. The background of the problem was said to have arisen out of recent ethnic and religious-based conflicts and debates in Europe and Canada, for example, the attack on the subway system in London in 2005 and the arrest of 17 terrorist suspects in the Greater Toronto Area in 2006, both of which generated debates about “home-grown terror.”²³ In each of these cases, second generation immigrants were held responsible for the violence.

After these events, the Policy Research Initiative (PRI) of the Federal Government organized regional roundtable consultations in partnership with the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada and the Metropolis Project in eight cities across Canada to address two

²¹ Colin Freeze, “Heritage Department Takes Aim at Religious Radicals,” *The Globe and Mail*, September 1, 2008, A1 and A4. The concern was expressed after a series of roundtable discussions, public surveys and a public forum. See Canada. Policy Research Initiative, *From Mosaic to Harmony: Multicultural Canada in the 21st Century – Results of Regional Roundtables*, edited by Jean Lock Kunz and Stuart Sykes (Ottawa: Policy Research Initiative, 2007); Canada. Canadian Heritage, “Religious Diversity and Canada’s Future,” *Canadian Diversity* 6, no. 1 (Winter 2008); Canada. Policy Research Initiative, “Religious Diversity in Canada,” *Horizons* 10, no. 2 (March 2009).

²² Freeze, “Heritage Department Takes Aim at Religious Radicals,” A1. Also see Kunz and Sykes, *From Mosaic to Harmony* (2007).

²³ Kunz and Sykes, *From Mosaic to Harmony*, 7. Home-grown terrorism can be described as violent acts committed by individuals born or raised in Western countries against their own state.

questions: “1) how to foster diversity without divisiveness and 2) whether Canada’s multiculturalism policies need review in the light of today’s social and geopolitical realities.”²⁴ Through these consultations, the PRI concluded, “It is apparent that, contrary to earlier predictions, religion will not fade away as a source of distinctiveness in modern society. Previous decisions about how social institutions and religions interact with one another may need to be revisited, particularly for the formation of policy.”²⁵ The previously ignored area – religion’s role in the state and society – became the PRI’s core research topic: the integration of faith into modern multicultural discourse. Religion was considered an essential resource for the building of a multicultural society.²⁶ Based on this finding, the PRI suggested that the government of Canada needed to renew its efforts to integrate newcomers and their descendants into society.

Based on the recent development of Canada’s multiculturalism, this thesis argues that the integrative multiculturalism approach is dangerous because, rather than being a solution for religious radicalization, it may well promote further cultural and religious conflict. Despite its laudable claims and aims, cultural integration ends up being a new expression of the traditional colonial method of assimilating different cultural heritages into a dominating culture. We will discuss this further in this chapter.

²⁴ Ibid., 3.

²⁵ Ibid., 5. In recent survey by Environics Institute between November 2015 and January 2016, young Muslims have more attachment to their religious identity than older Muslims. The Environics Institute, *2016 Survey of Muslims in Canada*, accessed July 4, 2016, <http://www.environicsinstitute.org/uploads/institute-projects/survey%20of%20muslims%20in%20canada%202016%20-%20final%20report.pdf>.

²⁶ After the PRI’s report, *From Mosaic to Harmony* (2007), the PRI published another report, *Understanding Canada’s “3M” (Multicultural, Multi-linguistic and Multi-religious) Reality in the 21st Century – Final Report* (2009). It notes, “Religious diversity is asserting itself as a key dimension of public policy and discourse to which current conceptions of multiculturalism are ill-prepared to respond” (12).

1.2. Interculturalism in Québec

Since the mid 2000s, issues raised in the *Annual Reports on the Operation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act* included the policy of Integrative Multiculturalism under the subtitle, “Promoting Integration.”²⁷ The 2012-2013 *Report* describes the government’s efforts to build an “integrated, cohesive society” through the promotion of a policy of integrative multiculturalism.²⁸ From the late 2000s, while the federal government was beginning to foster its new policy, the province of Québec was trying to find an appropriate model or policy to manage its diversity and to reflect its unique cultural, political, social, religious, and linguistic circumstances. In 2007, after a series of highly publicized incidents surrounding the cultural accommodation of different cultural heritages and religious minority groups in the province,²⁹ the then Québec Premier Jean Charest announced the establishment of the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences, commonly called the Bouchard-Taylor Commission.

The Commission’s report clarified why Québec needed an intercultural rather than the federal multicultural model. It stated, “The Canadian multiculturalism model does not appear to be well adapted to conditions in Québec,” because in multiculturalism there is no identified core culture and because the manner by which multiculturalism

²⁷ Canada. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Annual Report on the Operation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 2006-2007: Promoting Integration* (Ottawa, 2008).

²⁸ Canada. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Annual Report on the Operation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 2012-2013: Building an Integrated, Cohesive Society* (Ottawa, 2014).

²⁹ See Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, *Building the Future: A Time for Reconciliation* (Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accomodement reliées aux différences culturelles, 2008), 53-58.

promotes cultural diversities may lead to cultural ghettoization.³⁰ For the Commission, multiculturalism lacked an integrative dimension. Thus, Bouchard and Taylor recommended that “interculturalism ... reconcile the ethnocultural diversity with the continuity of the French-speaking core and the preservation of the social link.”³¹ According to the Commission, interculturalism is a “policy or model that advocates harmonious relations between cultures based on intensive exchanges centred on an *integration* process that does not seek to eliminate differences while fostering the development of a common identity.”³² Yet, there are similarities between Québec’s and the federal concepts of integrative multiculturalism; the purpose of both policies is to seek the integration of minor cultures into a major one.³³ While Québec’s interculturalism strives to produce and reproduce its majority cultural heritage and language in order to assure its survival as a minority culture in Canada, it also claims to respect other cultures in the province.³⁴ It has been a challenging task for the Commission to sustain a balance between maintaining its founding culture and language while, at the same time, allowing for the expression of different cultures in the province.

Interculturalism in Québec was not the first but one more in a series of approaches

³⁰ Ibid., 19.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid., 287; italics mine.

³³ To distinguish the interculturalism policy of Québec from that of intercultural church which will be presented later in Chapter 4, the descriptive Québec will always be included.

³⁴ The minority history of Québec in Canada makes for an integration thematic quite different from the national one. In 1971 Trudeau’s multicultural policy awarded French the official language status. However it created much tension between the French majority and the anglophone and immigrant communities in the province. The Québécois persisted in their efforts to keep their culture and language to survive and develop as a minority at the federal level, but the anglophones and other ethnocultural minorities had to suffer as strangers in the land even though they had a long history of living there.

toward integrating different cultural heritages into a dominant one.³⁵ Since its inception in 1971, the aim of federal multiculturalism had been the integration of different cultural heritages as a means of nation-building.³⁶ Québec's interculturalism adopted the main thrust of federal multiculturalism, that is, integration. How then, is Québec's interculturalism different from federal multiculturalism? Although Bouchard and Taylor introduced the term *secularism* – without a precise definition – right from the beginning of their report, partway through they located the concept in their particular context and devoted Chapter VII to it, titled “The Québec System of Secularism.”³⁷ Bouchard and Taylor presented the unavoidable issue of reasonable accommodation of religious difference within the context of secularism.

The general understanding of secularism is that church and state are separate from each other, making religion primarily a private affair from which the state keeps its distance in order to remain neutral.³⁸ The Commission suggested that, “In Québec,

³⁵ See Charles Taylor, “What Is Secularism?” in *Secularism, Religion and Multiculturalism Citizenship*, ed. Geoffrey Brahm Levey and Tariq Modood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), xiii.

³⁶ Charles Taylor, “Secularism and Multiculturalism,” in *Values and Ethics for the 21st Century* (BBVA, 2011), 96, accessed October 5, 2014, https://www.bbvaopenmind.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/valores_y_etica_ing.pdf; Kymlicka, *Finding Our Way*, 17-22.

³⁷ Bouchard and Taylor, *Building the Future*, 131-154.

³⁸ For the general concept of secularism see Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theology of Religion* (New York: Anchor Books, 1967); Charles Taylor, “What Is Secularism,” xi-xxii; Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 1-22; Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart, *The Sacred and the Secular: Religion and Politics Worldwide*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), ch. 1.

For the critique of secularism see José Casanova, “Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective,” *The Hedgehog Review* 11.3 (Spring and Summer 2006): 7-22; Charles Taylor, “Why We Need a Radical Reconceptualization of Secularism,” in *The Power of Religion in the Public Sphere*, ed. Judith Butler (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 34-59; Rajeev Bhargava, “Political Secularism: Why It is Needed and What Can be Learnt from its Indian Version,” in *Secularism, Religion and Multiculturalism Citizenship*, ed. Geoffrey Brahm Levey and Tariq Modood (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 82-109; Peter L. Berger, “The Desecularization of the World: A Global

secularism allows citizens to express their religious convictions inasmuch as this expression does not infringe on other people's rights and freedoms."³⁹ The Commission maintained that, "Québec must broaden and clarify the open secularism model."⁴⁰ Rather than refraining from supporting religion or restricting religious expressions in the public sphere, the Commission wanted to emphasize the protection of religious freedom in the context of "open secularism."

Four principles of secularism characterize the Commission's understanding of open secularism and how it is promoted by the concept of interculturalism. They are: 1) the moral equality of persons or the recognition of the equivalent moral value of each individual; 2) freedom of conscience and religion; 3) state neutrality toward religions; and 4) the separation of Church and State.⁴¹ Bouchard and Taylor comment particularly on the first two. In its definition of open secularism, they note that it "recognizes the need for the State to be neutral (statutes and public institutions must not favour any religion or secular conception) but ... also acknowledges the importance for some people of the spiritual dimension of existence and, consequently, the protection of freedom of conscience and religion."⁴² Unlike *rigid* secularism which confines religion to the private domain, *open* secularism offers the opportunity for reconciliation by accommodating particular religious practices in the public sphere. Under certain guidelines, it allows the

Perspective," in *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics*, ed. Peter Burger (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), 1-18.

³⁹ Bouchard and Taylor, *Building the Future*, 141.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 142.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 135.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 140.

display of religious symbols in public institutions. For example, in certain public positions, ordinary citizens might wear religious symbols while others such as judges would be prohibited from wearing them in order to demonstrate neutrality in a fair trial.⁴³

The open secularism of Québec's interculturalism recognizes religious diversity as a present reality; it attempts to incorporate the religious diversity of different cultural heritages into the francophone culture. Québec's management of religious diversity differs from that of federal multiculturalism. In federal multiculturalism, each different cultural heritage has the right to preserve its own cultural values in the framework of bilingualism and is invited to contribute to the wider society, but religion must be left at home. In contrast, Québec's interculturalism attempts to reflect its religious diversity and, in the event of conflict, seeks to promote reconciliation among diverse religious and non-religious groups by fostering freedom of religion and conscience in such a way that others can more easily be integrated into its French-speaking core. How, then, do people of diverse religious cultural backgrounds contribute to the building of community by participating in the life of the state while maintaining their identities?

1.3. Religious Identity and Religious Participation

Many liberal multicultural states, including Canada, have developed a policy of managing diversity based on secularism, that is, the view that religion is a private matter and that the state holds a neutral position on religions, or, at least in theory, that it

⁴³ In the aftermath of the Quebec City bombing in January 29, 2017, Charles Taylor recently reversed his opinion expressed in the Bouchard-Taylor Commission report saying, "nine years later I do not endorse it anymore." The main reason is what has happened since 2008. See Charles Taylor, "Opinion: Neutralité de L'État – Le Temps de la Réconciliation [Opinion: Neutrality of the State – The Time of Reconciliation]," *La Presse*, February 14, 2017, accessed February 20, 2017, <http://plus.lapresse.ca/screens/36c5c72e-28b9-49df-ba29-514fc56d647a%7CpUtyV30bPPsb.html>

expresses no negative attitudes toward them. Canadian multiculturalism generally expresses such a conception of secularism; indeed, policy makers have developed multicultural policies based on the secularization hypothesis.⁴⁴ However, the results of the PRI consultations⁴⁵ and recent statistics on multicultural diversity do not support the popular secularization hypothesis that religion will eventually recede as an important influence in modern society.⁴⁶ Religion is alive and well in Canada; most people continue to express a religious identity.⁴⁷ While attendance among mainline Canadian churches is declining, major minority religions such as Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism are growing fast and many have more than doubled the number of their adherents over the last two decades. The following, Table 1.1, shows the changing religious identification in Canada over the last two decades.

Table 1.1. Religious identification in Canada

Religious Community	1991 Census		2001 Census		2011 Census		Percentage Change
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Christianity	22,503,360	83.5	22,851,825	77.1	22,102,700	67.3	-20
Muslim	253,265	0.9	579,646	2.0	1,053,945	3.2	344
Hindu	157,015	0.6	297,200	1.0	497,960	1.5	207

⁴⁴ Kunz and Sykes, *From Mosaic to Harmony*, 5. This thesis denotes “secularism” as a world-view or state policy and “secularization” as an analytical conceptualization of modern world-social processes. See José Casanova, *Public Religion in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 12-15. For the discussion of Pierre E. Trudeau’s approach to the privatization of religion, see *The Hidden Pierre Elliott Trudeau; The Faith Behind the Politics* edited by John English, Richard Gwyn and P. Whitney Lackenbauer (Ottawa: Novalis, 2004), especially David Seljak’s article, “Trudeau and the Privatization of Religion: The Quebec Context,” 47-56.

⁴⁵ Kunz and Sykes, *From Mosaic to Harmony*, 5.

⁴⁶ The influential social thinkers of the nineteenth century such as Comte, Spencer, Durkheim, Weber, Marx, and Freud all believed that religion would gradually fade in importance and cease to be significant with the advent of industrial society. See Norris and Inglehart, *The Sacred and the Secular*.

⁴⁷ PRI, *Understanding Canada’s “3M,”* 12.

Sikh	147,440	0.5	278,415	0.9	485,965	1.4	253
Buddhist	163,415	0.6	300,345	1.0	365,830	1.1	192
Jewish	318,185	1.2	329,990	1.1	329,500	1.0	-15
No Religion	3,393,000	12.6	4,900,095	16.5	7,850,600	23.9	190
Total Population	26,944,040		29,639,035		32,852,300		

Source: Statistics Canada, 2011 National Household Survey

In large urban areas in Canada including the Greater Toronto Area, Vancouver and Montreal, the presence of different cultural heritages is clearly visible. Brampton, for example, northwest of Toronto, has a population approaching 550,000, two-thirds of which represent visible minorities;⁴⁸ 97,790 residents identified as Sikh in 2011, up 183 per cent from 2001, followed by 63,390 Hindus (259 per cent) and 36,960 Muslims (222 per cent), making Sikhism the second largest religion in the city. Statistics Canada predicts that by 2031, today's visible minorities will be the visible majority in Toronto (62%) and Vancouver (59%).⁴⁹ The face of Canada is changing. Accordingly, there will be changes in the cultural, social and religious dimensions of the society. Given these changes, religious identity is a critical factor in the building of community.

According to Paul Bramadat, "throughout Canada and the rest of the world, religion continues to have an influence on social, cultural, and even economic and political spheres, and as such is not, and never has been, a strictly private affair."⁵⁰ He contends that religion is not confined to the private sphere but that major minority

⁴⁸ Dakshana Bascaramurty, "How Brampton Demonstrates the New Vision of Canada," *The Globe and Mail* (June 15, 2013).

⁴⁹ Statistics Canada, "Projections of the Diversity of the Canadian Population," accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/100309/dq100309a-eng.htm>

⁵⁰ Paul Bramadat, "Beyond Christian Canada: Religion and Ethnicity in a Multicultural Society," in Paul Bramadat and David Seljak, eds., *Religion and Ethnicity in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 6.

religions are shaping Canada's future. Religious identities have historically been powerful forces for change in the religious, political and cultural geography in Europe, for example, the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. Québec's interculturalism suggests that religious identity continues to be important; people do not want to hide but rather express their religious identities openly, offering their religiously based beliefs as a contribution to the community.⁵¹ For example, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. both brought their religious beliefs into the public sphere; their visions for a new community challenged and changed the political terrain forever. People with and without religious backgrounds alike joined in with Gandhi and King's visions for non-violent civil disobedience and the racial justice movement; their visions are still alive in many people's lives. In confirmation, Amy Gutmann notes, "religious identification seems to be one of the strongest and most persistent sources of mutual identification known to humanity."⁵²

In addition, Gutmann asks, "Is religious identity special?"⁵³ There is a sense that religious identity plays a particular role in everyday life as well as in politics. Some people call for its special treatment in the public domain, while others argue that religion should be separated from the public domain because it may provoke violence and

⁵¹ Take Baltej Singh Dhillon's case for an example. He challenged the traditional RCMP dress code when he applied to the RCMP commissioner. The dress code requires a clean-shaven face and wearing of the uniform Stetson. As a Sikh, his religion required a beard and wearing a turban so he chose to fight for his religious rights. For a Sikh man, tidy unshorn hair is a symbol of respect for God; thus the use of the turban is essential for religious practice. In 1990 the Supreme Court announced the policy was theretofore amended to permit Sikhs to wear the turban while on active duty in the RCMP. For Dhillon, religion is not strictly a private matter; his religious faith may help him to carry out his duty in the public sphere. For Dhillon, religious identity is crucial to his identity.

⁵² Amy Gutmann, *Identity and Democracy* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003), 33.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 151-191.

intolerance against others. Gutmann argues that even though religious identity is not unique, “the ultimate ethical commitments of nonreligious and religious people alike are special and should be treated as such by democratic governments.”⁵⁴ She claims that the state owes a special consideration to the ethical commitments of individuals, whether religious or secular, as ethical agents, and that accordingly, religious people are to respect democratic laws and individual conscience upon which democratic justice depends.⁵⁵

Will Kymlicka, an influential Canadian philosopher of multiculturalism, would answer Gutmann’s question in the negative, given that his reasoning is quite different from hers. Kymlicka says that state neutrality, while a necessary condition for justice for liberal thinkers, is not sufficient. He argues for an *absolute* separation between state and church to prevent the implicit and explicit promotion of any particular religion. “Liberals have firmly endorsed the principles that states should not only avoid promoting religion for non-neutral reasons relating to controversial conceptions of the good, they should avoid promoting it *at all*, even for neutral reasons of efficiency or social harmony.”⁵⁶ For liberals, Kymlicka insists, when it comes to religious or ethnocultural diversity, there should be a vigorous principle of “benign neglect” that supports a firm separation of state and church to prevent any policies that privilege one religion over another.⁵⁷ Rigid separation of state and church, and ‘benign neglect’ of any particular religion are a

⁵⁴ Ibid., 154. Gutmann concludes that religious identity is not special, “although conscience, more generally understood as the ultimate ethical commitment of individuals, is special.” She continues, “Since religious identity is not the only source of binding ethical commitments, democratic governments cannot defer only to religious conscience without discriminating among citizens.” See Ibid., 34.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 173.

⁵⁶ Will Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 344; Kymlicka’s italics.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 344-345.

pragmatic approach arising from the wisdom of past experience. History suggests that where there is conflict between state and church, the easiest approach is to divorce the state from the church. This approach may, however, as Gutmann suggests, discourage the ethical commitment of religious conscience to the common good. Benign neglect of religion in the public domain may well, as the Bouchard-Taylor Commission affirms, undermine the freedom of conscience and religion.⁵⁸ The Commission suggests that the absolute prohibition of religious conviction in the public domain results in the suppression of the voices of those for whom religious commitment informs their participation in public life. Consequently, the state's benign neglect of religion in the public sphere and its requirement that religion remain secluded in the private domain may reduce what Robert Putnam calls "social capital," for the betterment of the state.⁵⁹

Putnam argues that religious participation is a crucial dimension of social capital. In his terms, physical capital refers to valued physical objects and human capital refers to the property of individuals, whereas social capital refers to established connections that link individuals to shared values or concerns. Social capital is composed of social networks conforming to specific values, such as the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness in society.⁶⁰ For Putnam social capital is closely related to 'civic virtue.' When civic virtue is embedded in a dense network of reciprocal social relations, a society nurtures a rich sense of connection among members. Accordingly, he asserts, "Faith

⁵⁸ Bouchard and Taylor, *Building the Future*, 141.

⁵⁹ Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster 2000), especially Chapter 4, "Religious Participation." Putnam argues there has been a decline in "social capital" in the United States. He explores some of the possibilities including religious participation for rebuilding social capital.

⁶⁰ Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 19.

communities in which people worship together are arguably the single most important repository of social capital in America.”⁶¹ He observes that social capital can be either maximized or minimized according to how social capital is used. He analyzes two interactions of social capital in order to clarify how society increases social capital, distinguishing between the two social capital dimensions of “bridging” (or inclusion) and “bonding” (or exclusion). These generate different relationships in which the results vary; bridging yields positive and bonding negative social capital.⁶² Bonding social capital is often inward looking and reinforces exclusive identities and homogeneous groups (e.g. ethnic fraternal organizations), whereas bridging is outward looking and encompasses people across diverse social cleavages (e.g. the civil rights movement and ecumenical religious organizations). Moreover, the dynamics of the relationship between the dimensions of bonding and bridging are not static; they are an ever-changing living reality.

Elsewhere, Putnam describes how the dimensions of bridging and bonding social capital change. In the essay, “E Pluribus Unum,” he explores the implications of immigration and ethnic diversity for social capital. He finds that, in the short to medium run, immigration and ethnic diversity challenge social solidarity and inhibit social capital. However, in the medium and long run, successful immigrant societies create new forms of social solidarity and dampen the negative effects of diversity by constructing new, more encompassing identities. Diversifying societies create a new, broader sense of the

⁶¹ Ibid., 66.

⁶² Ibid., 22-24.

“we.”⁶³ Putnam suggests how bonding social capital *can* be transformed into bridging. He comments on the application of his thesis to religious participation:

Americans have more or less deconstructed religion as a salient line of social division over the last half century, even though religion itself remains personally important. In fact, our own survey evidence suggests that for most Americans their religious identity is actually more important to them than their ethnic identity, but the salience of religious differences as lines of social identity has sharply diminished. As our religious identities have become more permeable, we have gained much religiously bridging social capital, while not forsaking our own religious loyalties.⁶⁴

If this argument about the importance of religious identity and the possibility of gaining social capital through religious participation is valid, how does religion contribute to the enhancement of bridging social capital? How do religious citizens participate in the life of the state so that religious imagination may increase social capital?

To reflect on these questions, which Putnam does not address in depth, I draw on Gutmann’s concept of “two-way protection” whereby the religious identities of citizens are welcomed in the public domain. Before Gutmann discusses her “two-way protection,” she critiques two particular views of secularism she wants to refute: 1) the impermeable rigid separation wherein there is a high wall of separation between religion and politics and 2) one-way protection wherein religious freedom is protected by the state but political interference by religion is prohibited.⁶⁵ Gutmann then suggests the necessity to move from rigid separation and one-way protection to a modified version of “two-way protection” whereby there is not only freedom of religion which protects religion from

⁶³ Robert D. Putnam, “E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century,” *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30, no. 2 (2007): 138-9.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 160-1.

⁶⁵ Amy Gutmann, “Religious Freedom and Civic Responsibility,” *Washington & Lee Law Review* 56, no. 3 (1999): 907.

politics (the first way of protection), but also that the political views of religious citizens are protected in the public domain (the second-way of protection). “Two-way protection is committed to protecting the religious freedom of individuals in exchange for protecting the democratic state from the political power from churches.”⁶⁶ Gutmann continues that in “two-way protection ... [the] church [is protected] from state and state from church, and neither protection is absolute because either protection taken to its extreme limits would undermine the other.”⁶⁷ In the public sphere, regardless of whether the citizens’ views are based on religion or not, all views are respected and welcomed to the discourse on the common good.

Indian political theorist Rajeev Bhargava goes beyond two-way protection in terms of promoting the *active* participation of religion in the public domain to suggest the concept of “principled distance” wherein religion and state may intervene in each other’s affairs to achieve the common good.⁶⁸ In principled distance, which amounts to a refashioned Indian form of secularism, there is not a complete separation of state and religion as in two-way participation, but a *distance* which allows the state to be impartial to both those who are religious and to secular citizens, regardless of whether the context demands it or whether it helps or hinders them. *Principled* distance creates boundaries between state and religion that respect the areas of jurisdiction of each, such as the ‘principled’ value of equality of citizenship or/and freedom of religion.

⁶⁶ Gutmann, *Identity and Democracy*, 33.

⁶⁷ Ibid. See also Gutmann, *Identity and Democracy*, 187-191.

⁶⁸ Rajeev Bhargava, *What Is Political Theory and Why Do We Need It?* (India: Oxford University Press, 2010), 96-99.

When the two components are put together, ‘principled distance’ acts as a compromise or balance in sharing life with others. Bhargava states:

The policy of principled distance entails a flexible approach on the question of inclusion/exclusion of religion and the engagement/disengagement of the state. ... This means that religion may intervene in the affairs of the state if such intervention promotes freedom, equality, or any other value integral to secularism. ... Equally, the state may engage with religion or disengage from it, engage positively or negatively, but it does so depending entirely on whether or not these values are promoted or undermined.⁶⁹

This Indian model of “principled distance,” which might include the “two-way protection” Gutmann speaks of, offers an alternative to Canada’s integrative multiculturalism. Similar to Québec’s open secularism, principled distance goes further than Québec’s interculturalism: in principled distance, both state and religion may intervene in each other’s affairs in order to achieve such principled values as equality, freedom, justice and peace. Furthermore, in principled distance, state and religion may work cooperatively to promote such social goals. Roger Hutchinson concurs that religious participation in public places in Canada “fosters rigorous [religious] public debates about the social issues and public policies.”⁷⁰ Hutchinson encourages theologians and religious leaders’ participation in public debate not only on matters of social issues and policies but on religious doctrines and beliefs that violate justice, equality and freedom.⁷¹ In the process, more religious participation in the state through bridging social

⁶⁹ Ibid., 97.

⁷⁰ Roger Hutchinson, “Religious Talk in Public Places,” *Emmanuel College Newsletter* (Toronto: Emmanuel College, Spring, 2001).

⁷¹ See Roger Hutchinson, *Prophets, Pastors and Public Choices: Canadian Churches and the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Debate* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1992). Hutchinson analyzes the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline debate as a case study of the role of churches in becoming effective allies of the aboriginal peoples.

capital, more interreligious dialogue and public policy debates aimed at finding the common ground to attain desired social goals may be expected and hoped for.

1.4. A Critique of Integrative Multiculturalism

Thus far, this chapter has focused on the history of Canada's policy of multiculturalism and its new policy of integrative multiculturalism as well as Québec's approach to multiculturalism, subsequently affirming the importance of religious identity, religious participation and the role of religion in the building up of community. Through an analysis of the federal policy of integrative multiculturalism and interculturalism in Québec, it has been argued that even though their approaches to the management of cultural diversity differ, the purposes are the same – the integration of different cultural heritages into a dominant culture. Now the concept of integrative multiculturalism will be critiqued in order to draw themes to be discussed further in forthcoming chapters and to lay a foundation for the United Church's vision of becoming an intercultural church.

The book cover (fig. 1.1) of *Governing Diversity*, published in 2007 by the government-founded and funded institution Rights & Democracy, illustrates its purpose of the ideal of integration.⁷²

⁷² Razmik Panossian, Bruce Berman and Anne Linscott, eds., *Governing Diversity: Democratic Solutions in Multicultural Societies* (Montreal: Rights & Democracy, 2007).

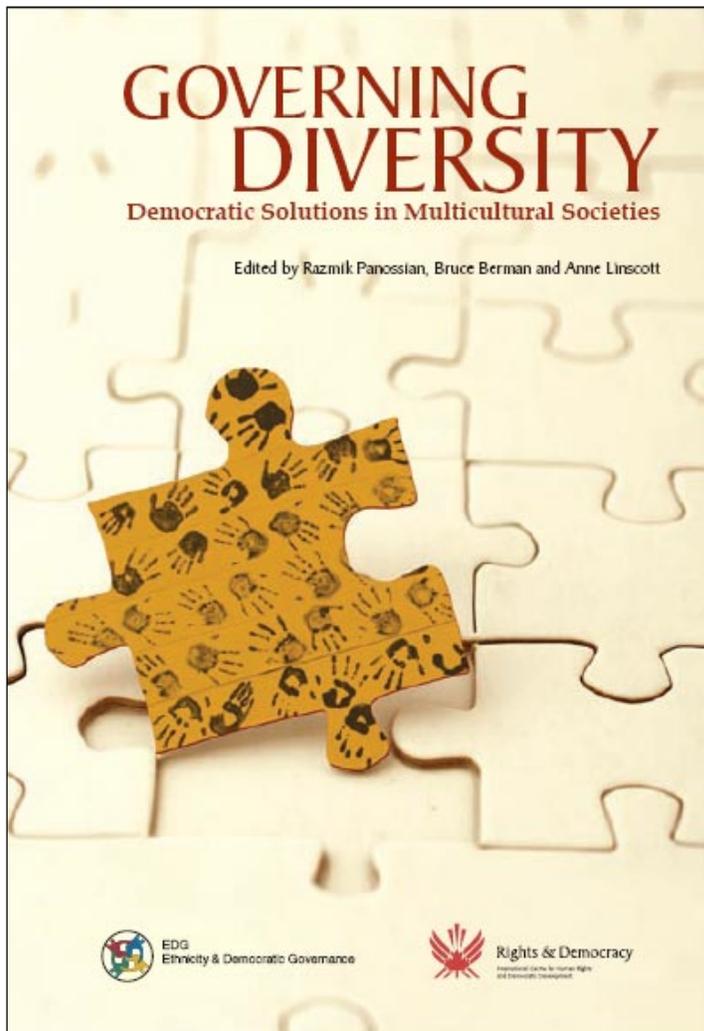


Figure 1.1. The *Governing Diversity* Book Cover

The policy papers in this book, rather than fostering diversity, actually promote the concept of integration. For example, the cover illustration clearly suggests that only one puzzle piece of the right shape and size fits into the established pieces already in place. The assumption is that any piece of a different size or shape would not fit. The brown piece may originally have been a different shape and size but it had to dramatically change its nature in order to fit into the space provided. What if the piece were smaller or larger than the space? Would it be eliminated from the beginning or during the putting of

the puzzle together? Who drew the design of the puzzle? Whatever the answer, the illustration exemplifies an approach that imagines integration as a kind of assimilative adjustment and acclimatization to pre-established values and practices—where pieces only fit if ‘cut’ into very specific forms. The ideal of integration requires a major alteration of the piece.

German sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas would address such questions by saying that societies cannot require different cultural heritages to assimilate or integrate into the majority culture. Different cultural heritages “cannot be compelled to surrender their own traditions”; rather they must be preserved in the recipient society.⁷³ Cultural hegemony ensues when a dominant culture compels others to assent to its monopoly over the public sphere. In this way, multiculturalism in Canada is stained with the questionable image of unequal power; it suggests a policy that requires a change in others without a change on the dominant culture’s part. The Canadian sociologist Himani Bannerji puts the point succinctly: “The problem of multiculturalism ... is how much tradition can be accommodated by Canadian modernity without affecting in any real way the overall political and cultural hegemony of Europeans.”⁷⁴ Thus the first problem with that image of the ideal of integration is that dominant cultures set the norms of integration and impose their norms on the other different cultural heritages by forcing them to adopt the dominant cultural values. In the next chapter we will discuss further about the

⁷³ Jürgen Habermas, “Struggles for Recognition in the Democratic Constitutional State,” in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 139-140. Habermas expresses the same thesis in his article, “Multiculturalism and the Liberal State,” *Stanford Law Review* 47, no. 5 (May, 1995): 853.

⁷⁴ Himani Bannerji, *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender* (Toronto: Canadian Scholar’s Press, 2000), 49.

different piece which should be dramatically altered its form to be fitted into the desirable space under Canada's integrative multiculturalism. French philosopher Emmanuel Levinas may label the different piece as "the Other." He may argue that the Other should not be integrated into or be excluded from a dominant society as multiculturalism suggests. Who, then, is the Other? This question will be explored in Chapter 2.

The second problem with the ideal of integration inherent in multiculturalism is that it promotes injustice and oppression. *Governing Diversity* says, "Integration is blind to *differences* in public and accepting of differences in the private sphere."⁷⁵ "Blind" seems to entail obliviousness to or taking no account of differences. This is unfortunate, for what is essentially being suggested here is that different cultural heritages have to adopt two different life styles, one public and one private, unless, of course, they discard their cultural heritages. As a Korean, for example, I have to hide my Korean values and follow 'Canadian values' in the public arena. We Korean/Asian people believe we have sound social and cultural values – for example, concepts of difference and community⁷⁶ – to contribute to this highly pluralistic society. However, experience teaches us to believe that these values are not considered a valuable contribution to public life; their practice should be confined to the personal and practised privately at home. My (in Korea we say "our"⁷⁷) children often become confused about the values of their heritage and what they

⁷⁵ John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary, "Framing the Debate: Integration Verses Accommodation," *Governing Diversity*, 19.

⁷⁶ The concept of difference (다름) in Korean thought will be presented in Chapter 2. For the concept of community see Heup Young Kim and David Ng, "The Central Issue of Community: An Example of Asian North American Theology on the Way," in *People On the Way: Asian North Americans Discovering Christ, Culture, and Community*, ed. David Ng (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1996), 25-41.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 35; italics mine.

see around them in Canada and come to consider Korean culture as inferior. The ideal of integration contributes to what Iris Marion Young calls the “double consciousness characteristic of oppression.”⁷⁸ The dominant culture stereotypes the identities of different cultural heritage groups and reinforces negative generalizations of them with demeaning images. Different cultural heritages suffer oppression under the dominant culture and are discouraged from contributing their cultural values creatively to society: the intentional ideal of integration is to promote injustice and oppression.

In reference to the problem of integrative multiculturalism, the feminist political theorist Susan Moller Okin’s argument that multiculturalism promotes gender inequalities is worthy of note. In 1999 Okin published the paper, “Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?”⁷⁹ In this essay she puts forth the example that the French government permitted polygamy for immigrant men during the 1980s so that they could bring multiple wives into the country. Okin suggests that multiculturalism pays more attention to the differences *between* and *among* cultural groups than to the differences *within* them; in so doing, it pays little or no attention to the private sphere. In the case of polygamy in France, minority group rights enable some minority cultures to preserve some of their values and practices, but, even though those rights may benefit men, they may not be in the best interests of the girls and women of those cultures.⁸⁰ While a multicultural policy focuses on group rights, it may ignore women’s individual rights within their cultural

⁷⁸ Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1990), 165. Young applies the concept to the process of assimilation, but it is useful here.

⁷⁹ Susan Moller Okin, “Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women,” in *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* ed. Joshua Cohen and Matthew Howard (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 9-24.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, 23.

heritage at the expense of group rights. Okin's argument claims validity and value because sometimes culturally endorsed practices can be oppressive of their less powerful members, such as women, remaining hidden in the private or domestic sphere of their cultural heritage community. In particular, Okin's argument helps those who consider themselves theologically progressive and opposed to all forms of oppression to reflect on whether gender differences and inequalities are being adequately addressed within any particular cultural group. If the problematic policies and practices of integrative multiculturalism are to be transformed, differences in both the public and private spheres must be recognized and taken into account. In the next chapter, the concept of difference will be discussed and then suggested as a gift toward the building of a just community.

The third problem with integrative multiculturalism is that it ignores the validity and importance of the public role of religion. As described above, in the wake of the radicalization among religious youth, the ideal of integration has been fixed in the policy of integrative multiculturalism. After the radicalization of youth in Canada made press headlines, scholars have tried to define the cause of religious youth radicalization.⁸¹ Paul Bramadat and Scot Wortley, scholars in religion and criminology respectively, define two models of religious radicalization: the import model and the strain model. The "import model" suggests that radicalization has been developed elsewhere and then imported, whereas in the "strain model," host societies provide the injustice to which some youth may feel the need to respond. Bramadat and Wortley hypothesize that the root cause of

⁸¹ Paul Bramadat and Scot Wortley, "Religious Youth Radicalization in Canada," in *Canadian Diversity* 6, no. 1 (Winter, 2008): 47-73; Lorne L. Dawson, "The Study of New Religious Movements and the Radicalization of Home-Grown Terrorists: Opening a Dialogue," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 22 (2010): 1-21.

religious radicalization is the experience of inequality, intolerance and discrimination.⁸² They suggest that what is wrong with our Western societies is that we are not making progress in dealing with other religious ideals. They search for the root causes of religious youth radicalization inside the state, suggesting that three obstacles to be overcome are: the privatization of religion (secularization), a dualistic view of religion (good vs. evil), and the consequences of secularism (religious illiteracy).⁸³

A key concept related to all three obstacles noted above is the concept of secularism. According to Charles Taylor, the term ‘secular’ has a complex and ambiguous history in the West.⁸⁴ The term evokes a dyad, which distinguishes two different but related dimensions of ‘time’, – the immanent and the transcendent – and assigns them to two different time-space realms – a self-sufficient immanent sphere and a contrasting realm at a transcendent level. The term ‘secular’ is derived from the first meaning, which denotes ordinary time and is associated with the meaning of ‘worldly’ and ‘lay.’ The second meaning leads to the term, ‘religious’, and refers to a higher realm related to the affairs of eternity. In the church calendar, the two times are interconnected and cannot be separated or isolated into specific time periods. When, however, this dichotomy is set in place, the two dimensions often disturb and dominate the worldview of each other. José Casanova argues that religion has always been the concern of the ‘worldly’ and the ‘lay’, and that therefore, the process of secularization is not necessary.

⁸² Bramadat and Wortley, “Religious Youth Radicalization in Canada,” 57.

⁸³ Ibid., 68-69. A dualistic worldview entails binary oppositions in which there is a violent hierarchy where one concept governs the other. This will be discussed further in Chapter 2.

⁸⁴ Taylor, “What Is Secularism,” xx and the masterful treatment of secularism see Taylor, *A Secular Age*, especially 54-61. Also see José Casanova, “Public Religion Revisited,” in *Religion: Beyond a Concept*, ed. Hent de Vries (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 105-6.

“To secularize – that is, ‘to make worldly’ or ‘to transfer from ecclesiastical to civil use’ – is a process that does not make much sense in such a civilizational context.”⁸⁵ The secularization process produces another dyad – true vs. false or necessary vs. superfluous. In the history of the West this dichotomy has contributed to the separation of state and religion; religion remains in the “private zone and can’t interfere with the common life.”⁸⁶

If Bramadat and Wortley’s findings are valid, the solutions to youth religious extremism would lead to the “deprivatization”⁸⁷ of religion so that it might recover its public character and role through the processes of “two-way protection” (Gutmann) and “principled distance” (Bhargava). In addition, publically available education about world religions could attempt to equip students, teachers and lawmakers with a better understanding of religious diversity. Religious education would enhance the knowledge of ways religious communities engage in public life and offer opportunities to learn from them. Religion would break through the prison of the private into the public realm to function as what Casanova calls “public religion.”⁸⁸ Public religion would take on a public character, function or role, not only bringing religious norms into secular public spheres as potential contributions to society, but also opening it to being challenged to go further and embrace secular democratic norms, such as gender justice, in religious communities. Integrative multiculturalism instead still fosters a process of privatization

⁸⁵ Casanova, “Public Religion Revisited,” 106.

⁸⁶ Taylor, “What Is Secularism,” xx.

⁸⁷ Casanova, *Public Religion in the Modern World*, 211-234.

⁸⁸ Casanova, *Public Religion in the Modern World* and Casanova, “Public Religion Revisited,” 101-119.

of religion so that it dismisses the public role of religion. The problem with the ideal of integration is that it is developed from the concept of secularism based upon a naïve understanding of religion. With this background in mind, the public role of religion will be discussed further in the case of the UCC in Chapter 3. The chapter will develop an appropriate model for the engagement of people of religious faith in the state along with those of different faiths or no religious faith to promote social issues and public policies that matter to our humanity.

Finally, and most importantly, the ideal of integration implies a practice of imperialism. The Canadian sociologist Raymond Breton coined the term “institutional completeness,”⁸⁹ to describe how a cultural heritage provides a coherent framework for all the services required by a community’s members, such as education, work, food, clothing, religion, medical care and social assistance.⁹⁰ English or French speaking Canadian communities and new immigrants from a country where one of the two official languages is spoken, enjoy an “institutional completeness” in Canada. A British Anglican woman immigrant, for example, does not need to worry about living in a totally foreign world, since her native political, economic, social, cultural and religious life is familiar to that of Canada’s.⁹¹ The issue of integration for the British immigrant is not such a difficult matter since there is no need to discard her cultural heritage. However, a Somali

⁸⁹ Raymond Breton, “Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities and the Personal Relations of Immigrants,” *American Journal of Sociology* 70, no 2 (1964): 193-205. Institutional completeness is a theoretical notion that immigrant communities create parallel sets of institutions for themselves to serve various functions within the community.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 194-5.

⁹¹ Paul Bramadat and David Seljak, “Charting the New Terrain: Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada,” in *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada*, eds. Paul Bramadat and David Seljak (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 29.

Muslim refugee's experience, for example, may be quite different. A Somali woman has to face a large number of obstacles, including a new language, a new set of moral and social customs and norms, and many negative stereotypes.⁹² Under the ideal of integration, the Somali refugee is encouraged to distance herself from her identified cultural heritage. She is expected to become a different person in order to survive in her adopted country. She may be experiencing the imposition of a "cultural imperialism" that requires her to conform to ways that restrict her freedom.⁹³ The term "cultural imperialism" used here is drawn from Young's notion, briefly described above, of the "double consciousness characteristic of oppression."⁹⁴ Not only does the dominant cultural group universalize its experience and culture as the norm and render different cultural heritages invisible, at the same time it stereotypes and stains them with demeaning images. In the process different cultural heritages will be marked as "other." Letty Russell describes this so-called marking as an "othering process."⁹⁵ I will discuss this concept in the next chapter. What makes it imperialist is that such restrictions make it difficult for others to participate in public life without being subject to norms and practices that remake the other's difference into the image of the same, the dominant culture.

Even though most migrants are voluntarily integrated into certain sectors of the society such as labour markets and political institutions, "many, however, *resist* the

⁹² Ibid., 30.

⁹³ Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 58-61.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 165.

⁹⁵ Letty M. Russell, "Encountering the 'Other' in a World of Difference and Danger," *Harvard Theological Review* 99, no. 4 (2006): 458.

suggestion that they should acquire the dominant national culture and privatize their native culture as a condition of these economic and political opportunities.”⁹⁶ Young suggests that the government should “allow or even encourage the self-organization of migrant groups to provide services and represent the interests and perspectives of these groups in politics and policy.”⁹⁷ Young’s argument is similar to Breton’s “institutional completeness,” in which different cultural heritages are encouraged to create or expand political and cultural spaces for themselves.

The history of Canadian imperialism at home was about expanding British and French-Canadian cultures to include newly arriving different cultural heritages so that these differences were assimilated and incorporated into a unified society. Integrative multiculturalism shares a similar imperialistic process – the imposition of the English and French cultures on other different cultural heritages so that they fit into pre-established cultural frameworks that function as hegemonies. While the English and French are thus well served by their institutional completeness, these official language groups discourage immigrants from developing their own institutional completeness. The ideal of integration encourages the learning of the official languages by law and discourages the practice of any other heritage culture. Therefore, according to Richard Day, “integration within multiculturalism in a bilingual framework is best seen as a creative reproduction of the colonial method of strategic simulation of assimilation to the Other.”⁹⁸ Canada’s promotion of integrative multiculturalism is in effect a colonial practice in a post-colonial

⁹⁶ Young, *Inclusion and Democracy*, 219; italics mine.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Day, *Multiculturalism and the History of Canadian Diversity*, 197.

era and thus, consequentially, it may promote cultural and religious conflict. This theme will be further discussed in Chapter 4 pertinent to the development of an intercultural theology which operates without absolutizing a dominant culture and without subjugating other cultures into the dominant one.

Conclusion

The history of multiculturalism in Canada, despite its laudable aims to promote respect among different cultures, is in essence about the permeation of British and French Canadian cultures into other different cultural heritages; cultural differences are to be assimilated and integrated into one of the two designated cultures. Canada's new multicultural policy – integrative multiculturalism – inherits some of the negative features of traditional multiculturalism in that dominant cultures still require a kind of assimilation by means of obliging minority cultural differences to be discarded or hidden in the public sphere, a prominent aspect of which is the restriction of religion to the private realm. While English and French-derived cultures enjoy “institutional completeness,” immigrants from other cultures are discouraged from developing their own “institutional completeness.”

Québec's interculturalism adopts and adapts the ideal of integration to reflect its unique circumstances, but the province goes further to allow religious expression in the public domain. The previously ignored role of religion in secular conceptions of the state since the Quiet Revolution becomes an important factor in the building of community in Québec. The significance of the Bouchard-Taylor Commission in relation to this thesis is its way of revisiting secularism and suggesting an open secularism by which people may

bring different religious symbols into the public domain. Open secularism may unlock the door for further development of religious participation in the life of the state. Gutmann's "two-way protection" and Rhargava's "principled distance" have been suggested as useful in making room for religion in the public sphere, conceptualizing how religion may participate in and even intervene in the affairs of the state for the sake of the common good. Yet even while Québec's interculturalism recognizes religious diversity in the public sphere, it still attempts to integrate different cultural heritages into the dominant culture. Thus, in the end, Québec's interculturalism shares a similar ethos of nation-building imperialism with federal multiculturalism through the ideal of integration.

This chapter's aim has been to review and critique Canada's integrative multiculturalism, a set of nation-building policies in which cultural differences are to be discarded or left at home in the private realm in order for immigrants to be integrated into a public realm controlled by the dominant culture. One question that arises from the discussion concerns the status of cultural and religious differences, namely whether it is to be considered inferior, justifying assimilation and integration into a dominant culture. Binaries of inferior-superior are often created when encountering the difference of the Other. It is important to understand how this happens, raising the question, "Who is the Other?" To deal with this question, in the next chapter the concepts of the Other and difference – in particular, cultural difference – will be explored through poststructural and postcolonial theories. Employing a deeper sense of these concepts will contribute to the philosophical basis for articulating the vision of becoming an intercultural church.

Chapter 2

The Gift of Difference:

A Philosophical Journey Toward Building a Just Community

Whose house is this?
Whose night keeps out the light
In here?
Say, who owns this house?
It's not mine.
I had another sweeter, brighter,
With a view of lakes crossed in painted boats;
Of fields wide as arms open for me.
This house is strange.
Its shadows lie.
Say, tell me, why does its lock fit my key?

– Toni Morrison, “Whose House is This?”

Differences, like instrumental tones, provide us with the recognizable univocity that makes up the melody of the True.

– Alain Badiou, *Saint Paul: The Foundation of Universalism*

As a visible, racialized immigrant living in North America, I have become aware of the many differences in the cultural values and norms between Korean and Canadian peoples. In my pastoral experience, for instance, I hear comments that my approach to ministry and my understanding of theology are “different” from those of the ministers the congregation has been used to. At first I understood this to have a positive meaning, such as fresh or unique, but gradually, I began to realize that “different” meant the more undesirable qualities of being “strange” or “nonstandard.” Shawn Copeland discusses how the common synonyms for difference in English describe negative qualities or

conditions.¹ However, the word different in Korean, 다르다 (*dareuda*), does not have negative implications or connotations. It has two meanings; 1) not the same, and 2) unique characteristics (in thought and deed).² *Dareuda* is often used to praise a person or group's positive qualities or conditions. *Different* is often used to express uncharacteristic or atypical qualities or conditions. While the English word *difference* may not be regarded as a gift – indeed, it may imply an unwanted change or deviation from the familiar – *dareum*, the noun of *dareuda*, implies a special gift to be praised. Since difference in the West has often been understood to mean strange or nonstandard, it is unfortunate but understandable – as illustrated in Chapter 1 – how different cultures have been forced to assimilate or integrate into a dominant one. Different cultures have been identified as *other* and in need of being (re)made over into the *same*.

Letty M. Russell uses a “postcolonial perspective”³ to critique colonial processes of dividing social structures and interactions into subject and object. She unfolds troubled and troubling relationships between them and clarifies how these often result in the demeaning, degradation or destruction of the object or other. She calls this divisive process *othering*.⁴ In such a process, a problem may arise in the understanding of

¹ Shawn Copeland, “The Power of Difference: Understanding, Appreciating, Critiquing Difference,” *The Ecumenist* 43, no. 2 (Spring 2006): 2.

² *Donga New Korean Dictionary*, 3rd ed. (Seoul: Dusan Donga, 1994), s.v. “Different.”

³ I follow Letty Russell's notion of a postcolonial perspective that “examines all aspects of the colonial process from the beginning of colonial contact up to and including its present effects in both colonizing and colonized nations.” Letty M. Russell, *Just Hospitality: God's Welcome in a World of Difference*, ed. J. Shannon Clarkson and Kate M. Ott (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2009), 25.

⁴ Letty M. Russell, “Encountering the ‘Other’ in a World of Difference and Danger,” *Harvard Theological Review* 99, no. 4 (2006): 458. Leela Gandhi succinctly summarizes the problem of Cartesian philosophy from a postcolonial theory: “The Cartesian philosophy of identity is premised upon an ethically unsustainable omission of the Other.” Leela Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 39.

difference not only among varied cultures, but also among similar cultures. The dominant group may declare difference “other” because it diverges from the main cultural and social norms; difference then, is marked as an object to be assimilated and integrated into the dominant group, or rejected or isolated from it. The othering process may operate also among cultures that share a similar history and/or tradition. For example, Lamin Sanneh refers to mutual jealousies among Christians, Jews and Muslims because of their common ancestry – that such feelings may be compared with the ‘sibling rivalry’ that arises from a common parentage. “People fight not just because they are different, but often because they are similar.”⁵ Since they share monotheist traditions and the Great Commandment,⁶ they may be too close for comfort. Historically, for centuries, until the West shattered the Ottoman Empire, Christians, Jews and Muslims peacefully shared land among themselves.⁷ When the othering process occurs, less powerful groups are expected to convert in order to survive or else they may be eliminated. Regardless of difference or similarity (e.g. the Abrahamic faiths) among cultures, the process of othering becomes a weapon for exclusion of the less powerful or less desirable. In *Just Hospitality: God’s Welcome in a World of Difference*, Russell laments how churches “unfortunately reinforce this fear and rejection by becoming ‘safe havens’ from

⁵ Lamin Sanneh, “Do Christian and Muslims Worship the Same God?” *Christian Century* (May 2004), 36. Sanneh only mentions Christians and Muslims, but Jews should be included because they share a similar history and theology.

⁶ See The Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, “A Common Word between Us and You,” accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.acommonword.com/index.php?lang=en&page=option1>.

⁷ See Ovey N. Mohammed, S.J., *Muslim-Christian Relations: Past, Present, Future* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1999), 25-42; Vivian B. Mann, Thomas G. Glick and Jerrilynn D. Dodds, eds., *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain* (New York: George Braziller, Inc. 1992).

difference, welcoming only certain groups and misusing theological teachings to exclude those who don't fit."⁸

The presence of differences provokes questions. Should different cultures be condemned as nonstandard so that a community may be identified chiefly by its homogeneity? Should different cultural heritages be integrated into a dominant culture to form a "cohesive society"?⁹ Instead of representing differences negatively, however, Russell turns the issue around and asks how difference can be lifted up as an "emancipatory power" to subvert the ideal of integration and be celebrated as a gift for building community?¹⁰ In the spirit of this question, this chapter explores the works of Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida and Homi Bhabha because of how their writings critique the tendency of Western philosophy to create binary oppositions – an othering process – in which one position has privilege over the other. These three authors support the argument that difference is a gift to be celebrated rather than an object of integration as in the context of Canada's integrative multiculturalism. Building on the discussion in

⁸ Russell, *Just Hospitality*, 21.

⁹ Canada. Citizenship and Immigration Canada, *Annual Report on the Operation of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 2012-2013: Building an Integrated, Cohesive Society* (Ottawa, 2014).

¹⁰ Russell, *Just Hospitality*, 71-74. Russell's portrayal of difference as *emancipatory* lends an important contribution toward the idea of working together as postcolonial subjects. Russell depends on Iris Marion Young's concept of emancipatory difference in *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University, 1990). According to Russell, understanding the concept of difference leads to stressing *relational* difference: "Difference emerges not as a description of the attributes of a group, but as a function of the relations between groups and the interaction of groups within institutions" (72). Seeing differences as relational allows the rejection of essentialist assumptions that define and reify different group identities as objects to be excluded and integrated. Far from being absolutely alien, "different groups are always similar in some respect, and always potentially share some attributes, experiences, and goals" (Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, 171). Further, emancipatory difference forms *coalitions across difference*. Russell continues, "This work requires the development of networks that can sustain groups in their struggles and provide opportunities for partnership as postcolonial subjects" (Russell, *Just Hospitality*, 73). Difference provides opportunities to learn to trust each other and to create an in-between space where various communities and cultures share in God's concern for all creation.

Chapter One, this chapter aims to provide a theoretical framework. for understanding difference. It will discuss the following notions: the Other (Levinas),¹¹ *différance* (Derrida) and cultural difference (Bhabba). Further, it will be argued that the affirmation of cultural differences is a necessary foundation for building a just community. Here, the concept of difference is developed specifically as a contribution to the theological foundation for the United Church of Canada’s vision of becoming an intercultural church.

2.1. *The Face of the Other:*

A Plea for Ethical Relationship (Emmanuel Levinas)

In an interview with Philippe Nemo, Emmanuel Levinas was asked, “How does one begin thinking?”¹² Levinas answered that it probably begins through traumatic incidents such as a violent scene, a separation or a sudden consciousness of the monotony of time that cannot be explained by a verbal form. He continued to say that upon further reflection on such incidents and more extensive reading – not necessarily of philosophy – these initial shocks promote questions, expose problems and deepen critical thinking.¹³ Levinas’ answer may reflect his life journey as a Jewish philosopher and a Holocaust survivor. Through the lens of the violence of his experience of the Holocaust, he sees Western philosophy as “a reduction of the Other to the same.” His focus is on “calling

¹¹ Levinas uses both *autrui* and *autre* in his writing. In Richard A. Cohen’s “Translator’s Note,” in Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity*, 17, the English for *autrui* is translated (and used in this thesis) as “Other” (upper case), referring to another person or the personal other, and *autre* as other (lower case), referring to otherness in general or to alterity. Because Levinas’ distinction between *autrui* and *autre* is not always consistent and because of the obscurity of his work, some translators do not distinguish between them. See Richard A. Cohen’s “Translator’s Note,” in Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity*, 17.

¹² Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity: Conversations with Philippe Nemo*, trans. Richard A. Cohen (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1985), 21.

¹³ Ibid.

into question of the same ... by the Other.”¹⁴ Describing who the Other is thus becomes an important task.

2.1.1. *The Holocaust*

Levinas was born in 1906 to a Jewish family in Kaunas, Lithuania, a country where Jewish culture was intellectually prized and fostered. From an early age he was influenced by Jewish orthodoxy and in his teens was confronted with anti-semitic tendencies and actions.¹⁵ In 1923 he left his home country for France to study philosophy at the University of Strasbourg and in 1930 he published his dissertation and became a French citizen. He loved France where he enjoyed both political freedom and the philosophical tradition. In 1934, shortly after Hitler came to power, Levinas wrote an article, “Reflections on the Philosophy of Hitlerism,” in *Esprit*, a journal representing a progressive, avant-garde Catholicism.¹⁶ In this article he uncovered the danger of the bloody barbarism in the philosophy of Hitlerism expressed in National Socialism. As a French citizen, he served in the army during World War II from 1939 as a military officer fighting against the National Socialists. He was captured in 1940 and held in a prisoner-of-war camp where he was put into forced labour as a member of the Jewish labour force.

¹⁴ Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay in Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 43. In this thesis the same (même), in contrast to the Other, refers to the first-person self; lower case is usually used for the ‘same’ except in quotations. The use of the Other (upper case) in this thesis is resistant to the transcendental ego so that the Other cannot be integrated into or reduced to the same while the use of the other (lower case) indicates it may be integrated into the empirical self.

¹⁵ Adriaan Peperzak, *To the Other: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1993), 2.

¹⁶ Emmanuel Levinas, “Reflections on the Philosophy of Hitlerism,” *Esprit* (1934), trans. Sean Hand, *Critical Inquiry* 17 (Autumn 1990), 62-71.

Because of his army status he was not sent to a concentration camp but his parents-in-law were deported and his parents and two brothers were murdered by French collaborators. Later he reflected that his life was dominated by the resentment and the memory of the Nazi horror.¹⁷ The dedication page to his second *magnum opus*, *Otherwise Than Being or Beyond Essence*, bears two dedications to the victims of the Holocaust. The first reads, “To the memory of those who were closest among the six million assassinated by the National Socialists, and of the millions on millions of all confessions and all nations, victims of the same hatred of the other man, the same anti-semitism.”¹⁸ Further down on the same page, Levinas dedicates the volume in Hebrew to the memories of the above-mentioned family members who were victims of the Holocaust. We can only imagine how deeply the Holocaust trauma affected his life, especially his philosophical works. He says, “The visage of being that shows itself in war is fixed in the concept of totality, which dominates Western philosophy.”¹⁹ His experience of the Holocaust provides the context to the problem he tries to solve and serves as the source for his work.

2.1.2. Two Directions of Western Philosophy

Reflecting on his experience of the Holocaust, Levinas comes to realize that the conceptual framework for “victims” and “anti-semitism” were both caused by the

¹⁷ Emmanuel Levinas, *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism* (1963, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Jewish Studies, 1997), 291.

¹⁸ Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis, (1981, Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1998), vi.

¹⁹ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 21.

Western philosophical concept of the ‘same’, which stems from a ‘totalizing ontology’.²⁰ War and violence, for instance, are seen as the result of totality; both subdue the *Other* and reduce it to the same. To unpack the main thrust of Western philosophy’s traditional search for truth, Levinas identifies “two directions” furthering his search for truth in an encounter with the Other. In this search he breaks away from the Western philosophical tradition of totalizing ontologies.

The first direction Levinas identifies is when truth signifies an experience that transports the thinker toward a *beyond* – a transcendence.²¹ In this direction he sees exteriority/transcendence as a corrective to the violence of totalizing ontology. On the journey the thinker is often surprised by encountering the unexpected Other. Truth, named “the daughter of experience” by Levinas, is found in exteriority rather than interiority.²² This implies a metaphysical desire, which searches for “*something else entirely, toward the absolutely other.*”²³ He asserts, “Philosophy would be concerned with the absolutely other; it would be heteronomy itself. [Accordingly] philosophy means

²⁰ A totalizing ontology involves a unified and cohesive conceptual sense of ‘being’ in homogeneous terms—as one, universal, complete, whole, total scheme that covers all reality. So that every particular being, including the Other as personal presence, is subsumed into larger totality, managed conceptually as part of the ‘same.’ See Levinas’ essay, “Is Ontological Fundamental” (1951), in *Emmanuel Levinas: Basic Philosophical Writings*, ed. Adriaan T. Peperzak, Simon Critchley, Robert Bernasconi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 1-10. In this essay Levinas critiques the Heideggerian ontology that reduces a relationship to comprehension. This understanding can also be seen in his book, *Totality and Infinity*, 42-48. Levinas uses two different notions of ontology in *Totality and Infinity*. The main concept, of course, is “a reduction of the Other to the same” and later he seeks a new ontology, the “otherwise than being.”

²¹ Levinas, “Philosophy and the Idea of the Infinity (1957),” in *To the Other: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas*, ed. Adriaan Peperzak (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1993), 89.

²² *Ibid.*, 90.

²³ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 33; Levinas’ italics.

metaphysics, and metaphysics inquires about the divine.”²⁴ A key point emerges: in a metaphysical relationship, the Other cannot be totalized into the same.

Yet, in the second direction identified by Levinas, the thinking subject falsely integrates the Other into the same. Here, as he understands it, unlike the first direction, truth is not found in its relationship with otherness; it is found in one’s freedom to reduce the Other to the same. Further, “philosophy would be engaged in reducing to the Same all that is opposed to it as *other*.”²⁵ Levinas continues, “Freedom, autonomy, the *reduction of the Other to the Same*, lead to this formula: the conquest of being by man over the course of history.”²⁶ This Western philosophical approach promotes sameness at the expense of difference and otherness.

Levinas asks which of these two directions Western philosophy has taken, heteronomy or autonomy? “The choice of Western philosophy has most often been on the side of freedom and the Same. ... Thus Western thought very often seemed to exclude the transcendent [by encompassing] every Other in the Same.”²⁷ He claims that Western philosophy leans too much toward the second direction, since it has most often taken the form of various ontologies that absorb the Other into a system of meaning aimed at promoting the overarching autonomy of the same. Here, in what he calls an “ontological relation,” one’s experience is consolidated by an act of excluding transcendent otherness.

²⁴ Levinas, “Philosophy and the Idea of the Infinity,” 89-90. In Adriaan Peperzak’s commentary on Levinas’ “Philosophy and the Idea of the Infinity,” he defines “heteronomy” as: “(a) experience implies otherness; (b) otherness is not simple exteriority; (c) transcendence, not sufficiently qualified by the metaphor of distance or farness” (Ibid., 90).

²⁵ Ibid., 91; Levinas’ italics.

²⁶ Ibid.; Levinas’ italics.

²⁷ Ibid., 92-3.

In an ontological relationship (i.e., a relationship understood in categories of being), the same absorbs the Other into itself and nullifies the radical alterity of the Other through an attempt to achieve universal synthesis. This amounts to a reduction of all experience to a totality that “leaves nothing outside of itself and becomes absolute thought.”²⁸ Levinas continues his critique by noting, “The consciousness of the self is at the same time the consciousness of the whole.”²⁹ He explains this by a process of self-identification: “The I is identical in its very alterations... It hearkens to itself thinking and surprises itself being dogmatic, foreign to itself. But faced with this alterity the I is the same, merges with itself, incapable of apostasy with regard to this surprising ‘self.’”³⁰ The I becomes elevated to autonomy as it domesticates alterity and incorporates the Other into its own categories and principles. Thus the process of self-identification, as an egocentric dynamic, is imperialistic and creates a totality, a denial of the Other’s difference that “integrates” the otherness of the Other into the same.³¹ Levinas’ point is that the process of ontological thinking is one which reflects a colonizing egoism whereby otherness is synthesized and incorporated into subjectivity for itself, thus denying the alterity of the Other. How, then, one can overcome the tendency to integrate the Other into the same and engage in right relations with the Other?

²⁸ Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity*, 75.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 36

³¹ Ibid., 52. Levinas criticizes the danger of integration: “If [a relationship] claims to integrate myself and the other within an impersonal spirit, this alleged integration is cruelty and injustice, that is, [it] ignores the Other” (Ibid). For Levinas the ‘same’ is like a gaze that sees everything as a reflection of itself, sweeping over particularities as if they were only possessions already held.

2.1.3. *Entering into a Relationship with the Other*

After comparing these two Western philosophical approaches in the search for the truth, Levinas asks: “[H]ow can the same, produced as egoism, enter into relationship with an other without immediately divesting it of its alterity?”³² This question seems to reflect the central tenet of his work, particularly evident in his major contribution, *Totality and Infinity* – the title of the book suggesting the two-sided image of the connection and separation of the same with the Other. The title, *Totality and Infinity*, specifies his purpose: he is exploring the nature of the relationship between totality and infinity as a way of understanding the relationship between the same and the Other without reducing the Other to the same.

In the Preface to *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas says that the purpose of the book is to “present itself as a defense of subjectivity, but it will apprehend the subjectivity not at the level of its purely egoist protestation against totality, ... but as founded in the idea of infinity.”³³ Subjectivity is a form of interiority, but it needs to be engaged on the basis of exteriority in order to be in right relationship with the Other. He suggests that the self is often caught up with itself and as a result fosters *totality*. This is reflected in Levinas’ “second direction,” Western philosophy’s search for the truth. This direction is found, for example, in Descartes’ *cogito*, in which the Other is rendered an object of knowledge. Levinas recognizes the Other here only in order to be absorbed and managed as content for the knowing subject. Elsewhere, he states, “Knowledge has always been interpreted

³² Ibid., 38.

³³ Ibid., 26.

as assimilation. ... [K]nowledge does not put us in communion with the truly other.”³⁴ The self cannot escape its assimilative logic through knowledge; this only leads it *back* to the self. Here Levinas confronts the problem presented by Descartes’ perspective—namely, insofar as the Other is an object of knowledge, alterity is violated by the same. To solve this problem, Levinas sets himself the task of establishing subjectivity elsewhere than in a totalizing ontology so that the other may be encountered as Other without being integrated into the same.

In *Totality and Infinity* Levinas says he “will present subjectivity as welcoming the Other, as hospitality; in it the idea of infinity is consummated.”³⁵ He describes how, integral to the idea of infinity, the self, at its core, is in an ethical relation with the Other. In order to sustain openness to the other as Other, the ethical relation needs to seek “its absolute exteriority.”³⁶ He likens this new characteristic of subjectivity to the journey of Abraham and Sarah. In the biblical story, Abraham and Sarah leave their homeland forever for an as yet unknown land, and forbid their servants from going back to bring their children to the point of departure (Genesis 12).³⁷ Unlike the Greek myth of Ulysses returning to his native Ithaca, Abraham and Sarah never return to the familiar, predictable place. Through the stories of their adventure (Genesis 12) and their hospitality to the strangers (Genesis 18), Levinas sees a new concept of subjectivity that is responsive to the Other rather than the self; it realizes a transcendence and exteriority. Here the self

³⁴ Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity*, 60.

³⁵ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 27.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 47.

³⁷ Emmanuel Levinas, “The Trace of the Other,” in *Deconstruction in Context: Literature and Philosophy*, ed. Mark C. Taylor (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 348.

does not give up its subjectivity; this responsiveness to the Other is the very basis of subjectivity. Furthermore, without affirming subjectivity, there can be no ethical relationship with the Other. For Levinas, an ethical relationship presupposes the separation of the same with regard to the other; he sees separation as a necessary condition for the relationship.³⁸

For Levinas, the self cannot integrate the Other into itself, since the Other contains the trace of infinity. Levinas borrows the idea of infinity from the Third of Descartes's *Metaphysical Meditations on First Philosophy*.³⁹ Descartes uses the idea of infinity to prove the existence of God and support his understanding of Christianity. His idea of infinity comes from God. That is, given that reality is finite, such an idea can come only from a source beyond the finite and, accordingly, beyond human knowledge, which is God. Levinas adapts Descartes' idea of infinity for his own purpose. He notes that "the idea of infinity is exceptional in that its *ideatum* surpasses its idea."⁴⁰ In other words, the idea of infinity signifies something beyond knowledge; it cannot be contained, bursting the boundaries of knowing. "The alterity of the infinity is not cancelled, is not extinguished in the thought that thinks it."⁴¹ Seeing infinity in the Other: "The infinite is the absolutely Other."⁴² Levinas continues,

[T]he idea of infinity occurs in the relationship with the Other (*Autrui*). The idea of the infinity is the social relationship. This relationship consists in approaching

³⁸ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 53.

³⁹ Levinas, "Philosophy and the Idea of the Infinity," 106.

⁴⁰ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 49; "Philosophy and the Idea of the Infinity," 107.

⁴¹ Levinas, "Philosophy and the Idea of the Infinity," 107.

⁴² Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 49; "Philosophy and the Idea of the Infinity," 107.

an absolutely exterior being. ... The exteriority of the infinity being is manifested in the absolute resistance which by its apparition, its epiphany, it opposes to all my power.⁴³

The Other is a trace of the infinite in that it resists the “power” of personal knowledge as exterior to that person. The idea of the infinite signifies that it is impossible for the self to unite with the Other, to create an integrative Whole, a totality; each entity is separately, safely preserved.⁴⁴ The Other cannot be integrated into the self, since the relationship between them is non-synthesizable and, in fact, non-symmetrical. This understanding of Levinas leads to his critique of Martin Buber’s symmetrical relations.

In his analysis of Buber’s “I-Thou” relation, Levinas refutes Buber’s account of the relationship as reciprocal or equal.⁴⁵ Levinas critiques the I-Thou relationship as too weak to prevent absorption of the Other. Levinas contests that “the relationship between the Other and me is not reciprocal [in] that I am [in] subjection to the Other; and I am ‘subject’ essentially in this sense.”⁴⁶ For Levinas, the relation of the I to the Other is *asymmetrical* and one-sided. The asymmetrical nature evokes biblical Others – sojourners, orphans and widows for whom “I” am held responsible (Deuteronomy 24:17-22). Thus it would be a mistake for the self, an “I”, to do something for the Other in the hope that it would receive something in return. Such would amount to manipulation, treating the Other as an object for the self. Instead, in its origin, the self is subjected to the Other in an ethical relationship of responsibility.

⁴³ Levinas, “Philosophy and the Idea of the Infinity,” 108-9.

⁴⁴ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 48.

⁴⁵ Emmanuel Levinas, *Outside the Subject*, trans. Michael B. Smith (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 44.

⁴⁶ Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity*, 98.

2.1.4. *Relation without Relation 1: The Face to Face Interaction*

How is an ethical relationship between the self and the Other possible while maintaining a distance? Levinas outlines the contours of an irreducible relationship between self and Other that he calls the “face to face interaction.”⁴⁷ For Levinas the ‘face’ is not an empirical human face but “a living presence” experienced socially and ethically.⁴⁸ The face is the most naked, vulnerable and visible part of the body. It is not an object of knowledge or perception; it can neither be reduced to something the self incorporates as a possession nor recede into an alien, absolute otherness. “The face resists possession, resists my powers. In its epiphany, in expression, the sensible, still graspable, turns into total resistance to the grasp.”⁴⁹ In its vulnerability, the face of the Other questions the freedom of the self, its self-contained autonomy as a subject, and calls it to responsibility. Levinas often says that the face of the Other appears as a commandment of God, “Thou shalt not kill” (Exodus 20:13 and Deuteronomy 5:17). Does Levinas mean that the face of the Other has a theological dimension? Yes. He says, “The Other is not the incarnation of God, but precisely by his face, in which he is disincarnate, is the manifestation of the height in which God is revealed.”⁵⁰ Further, Levinas claims, “God is the Other.”⁵¹ Even if God may not speak directly, God speaks through the face of the

⁴⁷ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 71, 79-81, 221.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 197.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 211.

Other. “The face the Other expresses his eminence, the dimension of height and divinity from which he descends.”⁵²

Drawing from Levinas, theologian and social activist Mary Jo Leddy names the moment when we are “summoned, addressed and commanded” by the Other as the “time of annunciation and visitation.”⁵³ For Leddy and her colleagues who work with refugees at Romero House in Toronto, it is a “religious experience.” The face of the Other speaks from the dimension of transcendence; for Levinas, the I is responsible for the Other, not because the Other is a special being according to measurable human criteria, but because the face itself comes from elsewhere, eliciting response by calling into question the I’s possession, freedom and use of violence. Levinas puts the concept of justice in an asymmetrical relationship, which becomes the foundation for building a just community.⁵⁴ He argues that, unlike Buber’s I-Thou relationship, justice is lodged in the face of the Other.

How is a just relation possible without reducing the Other to the same? Levinas answers by defending subjectivity. He suggests that the defense of subjectivity is possible only if this subjectivity engages in a “relation without relation,” a relation in which the self and the Other are separated yet connected via an encounter with the face of the Other.⁵⁵ The central concept of Levinas’s thought in *Totality and Infinity* is “relation without relation.” Since Levinas employs a kind of *via negativa* to highlight what this

⁵² Ibid., 262.

⁵³ Mary Jo Leddy, *The Other Side of God: When the Stranger Call Us Home* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2011), 25.

⁵⁴ For a definition of justice see the Introduction of this thesis.

⁵⁵ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 80.

entails, I present two negative descriptions. First, relation is not based on a totalizing ontology, a philosophy of the same that prohibits the possibility of the ego transcending itself toward to the Other. The relation is not a dialectical concept within which two terms are synthesizable into a totality. Second, relation is not a type of integration. Integration manages by subsuming beings into the ego's orbit as aspects of the ego. In this, it ignores the Other's alterity and difference. To prevent this danger, Levinas situates the concept "relation without relation" within the idea of infinity. Relation without relation seeks a transcendence that breaks up totalizing modes of thought like dialectics or integration and moves toward a *beyond*; it relates the self to the irreducibility of the Other. The self and Others are ethically connected because relation without relation occurs in the human face-to-face interaction as a responsibility for the Other. There is a distance between the faces yet they are connected through an encounter by which the Other challenges one's autonomy and freedom in summoning ethical responsibility. In this encounter, one is subjected to the Other in a relation of ethical responsibility. Further, because the Other summons from a transcendence, one can never do enough for the Other. It is this ethical priority that Jacques Derrida insightfully picks up on in his later work. Turning to explore Derrida at this point will help shed light on Levinas' importance for this thesis.

2.2. In the Beginning was Différance:

The Relation to the Other (Jacques Derrida)

Upon the death of Emanuel Levinas in 1995, Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) delivered a moving eulogy titled "Adieu" at the Pantin cemetery near Paris, France. This eulogy was later incorporated into a book, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*; the main essay,

“A Word of Welcome,” was a lecture given in *Homage to Emmanuel Levinas* on the first anniversary of his death at the Richelieu Amphitheater at the Sorbonne.⁵⁶ In the eulogy and the lecture, Derrida referred to Levinas’ use of the French word “adieu” to convey two meanings, *adieu* and *à-Dieu*.⁵⁷ It was a compelling use of Levinas’ own words, not only to bid *adieu* to the one to whom Derrida felt indebted for his work, but also to summarize Levinas’ work on the concept of *à-Dieu*, “the idea of infinity in the finite,” and, of course, to entrust his friend to God.⁵⁸ The book, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, was not Derrida’s first engagement with Levinas’ work; Derrida’s other essays, “Violence and Metaphysics” (1967) and “At This Very Moment in This Work Here I Am” (1980) explicitly refer to Levinas’ texts. The argument in this thesis is concerned mainly with Derrida’s discussion of Levinas’ “relation without relation,” since it may help to understand Derrida’s use of *différance* to imply just relations with the Other.

2.2.1. Relation without Relation 2: Interruption and Negotiation

Derrida discussed the notion of “relation without relation (*rapport sans rapport*)” in a *colloque* in 1986.⁵⁹ After that gathering, he began to use the concept in various other

⁵⁶ Jacques Derrida, *Adieu to Emmanuel Levinas*, trans. Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Nass (1977, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999).

⁵⁷ See Hent de Vries, “Adieu, à dieu, a-Dieu,” in *Ethics as First Philosophy: The Significance of Emmanuel Levinas for Philosophy, Literature and Religion*, ed. Adriaan Peperzak (New York: Routledge, 1995): 211-19. According to Derrida’s *The Gift of Death*, *adieu* can have three meanings: 1. The salutation or benediction given at the moment of meeting, 2. the salutation or benediction given at the moment of separation, of departure, sometimes forever, and 3. the *a-dieu*, for God or before God and before anything else or any relation to the other (Derrida, *Adieu*, 127 fn. 1).

⁵⁸ Derrida, *Adieu*, 120.

⁵⁹ For the background and main discussion of the *colloque*, see “Preface: Alterities – Politics of In(ter)vention,” *Parallax* 33 (special issue “Derrida & Labarrière, Alterities,” trans. and ed. Stefan Herbrechter), 2004: 1-16.

writings.⁶⁰ He acknowledges borrowing it from Levinas and another French philosopher, Maurice Blanchot, whom Derrida admired.⁶¹ In the *colloque* he says, “I would recognize the movement of the relation to the Other; it is a crazy relation (*rappor fou*), a relation without relation, which comprehends the other in a certain relation of incomprehension.”⁶² This paradoxical relationship is possible through alterity and transcendence as exteriority. In order to have a just relation with the Other it is necessary to enter into the two modes of “interruption and negotiation.”⁶³ By seeing how interruption and negotiation function it will be easier to understand what Derrida intends to accomplish by the modes of the relation.

The first mode is that of interruption – a separation or dissociation as a necessary condition for Being in a just relationship with the Other. Separation does not hinder the building of community; rather it is a prerequisite condition for encounter and connection

⁶⁰ See Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*, trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992); Jacques Derrida, “The Villanova Roundtable: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida,” in John D. Caputo, *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: Conversation with Jacques Derrida* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 3-28; Jacques Derrida, “Faith and knowledge: The Two Sources of ‘Religion’ at the Limits of Reason Alone,” in *Acts of Religion*, ed. Gil Anidjar (New York: Routledge, 2002 [1996]), 42-101; Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death and Literature in Secret*, trans. David Eills (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2008 [1999]); Jacques Derrida, “Interpretations at War: Kant, the Jew, the German,” in *Psyche: Inventions of the Other*, Volume 2, ed. Peggy Kamuf and Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008), 241-298.

⁶¹ Derrida, “The Villanova Roundtable,” 14. The concept, “relation without relation” appears in Maurice Blanchot’s book, *The Infinity Conversation*, trans. Susan Hanson (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1997). In the *colloque*, Derrida was challenged by a debater to specify how he maintains intellectual distance with respect to Levinas’ work. (Simon Critchley, *The Ethics of Deconstruction: Derrida and Levinas*, 2nd ed., Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999, 9). Derrida responds with the surprising remark: “I don’t know ... Faced with thought like that of Levinas, I never have an objection. I am ready to subscribe to everything that he says. That does not mean that I think the same thing in the same way, but in this respect the differences are very difficult to determine” (Jacques Derrida and Pierre-Jean Labarrière, *Altérités*, Paris: Éditions Osiris, 1986, 74).

⁶² Derrida and Labarrière, *Altérités*, 82.

⁶³ *Ibid.* A just relationship implies an ethical relationship with the other. The other remains absolutely transcendent; one cannot replace another. Derrida’s relation without relation suspends opposition and dialectic. See Derrida, “The Villanova Roundtable,” 14.

with genuine difference.⁶⁴ Elsewhere, Derrida says that in the “structure of my relation to the other, . . . I cannot reach the other. I cannot know the other from the inside and so on. That is not an obstacle but the condition of love, of friendship, and of war, too, a condition of the relation to the other.”⁶⁵ Interruption is the coming of something different and Other, from outside the same, and it creates a space of in-betweeness that respects differences and opens relationship with the Other.⁶⁶ The second mode required for right relations is that of negotiation. When one enters into relation without relation with the Other, the relationship is commenced by the Other. Illustrating this with the biblical story of Abraham’s sacrifice of his son Isaac (Genesis 22) in *The Gift of Death*,⁶⁷ Derrida discusses the concept of duty or responsibility that binds one to the Other. The call of the wholly other demands that one respond and attend to the Other. This is none other than God, declares Derrida:

Duty or responsibility binds me to the other, to the other as other, and ties me in my absolute singularity to the other as other. God is the name of the absolute other as other and as unique (the God of Abraham defined as the one and unique). As soon as I enter into a relation with the absolute other, my absolute singularity enters into relation with his on the level of obligation and duty. I am responsible to the other as other, I answer to him and I answer for what I do before him.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ The concept of separation will be discussed further in the First Nations’ Two Row Wampum belt (Chapter 4).

⁶⁵ Derrida, “The Villanova Roundtable,” 14.

⁶⁶ Derrida applies the concept of interruption to a wider context such as the state. He underscores plurality in a state as a key to living in right relationship. Without plurality, a state becomes totalitarian, which, in Derrida’s view, is not only unacceptable but also unworkable. “Thus, a state as such must be attentive as much as possible to plurality, to the plurality of peoples, of languages, cultures, ethnic groups, persons, and so on. That is a condition for a state.” In a community or state, plurality is a condition for mutuality where all parties recognize all participants’ sharing of their concerns together. See Jacques Derrida, “The Villanova Roundtable,” 15.

⁶⁷ Jacques Derrida, *The Gift of Death and Literature in Secret*, trans. David Eills (1999, Chicago: University of Chicago, 2008).

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 68.

Duty or responsibility bridges the space between the self and the Other. It connects the two in an in-between space, negotiating a *relation without relation*.

Derrida's demand for duty and responsibility, however, presents a dilemma. As one attends responsibly to the wholly other, one has to "denounce, refute and transcend ... all duty, all responsibility, and every human law."⁶⁹ The concept of the Other, say both Levinas and Derrida, challenges one to confront the reality that one cannot fully respond to the call of the Other in each instance as summoned. Attendance to one person may limit attendance to others. Take Derrida's example: How can I justify feeding my cat, while other cats die of hunger all around me?⁷⁰ Broadening his perspective, he reflects, "There are also others, an infinite number of them, the innumerable generality of others to whom I should be bound by the same responsibility, a general and universal responsibility. I cannot respond to the call, the request, the obligation, or even the love of another without sacrificing the other other, the other others."⁷¹

Upon facing up to one's responsibility to an Other, one faces the reality of the impossibility of meeting the demand of "the other Others."⁷² This challenge puts one in a "terrible" dilemma, since one must always "negotiate the nonnegotiable."⁷³ For Derrida, negotiation means endless action and reflection that prevent one from ever ending the decision-making process. In this way, negotiation goes beyond the conventional scope of

⁶⁹ Ibid., 67.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 71.

⁷¹ Ibid., 68-69.

⁷² This term will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

⁷³ Jacques Derrida, *Negotiations: Interventions and Interviews, 1971-2001*, ed. and trans. Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 310.

ethics and politics in which action is based on calculation and decision-making.⁷⁴ True responsibility suggests irresponsibility on one's part. The concept of negotiation lies in the reality of the impossibility of being able to attend to the other people. However, the fact that one cannot fulfill one's responsibility for the other Others suggests another possibility. Derrida finds this in the concept of *différance*, which relates two things at the same time by suspending binary oppositions and dialectic; *différance* connects two things in a relationship without sharp boundaries or limits.⁷⁵ This idea will be developed below in a discussion of Bhabha's cultural difference; for now it is important to understand how *différance* offers a critical perspective on the ethical dilemma put by Derrida above.

2.2.2. *The Play of Différance*

Derrida begins his book, *Margins of Philosophy*, with the words, "To tympanize – philosophy."⁷⁶ His translator, Alan Bass, explains that in French, "*tympaniser*" is "an archaic verb meaning to criticize, to ridicule publically."⁷⁷ From the very beginning, Derrida sets out his goal: to problematize the conceit of Western philosophy.

⁷⁴ Derrida, *Negotiations*, 310-1.

⁷⁵ Derrida and Labarrière, *Altérités*, 82.

⁷⁶ Jacques Derrida, "Tympan," in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (1972, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), x. *Tympan*, in French, means eardrum or middle ear, but technically it refers to a fibrous membrane that receives sound vibrations and transmits them to the inner ear. In the ear, the *tympan* separates the external from the inner ear. The *tympan* symbolizes the limits and boundaries through which sound breaks. One can hear the sound beyond the unbalanced pressures on either side of the membrane. In terms of function, the outside is never outside, since "beyond the philosophical text there is not a blank, virgin, empty margin, but another text, a weave of differences of forces without any present center of reference" ("Tympan," xxiii). Derrida suggests that a philosophy should be concerned with its margins which overflow and crack the limits of the self-contained philosophy and its thinking. The margins blur the boundaries since always already there have been transgressions of the limitations by a series of border-crossings. In this regard, philosophy is unable to contain or delimit the Other in its category and thinking.

⁷⁷ Derrida, "Tympan," x fn. 1.

Philosophy has always insisted upon this: thinking its other. Its other: that which limits it, and from which it derives its essence, its definition, its production. To think its other: does this amount solely to *relever (aufheben)* that from which it derives, to head the procession of its method only by passing the limit? Or indeed does the limit, obliquely, by surprise, always reserve one more blow for philosophical knowledge? Limit/passage.⁷⁸

Like Levinas, Derrida critiques Western philosophy's practice of defining its proper (or own) other (*son propre autre*) and categorizing it. Derrida argues, "In thinking it *as such*, in recognizing it, one misses it."⁷⁹ He is concerned about the limits set by philosophy and the boundaries between it and its inseparable counterpart, the Other. In using the function and metaphor of *tympan*, Derrida deconstructs the limits and the boundaries of traditional Western philosophy. By this means, he moves beyond those metaphysical (binary) oppositions whereby the thinking subject has privilege over the other.

Derrida attempts to tympanize "logocentric" Western metaphysics from its characteristic, metaphysical oppositions – in particular, between speech/writing – and to liberate the conventional understanding of writing from being subordinated to the idea and approach of speech.⁸⁰ He challenges the understanding of speech as a reduction of

⁷⁸ Ibid., x-xi; Derrida's italics. Alan Bass translates the Hegelian term in German *aufheben* as *reliever*.

⁷⁹ Ibid., xi; Derrida's italics.

⁸⁰ Logocentrism is the idea and approach that logos (λόγος) is the central principle of language, philosophy and theology. The Greek term λόγος means speaking, reason, or God's word that signifies truth. The idea of the logos is originally and essentially linked to *phone*. Logocentrism, which is also a phonologism, is defined as an "absolute proximity of voice and being, of voice and the meaning of being, of voice and the identity of meaning" (Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974, 12). Derrida explains logocentrism from Aristotle's point of view, that is that "spoken words (ta en te phone) are the symbols of mental experience (pathemata tes psyche) and written words are the symbols of spoken words" (Ibid., 11). Spoken words are considered to be pure thought since they are closely connected with mental experience and a reflection of interior consciousness. Thus speech is deemed the original signifier of meaning and writing is derived from the spoken word. The approach of logocentrism claims speech is privileged over writing; as a result the presence of writing is marginalized. Thereby Derrida states: "The reduction of writing – as the reduction of the exteriority of the signifier – was part and parcel of phonologism and logocentrism" (Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, trans. Anan Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1981, 24). For Derrida, Western

space and time. Alternatively he suggests that there is a continuous spatial and temporal movement in language. Derrida calls this movement *différance*.⁸¹ Derrida coined the word *différance* (“a” instead of “e”) to differentiate between speech and writing. In spoken French, *différance* (with an “a”) and *différence* (with an “e”) are indistinguishable; but when *différance* is written, it is clearly recognizable. The term *différance* demonstrates Derrida’s deconstructive project of critiquing metaphysical oppositions and ontological difference.

Derrida’s *différance* is based on the Latin verb *differre*, which becomes the root for *defer* and *differ* in English.⁸² *Différance* implies two meanings, 1) a temporary delay which causes something to be put off until later and 2) a spatial difference indicating not identical or being other.⁸³ The word *différence* (with an “e”) does not render these original meanings. *Différance* (with an “a”), however, economically recovers the lost meanings of a temporal (deferring) and a spatial (differing) as in deferring actions and differing opinions. When one writes a sentence, for instance, the meaning is not forthcoming until one adds additional words different from the previous words. The meaning is always anticipated and defined after the event; it is “deferred” or postponed in

philosophy from Plato to Husserl excludes writing from the field of linguistics as a phenomenon of exterior representation, both useless and dangerous.

⁸¹ Jacques Derrida, “*Différance*,” in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (1972, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 1-27. The essay ‘*Différance*’ is a densely elusive, enigmatic text. Derrida delivered a lecture at a meeting of the Société at the Sorbonne in 1968 which engaged the work of Hegel, Saussure, Husserl, Emmanuel Levinas (1925–95), Alexandre Koyré (1882–1964), Gilles Deleuze (1925–95) and Jacques Lacan (1901–81), but is based primarily on the three modern critical thinkers arguably most crucial for an understanding of Derrida’s work in general, namely Nietzsche, Freud and Heidegger. See Nicholas Royle, *Jacques Derrida* (London: Routledge, 2003), 76.

⁸² In English there is a phonological and graphic distinction between *differ* and *defer* that does not exist in the French.

⁸³ Derrida, “*Différance*,” 8.

a chain. Thus one's understanding or reading is always partial and incomplete until all the elements of a chain are interwoven or inter-textualized together.

To explain further his idea of *différance*, Derrida argues that no sign is simply “present in and of itself. ... Essentially and lawfully, every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the other, to other concepts, by means of the systematic play of differences.”⁸⁴ *Différance* as a chain is no longer conceivable on the basis of the opposite such as presence/absence or inside/outside. When each element finds meaning in its difference from other elements, it is marked by those very other elements in a chain; thereby each element bears other elements. Derrida calls this “the trace,” a concept previously presented by Levinas,⁸⁵ that is, each element bears the residue of other elements. While the trace bears other elements, it must have the sign that comes before. In other words, the element bears traces of the absence of other elements. However that absence is neither simply absent nor present, since no element can conceive other elements according to the opposites, presence/absence. In a living trace, there is always already a *différance*. Derrida explains, “There is *différance* as soon as there is something living, as soon as there is something of a trace, across and despite all the limits that the strongest philosophical or cultural tradition thought it could recognize between

⁸⁴ Ibid., 11.

⁸⁵ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 70. When he wrote his article “Violence and Metaphysics,” Derrida had rejected the notion of trace introduced by Levinas: “The notion of a past whose meaning could not be thought in the form of a (past) present marks the *impossible-unthinkable-unstatable* not only for philosophy in general but even for a thought of being which could seek to take a step outside philosophy.” However, Derrida later changed his mind and adopted the notion of trace. For a detailed background see Robert Bernasconi, “The Trace of Levinas in Derrida,” in *Derrida and Différance*, edited by D. Wood and R. Bernasconi (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988), 13-29.

‘man’ and ‘animal’.”⁸⁶ There is no absolute meaning or presence that can be presented as an absolute truth or value, solely self-presenting without relation with different elements. Therefore, Derrida concludes, “[n]othing, neither among the elements nor within the system, is anywhere ever simply present and absent. There are only, everywhere, difference and traces of traces.”⁸⁷ In the ongoing movement of *différance* there is a living trace of other elements in the same, what Geoffrey Bennington calls “the-other-in-the-same.”⁸⁸

Derrida defines trace in terms of “spacing,” which stands for “the becoming-space of time or the becoming-time of space.”⁸⁹ The present element is present by evolving from the past element, but, at the same time, the present is vitiated by its relation to the future element. Thereby the present element is always already related to what it is absolutely not, not a past or a future as a modified present.⁹⁰ Trace is essentially spatial, since becoming the present means to create an interval that separates the present from what it is not in order for the present to be itself. The interval is what might be called “spacing” where each element is related to each other.⁹¹ Although everything exists in its relation to its spatial and temporal separation from other elements, yet, as Derrida insists,

⁸⁶ Jacques Derrida and Elisabeth Roudinesco, *For What Tomorrow; ... A Dialogue*, trans. Jeff Fort (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004), 21.

⁸⁷ Derrida, *Positions*, 26.

⁸⁸ Geoffrey Bennington and Jacques Derrida, *Jacques Derrida*, trans. Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1993), 76.

⁸⁹ Derrida, “*Différance*,” 11.

⁹⁰ Derrida, *Positions*, 27; Derrida, “*Différance*,” 13.

⁹¹ Derrida, “*Différance*,” 13.

“without a trace retaining the other as other in the same, no difference would do its work and no meaning would appear.”⁹²

The play of *différance*, or the trace, constitutes the present as an “‘originary’ and irreducibly nonsimple (and therefore, *stricto sensu* nonoriginary) synthesis of marks.”⁹³ Derrida claims *différance* is an originary synthesis, but with the caution that the synthesis is a non-simple one. Contrary to Hegel’s dialectical notion of *aufhebung*, in *différance* there are no winners or losers in a synthesis action. In *différance*, the intent of words and signs are never fully forthcoming; the meaning is always deferred in a system. “The structure of delay (*Nachträglichkeit*) in effect forbids that one make of temporalisation (temporization) a simple dialectical complication of the living present as an originary and unceasing synthesis – a synthesis constantly directed back on itself.”⁹⁴ Temporizing space makes it impossible for the dialectical synthesis to be itself. Trace, as a synthesis, comes from the past and it moves into the future; it can never be itself without encountering the Other. This is why Derrida defines *différance* (with an *a*) as:

the displaced and equivocal passage of one different thing to another, from one term of an opposition to the other. Thus one could reconsider all the pairs opposites on which philosophy is constructed and on which our discourse lives, not in order to see opposition erase itself but to see what indicates that each of the terms must appear as the *différance* of the other, as the other different and deferred in the economy of the same.⁹⁵

⁹² Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 62.

⁹³ Derrida, “*Différance*,” 13.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

For Derrida, *différance* is not a dialectical opposition: “It is a reaffirmation of the same, an economy of the same in its relation to the Other, which does not require that the same, in order to exist, be frozen or fixed in a distinction or in a system of dual opposition.”⁹⁶

In the encounter with the Other, one can never be the same. The encounter can be explained by the trace. For example, as a Korean-Canadian, my life in Canada may lead me to adapt to and adopt certain Canadian values and aspects of Canadian culture; however, I do not need to discard my Koreanness even if it sometimes seems to be unwelcome. I am both Korean and Canadian; I may be this rather more than that or vice versa; but no, I am not this *or* that.⁹⁷ There are always tendencies in the movement of *différance*, the traces of difference. Derrida affirms, “*The trace is in fact the absolute origin of sense in general. Which amounts to saying once again that there is no absolute origin of sense in general. The trace is the différence which opens appearance [l'apparaire] and signification.*”⁹⁸ In this sense, *différance* may be understood as another kind of origin, perhaps a substitute creator, since the origin exists in relation to its spatial and temporal separation from other elements, meaning that nothing can be said to have originality in itself. Thus, in the beginning was *différance*.

⁹⁶ Derrida, *For What Tomorrow*, 21.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁹⁸ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 65; Derrida’s italics. Elsewhere Derrida says, “*Différance* is the non-full, non-simple, structured and differentiating origin of differences. Thus, the name ‘origin’ no longer suits it.” Derrida, “*Différance*,” 11.

2.2.3. *The (Im)Possibility of Différance*

Derrida describes *différance* through various *via negativas*: it is “neither a word nor a concept;” it belongs “neither to the voice nor to writing in the usual sense;” its voice is “neither simply active nor simply passive” and “it has no name.”⁹⁹ *Différance* is situated in an in-between, middle, unknown, strange land. It cannot be named in a concept or by a word. Like the ancient Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu (老子)’s Tao (道) that cannot be named, since, when it is conceptualized, it is no longer itself,¹⁰⁰ *différance* is also unnameable; it is situated in the in-between. As Derrida further defines it, “[t]his unnameable play of *différance* makes possible nominal effects.”¹⁰¹ Such play allows for the trace of the Other which is undeterminable. Derrida adds that *différance* “brings the radical otherness or the absolute exteriority of the outside into relation with the closed, agonistic, hierarchical field of philosophical oppositions, of ‘differends’ or difference.”¹⁰² Thereby the unnameable *différance* “opens the possibility of an organic, original, and homogeneous unity that eventually would come to be divided, to receive difference as an event.”¹⁰³ This possibility of *différance* shakes “the ontology of beings

⁹⁹ Derrida, “*Différance*,” 3, 5, 9, 26, respectively.

¹⁰⁰ Lao Tzu writes in the *Tao Te Ching* 道德經 ch. 1.1
 道可道非常道, 名可名非常名. 無名天地之始, 有名萬物之母.
 The tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao.
 The name that can be named is not the eternal Name.
 The unnamable is the eternally real.
 Naming is the origin of all particular things.

¹⁰¹ Derrida, “*Différance*,” 26. *Différance* differs from *Tao*; *Tao* does not distinguish between differing and deferring.

¹⁰² Jacques Derrida, *Dissemination*, trans. Barbara Johnson (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1981), 5.

¹⁰³ Derrida, “*Différance*,” 13.

and beingness” as a whole. He continues, “Not only is there no kingdom of *différance*, but *différance* instigates the subversion of every kingdom. Which makes it obviously threatening and infallibly dreaded by everything within us that desires a kingdom, the past or future presence of a kingdom.”¹⁰⁴

Différance of deconstruction, however, is not a rejection of the subject. Rather, as Caputo asserts, it “must be a self-revising, self-correcting, continual *reaffirmation* of itself, taking responsibility from moment to moment for itself, if it is to have a self, a ‘yes’ followed by a ‘yes’ and then again another ‘yes.’ ... It is a great burst of passion for the impossible.”¹⁰⁵ And it is a ‘yes’ to negotiation. In the play of *différance*, no element can function as a sign without referring to another element which itself is not simply present. The differing and deferring movement of *différance* opens the possibility of referring to the impossible. Derrida names the impossible the “wholly other (*tout autre*)” which is never fully present. Just as it is impossible to recognize God with the usual human senses, it is impossible to recognize the wholly other since the Other never manifests itself directly. It is impossible to meet one’s full responsibility to the call of the wholly other, which is reminiscent of Derrida’s use of ‘negotiation’ – to “negotiate the nonnegotiable.”¹⁰⁶ In his book, *The Gift of Death*, Derrida puts the emphasis in the form of italics in various places, “*Every other (one) is every (bit) other [tout autre est tout*

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 21 and 22.

¹⁰⁵ John D. Caputo, *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: Conversation with Jacques Derrida* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1997), 198; Caputo’s italics and John Caputo, *The Prayers and Tears of Jacques Derrida* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997) 3.

¹⁰⁶ Derrida, *Negotiations*, 310.

autre], everyone else is completely or wholly other.”¹⁰⁷ For Derrida, every singularity is a wholly other, signifying that everywhere there is something of the wholly other, though only in traces. Further, “Each one is infinity other in its absolute singularity, inaccessible, solitary, transcendent, nonmanifest, originarily nonpresent to my *ego*.”¹⁰⁸ The wholly other is simply different, undeterminable, unimaginable and incalculable. The impossibility of integrating the Other into one’s own space (as somehow self-same and determined in advance) opens the possibility for an in-between space. This leads into a key theme in the work of Homi K. Bhabha, which propels the discussion forward toward a robust engagement with cultural difference.

2.3. Dwelling in the In-between Space:

From Cultural Diversity to Cultural Difference (Homi K. Bhabha)

In an influential essay, “DissemiNation: Time, Narrative and the Margins of the Modern Nation,” Homi Bhabha (1949 -) uses one of Derrida’s terms, “DissemiNation” to convey his experience of immigration.¹⁰⁹ Derrida uses the term dissemination to challenge the traditional understanding of a single unifying interpretation in a text. He employs it with a double meaning, that of a scattering of seeds and of multiple meanings in a text. His reading of Plato’s *Phaedrus*, found in the essay, “Plato’s Pharmacy,”

¹⁰⁷ Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, 69, 78 & 79; Derrida’s italics.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 78. Levinas and Derrida differ in their concept of the Other. For Levinas there is no difference between the infinity alterity of God and that of every human being. However Derrida thinks God is wholly other and that something of the wholly other is found everywhere and in every human being and even in Derrida’s cat. See Derrida, *The Gift of Death*, chapters 3 & 4.

¹⁰⁹ Homi K. Bhabha, “DissemiNation,” in *The Location of Culture* (1994, London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 199-244. The article first appeared in the book, *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), 291-322.

suggests that this text contains multiple interpretative possibilities.¹¹⁰ He explains more specifically that, “dissemination is precisely the impossibility of reducing a text as such to its effects of meaning, content, thesis, or theme.”¹¹¹ In any text, the possibilities of different interpretations and understandings already exist, so that it is impossible to state categorically the meaning of the author or interpreter. It signifies that a reading is always partial and incomplete. Thus there is no original or standard reading; multiple interpretations and understandings are possible.

Bhabha takes various notions from Derrida – such as dissemination, supplement and *différance* – and employs them in relation to cultural difference in order to disturb the social processes of othering, which polarize and create binary divisions and oppositions between the self and other. Unlike Levinas’ ethical responsibility of the *self* and Derrida’s deconstruction of the *self*, Bhabha’s work turns toward the possibilities of the impossible, the Other. To this end, Bhabha argues that, since cultural difference could intervene and disturb “the homogenizing effects of cultural symbols and icons,” the power of resistance and disavowal must come from the Other who is different from the self.¹¹² He emphasizes the play of the Other in subverting binary oppositions and speaks of transforming unitary, homogeneous culture into an in-between space. Before exploring Bhabha’s understanding of cultural difference, it is helpful first to examine his idea of the

¹¹⁰ Derrida, *Dissemination*, 61-171.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹¹² Bhabha, “The Commitment to Theory,” in *The Location of Culture*, 52.

possibility of “a holistic cultural entity” being transformed by dissemination and supplement.¹¹³ Bhabha’s article, “DissemiNation,” begins as follows:

I have lived that moment of the scattering of the people that in other times and other places, in the nations of others, becomes a time of gathering. Gatherings of exiles and *émigrés* and refugees; gathering on the edge of ‘foreign’ cultures; ... gathering in the half-life, half-light of foreign tongues, or in the uncanny fluency of another’s language; gathering the signs of approval and acceptance, degrees, discourses, disciplines; gathering the memories of underdevelopment, of other worlds lived retroactively; ... Also the gathering of people in the diaspora: indentured, migrant, interned; the gathering of incriminatory statistics, educational performance, legal statutes, immigration status...¹¹⁴

Bhabha is not alone; so many migrants, including myself, have passed through Bhabha’s experience. After becoming a Canadian citizen, for example, I still live with the nametag “ethnic.”¹¹⁵ The word ethnic has a nuanced meaning; the root of ethnic means Gentiles or foreigners. So instead of the word ‘ethnic’, this thesis employs ‘different cultural heritages’. Werner Sollors says, “The English language has retained the pagan memory of ‘ethnic’, often secularized in the sense of ethnic as *other*, as nonstandard,” or in Canada, as not fully Canadian.¹¹⁶ I am often asked when I am going back to Korea. My location in Canada as an immigrant is as *other*, a supplement to the nation.

¹¹³ Bhabha, “DissemiNation,” in *The Location of Culture*, 201.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 199-200.

¹¹⁵ The word ethnic is derived from both Hebrew and Greek. In Hebrew, the main terms for people are *am* and *goyim*. In the Hebrew Bible, the singular *am* is used for the holy people and the plural *goyim* (singular: *goy*) if used for the Gentiles. (Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 2, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-76, 365.) The LXX translates *am* “almost always” with *λαος*, the elected people and *goy* with *εθνος*, people in general. (Kittel, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, 365; Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 1, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990-93, 382.) The meaning of the Greek word *εθνος* varies according to whether it is used in the singular or plural. The singular *εθνος* means people in general while *εθνη* means Gentiles, in contrast to the Jews. The root of ‘ethnic’ means Gentiles or foreigners, so, in most cases *εθνη* means Gentiles. In the Christian Bible the words *εθνος/εθνη* appear 162 times – 32 times in the singular *εθνος* and 130 times in the plural *εθνη*. See Balz and Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, 382.

¹¹⁶ Werner Sollors, *Beyond Ethnicity: Consent and Descent in American Culture* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 25; italics mine.

2.3.1. *I Am (Not) A Supplement*

Bhabha uses Derrida's concept of supplement to transform "a homogenous empty time" into an in-between space.¹¹⁷ Derrida applies the term to deconstruct Jean-Jacques Rousseau's work to argue that writing does not simply add a supplement to speech or a secondary form of communication; what Derrida wants to emphasize is that the supplement "adds only to replace."¹¹⁸ Difficult to understand, this concept needs elaboration. Canada, for example, is often said to have been founded by the descendants of two nations, England and France. Unfortunately the First Nations were excluded from the names of the founding nations at Confederation in 1867. Ever since its beginning, Canada has opened its borders to receive immigrants to meet its needs. Immigrants or supplements, to use Derrida's term and argument, add *to* the tradition and substitute for it, more than merely adding *up* to it. Here we see the critical implication of the two different words, add *to* and add *up*. The conventional meaning of supplement is something that adds up to that which is complete or whole. Derrida argues that writing is not a secondary entity that is added to speech. "The supplement adds itself, it is a surplus, a plenitude enriching another plenitude, the *fullest measure* of presence. It cumulates and accumulates presence."¹¹⁹ For Derrida the supplement is not an additional element to be situated on the outside of the system, but "its place is assigned *in* the structure."¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Bhabha, "DissemiNation," in *The Location of Culture*, 222.

¹¹⁸ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 145.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 144; Derrida's italics.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 145; italics mine.

Bhabha agrees with Derrida's notion of supplement by noting, "The supplementary strategy suggests that adding 'to' need not 'add up', but may disturb the [very] calculation."¹²¹ The point is that the supplement is not an addition or appendix to the nation but a substantial part of it. Bhabha argues, "The nation's totality is confronted with, and crossed by, a supplementary movement of writing."¹²² Its assumed homogeneous structure (as a stable whole that is somehow complete of itself) is destabilized by the supplement. The supplement interrupts the nation's tradition, rearticulates it and creates a different space and time.

2.3.2. Cultural Diversity and Cultural Difference

In the introduction to this chapter there was a discussion of Letty Russell's critique of the 'othering process', wherein the other's difference is objectified and considered something strange and foreign and which requires assimilation into a dominant culture. In support of that critique, the chapter explored both Levinas' argument that the Other is not an object for integration and Derrida's use of *différance*, which deconstructs such an othering process. At this point, it is important to note Bhabha's contention that "a process of othering" still works in a 'liberal' sense of community, though which minorities are perceived as needing integration into holistic and established notions of cultural value.¹²³ However, he asserts that the time for assimilating others into

¹²¹ Bhabha, "DissemiNation," in *The Location of Culture*, 222.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 221.

¹²³ Homi K. Bhabha, "The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 219. In a similar fashion Iris Marion Young, in her monologue, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, explains the meaning of liberal. Young's politics of difference challenges mainstream liberalism and awakens liberals from their "assimilationist ideal" which assumes that "equal social status for all persons requires treating everyone

a dominant culture has passed. The liberal sense of cultural community, which produces terms like ‘cultural diversity’, for Bhabha, needs to be rethought from the viewpoints of both ‘postcolonialism’ and ‘nationalism’; different cultures cannot just be soldered together to produce a new cultural totality as in the notion of multiculturalism or, in the case of Canada, integrative multiculturalism. Bhabha assigns cultural diversity to a liberal tradition rooted in philosophical relativism and forms of anthropology, and notes that cultural diversity should be considered a good and positive thing and ought to be encouraged in the tradition.¹²⁴

Bhabha, however, has two reservations about such liberal promotion of cultural diversity. The first is that the host society usually sets the norm and suggests that other cultures must be located *within* the dominant cultural grid, even though they may be valued positively. The host country manages cultural diversity and allows cultural difference as long as it can be contained within the dominant culture. As discussed in Chapter 1, Canada’s current “integrative multiculturalism” is a good example of how state policy forces different cultures to be incorporated into the dominant culture: this ideal is that different cultures should fit into a normative pre-existent one. The second reservation is a result of the first, namely, that in “societies where multiculturalism is encouraged, racism may be still rampant in various forms. This is because the universalism that paradoxically permits diversity masks ethnocentric norms, values and

according to the same [neutral] principles, rules, and standards.” However, Young argues, “equality as the participation and inclusion of all groups sometimes requires different treatment for oppressed or disadvantaged groups” (158).

¹²⁴ Bhabha, “The Third Space,” 207-8.

interests.”¹²⁵ The covering of cultural difference is derived from the ignorance of an uneven, unequal and multiple terrain in favour of a consensus based on a norm promoting cultural diversity.¹²⁶ Over the course of Canadian history, the face of the national identity has changed dramatically, with many different cultures playing a part in shifting the landscape. However, the state policy of multiculturalism suppresses and controls dynamic articulation of cultural differences. In such a context, the aim of Bhabha’s postcolonialism is to critique the liberal notion of cultural diversity. In order to overcome it, he distinguishes between “cultural diversity” and “cultural difference.”

Bhabha states, “Cultural diversity is an epistemological object” in which cultures can be recognized, compared, objectified and described according to their contents and customs; in other words, culture is cast as “an object of empirical knowledge.”¹²⁷ Cultural diversity emphasizes “the recognition of pre-given cultural contents and customs,” and “it gives rise to liberal notions of multiculturalism, cultural exchange or the culture of humanity.”¹²⁸ Bhabha presents us with the image of a gathering of cultures as if collected into “a kind of *musée imaginaire*.”¹²⁹ A curator of a museum locates different cultures in a universal time frame that *acknowledges* various cultures through the lens of a Western connoisseur. In this view there is an assumption that different cultures live separately side-by-side as they are displayed in a museum. Bhabha, however, insists this is a

¹²⁵ Bhabha, “The Third Space,” 208.

¹²⁶ Ibid. On the grid of cultural diversity, a range of different sorts of interests, kinds of cultural histories, postcolonial lineages and sexual orientations is often ignored.

¹²⁷ Bhabha, “The Commitment to Theory,” in *The Location of Culture*, 49-50.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 50.

¹²⁹ Bhabha, “The Third Space,” 208.

Utopian myth.¹³⁰

The 1988 *Multiculturalism Policy of Canada* may be seen as an example of Bhabha's critique of cultural diversity:

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the Government of Canada to: (a) recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society ... ; (b) recognize and promote the understanding that multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity ... ; (d) recognize the existence of communities whose members share a common origin and their historic contribution to Canadian society, and enhance their development.¹³¹

While government policy based on a liberal notion of cultural diversity *recognizes* the existence of different cultural heritages, it does not fully recognize the value of minority cultures. According to Bhabha there is a recurrent problem with the notion of equality: "Liberal discourse attempts to normalize cultural respect into the recognition of *equal cultural worth*," however, "it does not recognize the disjunctive, 'borderline' temporalities of partial, minority cultures."¹³² In the notion of cultural diversity, power differences among cultures are *not* attended to in the process of recognition. In the practice of cultural interaction, a model of cultural diversity eventually sees various cultures integrated into the dominant culture.¹³³

In contrast, the notion of cultural difference asks *how* cultures come to be knowable and known through the sense of power relations rather than simply recognized

¹³⁰ Bhabha, "The Commitment to Theory," 50.

¹³¹ Quoted in Will Kymlicka, *Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relationship in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998), Appendix, 185; italics mine.

¹³² Bhabha, "Culture's in Between," in *Multicultural States: Rethinking Difference and Identity* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 32; Bhabha's italics.

¹³³ Bhabha, "The Third Space," 209.

as exotic at the level of commodities. According to Bhabha, cultural difference operates when “something is being challenged about power or authority.”¹³⁴ A certain cultural trait or tradition becomes the site of contestation, abuse, insult and discrimination. Cultural difference is generated and engendered through a ritual or a trait that bears a “set of significations, tensions or anxieties;”¹³⁵ therefore it is not a natural consequence. Cultural difference is produced in acts of contestation and frictional relations. When there is a particular issue about “the redistribution of goods between cultures” or when cultural characters are challenged by the dominant hegemony, cultural difference is constituted through antagonistic and unresolved tensions.¹³⁶ In such a situation, Bhabha summons us to move away from the liberal concept of cultural diversity in order to move toward a much deeper engagement with the complexities of culture by addressing the power relations that enhance a system of inequality, marginalization and exclusion.

In exploring cultural difference, Bhabha employs Derrida’s notion of supplement to intervene in hegemonic, dominant cultural processes, highlighting how different cultures *add to* the national culture by introducing other times and spaces of cultures.

Bhabha explains further:

The aim of cultural difference is to re-articulate the sum of knowledge from the perspective of the signifying *singularity* of the ‘other’ that resists totalization – the repetition that will not return as the same, the minus-in-origin that results in political and discursive strategies where adding-to does not add-up but serves to disturb the calculation of power and knowledge, producing other spaces of

¹³⁴ Homi Bhabha, “Staging the Politics of Difference: Homi Bhabha’s Critical Literacy,” in *Race, Rhetoric, and the Postcolonial*, edited by Gary A. Olson and Lynn Worsham (Albany: State University of New York, 1999), 16.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

subaltern signification.¹³⁷

Through a supplemental daily “repetition,” different cultural heritages create a national culture differently and *substitute for* the national tradition by re-interpreting and/or re-articulating it, thus allowing for new cultural identities to emerge.¹³⁸ This notion of cultural difference reflects Levinas’ critique of totalizing Western philosophical systems and affirms the value of Derrida’s *différance* as a way of opening space for a non-integrative engagement with difference.

It is clear that cultural difference is, for Bhabha, an *argument* and an *action* against “the naturalization of the notion of culture.”¹³⁹ He argues that in the concept of cultural difference, cultures cannot be understood from a universal framework or as a norm. He analyzes the difference between cultural diversity and cultural difference from a postcolonial perspective, challenging “the profound limitations of a consensual and collusive ‘liberal’ sense of cultural community.”¹⁴⁰ Bhabha compares the understanding of cultural diversity – and its concomitant liberal conception of multiculturalism – with that of cultural difference as “the process of *enunciation* of culture as ‘knowledgeable’, authoritative, adequate to the construction of systems of cultural identification.”¹⁴¹ In the process of enunciation, each culture has “symbol-forming and subject-constituting,

¹³⁷ Bhabha, “DissemiNation,” in *Nation and Narration*, 312; Bhabha’s italics.

¹³⁸ The concept of repetition along with ‘doubling’ will be discussed later.

¹³⁹ Bhabha, “DissemiNation,” in *Nation and Narration*, 312.

¹⁴⁰ Bhabha, “The Third Space,” 219; Bhabha, “The Postcolonial and the Postmodern,” in *The Location of Culture*, 251.

¹⁴¹ Bhabha, “The Commitment to Theory,” in *The Location of Culture*, 50; Bhabha’s italics.

‘interpellative’ practices.”¹⁴² Bhabha’s recognition of the uniquely symbol-forming nature of culture affirms that cultural difference problematizes homogenizing discourse. He claims that different cultural contents and practices are *incommensurable*, that the enunciation of cultural difference cannot be accommodated within a universalist framework. Thus it is impossible to fit them together into universal concepts such as human beings, class or race or to assume that they easily coexist.¹⁴³

Bhabha conceives of cultural difference as an action that resists the binary structuring of social hierarchies. In a chapter of the book he edited, *Nation and Narration*, he asserts that the idea of a nation is a result of a continuous *narrative* of “pedagogical” discourse that glosses over cultural differences in order to build “‘the totalization’ of national culture.”¹⁴⁴ Pedagogical discourse is an educational tool for a nation to carry on its imagined holistic cultural entity by cultural symbols and icons such as, for Canada, the Beaver, the Maple Leaf and ice hockey. In national pedagogical discourses, people are given a certain kind of “authority that is based on the pre-given or

¹⁴² Bhabha, “The Third Space,” 210. Here Bhabha uses Louis Althusser’s concept of *interpellation*: “You and I are *always already* subjects, and as such constantly practice the rituals of ideological recognition, which guarantee for us that we are indeed concrete, individual, distinguishable and (naturally) irreplaceable subjects.” See Louis Althusser, “Ideology and the State Apparatuses,” in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*, translated by Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1971), 172-173; Althusser’s italics. The term “interpellation” was introduced by Althusser to explain how ideas get into our heads and we believe they are our own. Althusser illustrates, “Ideology functions in such a way that it ‘recruits’ subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or ‘transforms’ the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very process which I have called interpellation or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most common everyday police (or other) hailing: ‘Hey, you there.’ . . . [T]he hailed individual will turn around. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a subject. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was ‘really’ addressed to him” (174).

¹⁴³ Bhabha, “The Third Space,” 209.

¹⁴⁴ Bhabha, “Introduction: Narrating the Nation,” in *Nation and Narration*, 3. Bhabha’s concept of nation is closely related to narration, pedagogical discourses of the nation. Bhabha’s notion of nation is that of *imagined communities*; Benedict Anderson asserted that “nation is a result of imagined narratives.” See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

constituted historical origin *in the past*.¹⁴⁵ The discourses, according to Bhabha, take the form of “the continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical,”¹⁴⁶ in which a nation represents itself as a continuous unit through the writing and teaching of histories and myths. Pedagogical discourses seek to locate the national culture in its past and situate the people as a historical object in order to easily *manage* them.

Bhabha argues that pedagogical discourses need to be practised by “the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative” process in order to disturb the false image of the self-contained national identity.¹⁴⁷ The idea of the performative is that a national identity is carried out by a strategy of ‘repetition’ in order to disrupt the fiction of a unitary national culture. In performative practice, different cultural heritages do not necessarily follow the pedagogical discourses; they bring their own narratives to stand up against the pedagogical discourses by “doubling” them through daily “repetition.”¹⁴⁸ Different cultural heritages dispute national pedagogical discourses and create different cultures. In the very act of disputing the pedagogical discourses Bhabha employs Derrida’s notion of ‘supplement’: different cultural heritages double, *add to* and *replace* the pedagogical discourses with their own.¹⁴⁹ By using the notion of supplement, Bhabha

¹⁴⁵ Bhabha, “DissemiNation,” in *Nation and Narration*, 297; Bhabha, “DissemiNation,” in *The Location of Culture*, 208-209; Bhabha’s italics.

¹⁴⁶ Bhabha, *Nation and Narration*, 297; Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 209.

¹⁴⁷ Bhabha, “DissemiNation,” in *Nation and Narration*, 297.

¹⁴⁸ Doubling is a way of disavowing the presence of hegemonic authority by “articulating it syntagmatically with a range of differential knowledges and positionalities that both estrange its ‘identity’ and produce new forms of knowledge, new modes of differentiation, new sites of power.” Bhabha, “Signs Taken for Wonders,” in *The Location of Culture*, 171.

¹⁴⁹ Bhabha quotes from a section of Derrida’s book, *Of Grammatology*, to present the notion of supplement in order to explain performative practice. Toward the end of the quotation Bhabha adds the word, “performative” in that the function of performative practice is similar to that of supplement. Bhabha

deconstructs nationalism so that a unitary, homogeneous culture is transformed into another “time and “space” of culture in which there is no cultural supremacy, just cultural difference. Bhabha calls the other time and space an in-between space that is “differential and strategic rather than originary, ambivalent rather than accumulative, [and] doubling rather than dialectical.”¹⁵⁰ Different cultures reside in-between and within cultures as a way of undermining the homogenizing tendencies that create binary divisions. Bhabha goes further to claim that the notion of cultural difference deconstructs binary divisions, essential identities, homogeneity and totalization; “cultures are never unitary in themselves, not simply dualistic in the relation of Self to Other.”¹⁵¹ Bhabha discusses how cultural difference transforms and transfigures the space and sphere of homogeneity and totalization into that of an in-between space in the concept of hybridity, which will be discussed below.

As noted above, Bhabha’s notion of cultural difference is in large part derived from Derrida’s use of the term *différance*.¹⁵² Eleanor Byrne agrees that Bhabha owes much to Derrida’s *différance*.¹⁵³ Both cultural difference and *différance* deconstruct a series of binary oppositions that define self and other, or us and them, to construct a space of in-betweenness where new cultural meaning arises. Bhabha claims that:

quotes: [Supplement] intervenes or insinuates itself *in-the-place-of* ... If it represents and makes an image it is by the *anterior* default of a presence ... As substitute, it is not simply added to the positivity of a presence, it produces no relief ... Somewhere, something can be filled up *of itself* ... only by allowing itself to be filled through sign and proxy (performative).” Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 221. Bhabha quotes from Derrida’s *Of Grammatology*, 145.

¹⁵⁰ Bhabha, “Interrogating Identity,” in *The Location of Culture*, 79.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ Eleanor Byrne, *Homi K. Bhabha* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 33.

Meaning is constructed across the bar of difference and separation between the signifier and the signified. ... [C]ultures are only constituted in relation to that otherness internal to their own symbol-forming activity which makes them decentred structures – through that displacement or liminality opens up the possibility of articulating *different*, even incommensurable cultural practices and priorities.¹⁵⁴

Like Derrida's *différance*, Bhabha's use of the concept of cultural difference opens up the possibility for 'other *times* of cultural meaning and other narrative *spaces*' that blur the boundaries holding discrimination so that "objectified others may be turned into subjects of their history and experience."¹⁵⁵ Different cultures as subjects deconstruct the dominant culture to create a different culture – a hybrid one. A hybrid culture is a product of continual performative practice in which different cultures articulate themselves in an in-between, hybrid space.

2.3.3. *The In-between, Hybrid Space*

When culture crosses a boundary, sensitivity to power difference is essential; a power difference suggests the potential for, if not the inevitability of, injustice. Without justice, crossing a boundary can be a dangerous thing to do. To overcome this danger, Bhabha creates the concept of the "in-between space" or the "Third Space" where different cultures meet each other without imposing homogenization or unity.¹⁵⁶ Bhabha suggests that, from the perspective of different cultural heritages, the act of the "social articulation of differences" is never simply an act of communication between differences; rather it is "a complex, on-going negotiation that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities

¹⁵⁴ Bhabha, "The Third Space," 210-211; Bhabha's italics.

¹⁵⁵ Bhabha, "The Postcolonial and the Postmodern," in *The Location of Culture*, 255; italics mine.

¹⁵⁶ Bhabha, "Introduction," in *The Location of Culture*, 2 and "The Commitment to Theory," 53.

that emerge in moments of historical transformation.”¹⁵⁷ Different cultures live in an in-between space where all cultural statements and systems are constructed. This space does not operate around “hierarchical claims to the inherent originality or ‘purity’ of cultures,”¹⁵⁸ but rather affirms all differences. Bhabha refers to the in-between spaces as:

[The] terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself... It is in the emergence of the interstices – the overlap and displacement of domains of difference – that the intersubjectivity and collective experiences of *nationness*, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated.¹⁵⁹

Cultural difference emerges in an in-between space where different cultures meet and negotiate through a process of self-forming identification. This space is reminiscent of Derrida’s *Tympan* where boundaries are blurred and limits are crossed by a series of border-crossings so that a homogenous space becomes an in-between and liminal space.¹⁶⁰

The in-betweenness becomes a bridge that connects and transforms each culture. A bridge escorts different cultures to and fro so that they meet each other in the in-between space to learn from and supplement each other without breaching each other’s identity.¹⁶¹ In the preface to *This Bridge We Call Home*, editors Gloria Anzaldúa and Analouise Keating say, “Bridges are thresholds to other realities ... passageways, conduits, and connectors that connote transitioning, crossing borders, and changing perspectives.

¹⁵⁷ Bhabha, “Introduction,” in *The Location of Culture*, 3.

¹⁵⁸ Bhabha, “The Commitment to Theory,” in *The Location of Culture*, 55.

¹⁵⁹ Bhabha, “Introduction,” in *The Location of Culture*, 2; Bhabha’s italics.

¹⁶⁰ Derrida, “Tympan,” in *Margins of Philosophy*, xxiv.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 7-19.

Bridges span threshold spaces between worlds.” They continue, “Transformations occur in this in-between space, an unstable, unpredictable, precarious, always-in-transition space lacking clear boundaries.”¹⁶² This in-between space of mutual interaction among different cultures has been central to the development of all cultures throughout the world. By way of affirmation, Edward W. Said says, “Culture is never just a matter of ownership, ... but rather of appropriations, common experiences, and interdependencies of all kinds among different cultures.”¹⁶³

It is in the in-between space where different cultures emerge in hybrid forms that the seeds of the alternative community are germinated.¹⁶⁴ Here dissemination, according to Derrida, deconstructs the time and space of the nation where different cultural heritages are forced either to be integrated into the dominant culture or to be excluded. The dominant culture requires different cultural heritages to repeat its norms and values, thus normalizing themselves. While the dominant culture maintains a hierarchal relationship between itself and others, different cultures create “something *different* – a mutation, a hybrid” in a process of repeating.¹⁶⁵ Hybridity is a strategy for (post)colonial subjects of disavowing hegemonic power by displacing, deforming and subverting it in a way that repeats hegemonic discourses differently. Thus, hybridity “unsettles the mimetic

¹⁶² Gloria Anzaldúa and Analouse Keating, eds., *This Bridge We Call Home: Radical Visions for Transformation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 1.

¹⁶³ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 217.

¹⁶⁴ Robert Young’s notion of hybridity is worthy of note: “Hybridity makes difference into sameness, and sameness into difference, but in a way that makes the same no longer the same and the difference no longer simply different. In that sense it operates according to the form of logic that Derrida isolates in the term ‘brisure’, a breaking and joining at the same time, in the same place: difference and sameness in an apparently impossible simultaneity.” Robert J. C. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995), 26.

¹⁶⁵ Bhabha, “Signs Taken for Wanders,” in *The Location of Culture*, 159; Bhabha’s italics.

or narcissistic demands of colonial power but reimplicates its identifications in strategies of subversion that turn the gaze of the discriminated back upon the eye of power.”¹⁶⁶ In speaking back to power, hybrid subjects reject a singular universal framework and the notion of cultural purity created by the dominant culture. Hybrid subjects create an in-between space where the “cutting edge of translation and negotiation”¹⁶⁷ occurs and the gap between the self and the Other is blurred.

In the “Foreword” to Frantz Fanon’s book, *Black Skin, White Masks*, Bhabha presents an example of how an in-between space becomes an ambivalent, hybrid space and a place of self-forming identification.¹⁶⁸ He asserts that the image of “‘black skins, white masks’ is not, for example, a neat division; it is a doubling, dissembling image of being in at least two places at once, which makes it impossible for the devalued, insatiable évolué ... to accept the colonizer’s invitation to identify.”¹⁶⁹ Bhabha continues:

‘You’re a doctor, a writer, a student, you’re *different*, you’re one of us.’ It is precisely in that ambivalent use of ‘different’ – to be different from those that are different makes you the same – that the Unconscious speaks of the form of Otherness, the tethered shadow of deferral and displacement. It is not the Colonialist Self or the Colonized Other, but the disturbing distance in-between that constitutes the figure of colonial otherness – the White man’s artifice inscribed on the black man’s body. It is in relation to this impossible object that emerges the liminal problem of colonial identity and its vicissitudes.¹⁷⁰

Bhabha demonstrates how the in-between space generates a hybrid subjectivity which has

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 159-160.

¹⁶⁷ Bhabha, “The Commitment to Theory,” in *The Location of Culture*, 56.

¹⁶⁸ Homi K. Bhabha, “Remembering Fanon: Self, Psyche and the Colonial Condition,” in *Black Skin, White Masks*, by Frantz Fanon (London: Pluto Press, 1986).

¹⁶⁹ Bhabha, “Remembering Fanon,” xvi.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid; Bhabha’s italics.

no pure and fixed identity but rather a merging or emerging – a moving away from the binary overlapping between two categories toward a transformation. According to Bhabha a hybrid subjectivity is an “impossible object” which cannot be controlled by (post)colonial power or pedagogical discourse such as ‘nation as narration’ and which resists being named an object.¹⁷¹ Thus hybrid subjectivity is not to be seen as an object to be acted upon, but as the subject of action and an agency for resistance and transformation. Hybridity itself is a realization of cultural difference, which subverts binary oppositions and resists the othering processes that objectify and demean the Other. An in-between space is one where different cultures dwell together without suppressing or concealing differences; further, it is a space where differences may build an alternative community with different ideas and perspectives, the aim being to cherish difference as a gift empowering the building of just community.

To conclude, when the self moves *beyond* its self-contained territory, it is often surprised by encountering the unexpected Other. On the journey, its assumed identity is challenged and hybridized, and becomes a different being that is “almost the same, *but not quite*.”¹⁷² What was thought to be stable and fixed is instead malleable, its borders permeable, as an earlier identity is replaced with a hybrid identity forged in a space of in-betweenness. Bhabha characterizes this space as “unhomeliness.”¹⁷³ The notion of

¹⁷¹ Referring to the poem, “Strangers on a Hostile Landscape,” written by M. Jin, a black descendant of a slave woman, Bhabha points out her subversion to the racist and sexist authority which denies her presence (Bhabha, *Location of Culture*, 65-67). What Bhabha means by the ‘impossible object’ here is, her resistance against becoming an ‘it’ or ‘the invisible’, as expressed in her poem, “Only my eyes will remain to watch and to haunt, and to turn your dreams to chaos” Bhabha emphasizes “putting the eye/I in the impossible position of enunciation” to see the invisibility. The ‘impossible object’ demands ‘I’, the subject who cannot be controlled.

¹⁷² Bhabha, “Of Mimicry and Man,” in *The Location of Culture*, 123; Bhabha’s italics.

¹⁷³ Bhabha, “Introduction,” in *The Location of Culture*, 13-25.

unhomeliness is expressed in Toni Morrison's poem, "This house is strange."¹⁷⁴ One's identity is constructed by the "estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world – the unhomeliness – that is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations."¹⁷⁵ Morrison finds that even though "Its shadows lie," she lives in the house with the question: "Say, tell me, why does its lock fit my key?" Perhaps her question reflects her hybrid subjectivity. I too yearn to feel that I belong in a space of unhomeliness and of in-betweenness by participating in the *solidarity of Others*.¹⁷⁶ With Morrison and Bhabha, "I am looking for the join ... I want to join ... I want to join."¹⁷⁷

Conclusion

In order to outline a prospect for building a just community in the context of Canada's policy of Integrative Multiculturalism, the discussion in this chapter has focused on exploring a theoretical foundation for the United Church of Canada's vision for becoming an intercultural church. To this end, selected theories of the Other (Levinas), difference (Derrida) and cultural difference (Bhabha) have been explored. Their works contribute to an understanding, analysis and deconstruction of the Western colonial 'process of othering' (Russell) and to the construction of an alternative vision of community. Since the Other is different from the self, in a colonial framework the Other

¹⁷⁴ Quoted in Homi K. Bhabha, "Halfway house," *Afforum International* 35. 9 (May 1997), 11. See the epigraph of this chapter.

¹⁷⁵ Bhabha, "Introduction," in *The Location of Culture*, 13.

¹⁷⁶ This yearning will be discussed as a practice of mission under the title, *the solidarity of Others* in Chapter 5.

¹⁷⁷ Quoted in Quoted in Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 27. Toni Morrison, *Beloved*.

may be forced to either integrate into or be excluded from a dominant group. The acknowledgement of difference can be a means of exclusion when it is used as a tool for ‘othering’ that justifies downgrading, oppressing or ostracizing those who are different from a dominant group or culture. Such misuse produces metaphysical binary oppositions where one side has privilege over another. In Western philosophy the Other has been objectified for the purpose of promoting assimilation, a dynamic that Canada’s integrative multicultural policy re-enacts.

This chapter raises the question ‘Who is the Other?’ - a question that is echoed throughout this thesis, especially in Chapter 5. Specifically, the question is aimed at addressing the matter of securing just relationship between the self and the Other in the context of the church’s vision and the nation’s questionable policy related to Integrative Multiculturalism. In the previous chapter it was argued that Canada’s Integrative Multiculturalism retains the colonial desire to contain and manage cultural difference, reducing the Other to the same (the dominant culture) in the name of building an ‘inclusive, cohesive society.’ This chapter pushes further to highlight the possibility of a new subjectivity that is responsive to the Other rather than caught up in the self, and more, of viewing difference as a gift empowering the process of building just community.

Levinas’ notion of the Other has emancipatory power to subvert the ideal of integration and the act of exclusion. From his experience of the Holocaust, Levinas observes the tragedy arising from the Western philosophical tendency to seek a totalizing ontology. Levinas sees God hidden in the neighbour’s face, since every human being bears the trace of God in the image of God (*imago Dei*, Genesis 1:27).¹⁷⁸ The ethical

¹⁷⁸ Levinas, “Meaning and Sense,” in *Emmanuel Levinas: Basic Philosophical Writings*, 64; Levinas, “A Religion for Adults,” in *Difficult Freedom: Essays on Judaism*, 11.

relationship vis-à-vis the face of the Other frees the self from reducing the Other to the self and its agenda, and challenges the self to embrace the other face of God. Even though God remains irreducible to the encounter between self and Other, God's trace is revealed in the face of the Other. In such an encounter, there is a constant movement called 'relation without relation.' The self and the Other are separated by the transcendence of the Other, yet they are ethically connected. The way to connect with the Other is in a relation of responsibility, wherein the self welcomes the face of the Other in justice. The Other is a summons to ethical responsibility and an activator of just community, a gift that empowers relationship.

Derrida's *différance* was discussed to illustrate further why the Other is a gift and an essential part of building a just community. Derrida brings Levinas' discussion of 'the Other' and 'trace' into his critique of Western philosophy's privileging of speech over writing. In the *logocentrism* of Western thought, speaking is considered universal and autonomous (like the subject or self) in relation to writing, Derrida deconstructs that violent hierarchy to reveal that a living trace of other elements already always exists in the subject. To liberate writing from being subordinated to speech, Derrida recovers the two lost meanings of temporal *deferring* and spatial *differing* in the use of *différance*: meaning always arises in relation to other subjects. Thus, one's understanding is always partial and incomplete until all the elements are interwoven or inter-textualized together: no living organism has meaning without a trace of the Other. Derrida's discussion of *différance* has implications for the building of community; the impact of the Other's radical otherness on the exclusive, hierarchical character of the society alters its rigid, homogeneous terrain. Difference is a necessary resource and creator of building

community. The self, in recognizing the gift of difference, is liberated by knowing that its identity is temporal, relational and transformational.

Bhabha's contribution to the vision of becoming an intercultural church lies in his definition of cultural difference. He asserts that an 'othering process' is still practised within the liberal notion of cultural diversity operative in Canada's policy of Integrative Multiculturalism. To critique the way cultural diversity is recognized at a celebratory level only, Bhabha adopts Derrida's notion of 'supplement' to identify how different cultural heritages bring their own cultural content and practices to the nation. Bhabha suggests that Derrida's notion of *différance* as applied to cultural meaning helps highlight the 'in-between space' where hybrid form of different cultures emerge without being integrated into the dominant culture. It has been argued here that the three concepts of 'relation without relation' (Levinas/Derrida), difference (Derrida) and cultural difference (Bhabha) contribute to understanding the in-between space as a site in which different cultures displace and subvert the hegemonic power by 'repeating' the national discourses differently. The in-between space is the place and time in which different cultures dwell together, opening up to their cultural differences; different cultural heritages bring their cultures as gifts to build community.

The discussion in this chapter has argued that openness to the presence of the Other is critical to becoming an ethically responsible self, and that difference is an essential gift for creating meaning (Derrida) and culture (Bhabha). This leads to the further question of how the gift of difference contributes to the creation of a just community, especially in the context of the United Church of Canada becoming an intercultural church. To explore this more fully, in the next chapter the historical and

theological process by which the United Church has come to affirm religious and cultural pluralism in its desire to build just community will be explored.

Chapter 3

The United Church of Canada's Journey

toward Becoming an Intercultural Church in the Context of Pluralism

The church is the church only when it exists for others.

– Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*

“Listen, my darling, if you’re going to be religious, you must be either a Hindu, a Christian or a Muslim. . . .” “I don’t see why I can’t be all three.”

– Yann Martel, *Life of Pi*

In 2007, 38 Muslim scholars sent an open letter to world leaders of Christian churches.¹ The letter states that since the two faith communities make up more than 55% of the world’s population, there can be no peace around the world without respectful relations between Muslims and Christians. The Muslim leaders propose that we all “respect each other, be fair, just and kind to [one] another and live in sincere peace, harmony and mutual goodwill.”² The title of the letter is “A Common Word Between Us and You.” The title speaks to the reality of the current relations between Muslims and Christians. Muslims call Christians “you.” Although relations between the two faith communities have improved over the decades, Muslims and Christians have not yet moved from “you” to “we.”

¹ The Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought, “A Common Word between Us and You,” accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.acommonword.com>

² Ibid.

In this context, the question addressed in this chapter is how, in the church's interfaith and intercultural relations, the United Church of Canada (UCC) can move from speaking of "them" or "you" to a "we" relationship. This question was raised about 30 years ago by the Canadian theologian, Wilfred Cantwell Smith.³ Smith suggested four steps on the way to 'becoming one community' – the "we" in interfaith dialogue. The first step is to talk about "it:" here others are seen only by reference to an impersonal presentation of the subject matter – "it." The second step is to talk about "them" – the first great innovation of seeing others as personalizing beings. However, here others are seen only from a distance, as an object. The third step is to talk of "you:" here there is direct reference to the other via engagement among faith communities through listening and mutuality in dialogue. Recognizing the other as 'you' is an important step addressed in the last chapter; it opens ethical responsibility and acknowledges genuine difference in an in-between space. From there it becomes possible to take the last step, referring to an other for each other as an 'us.' Smith called this step "the culmination of the process" of becoming "we."⁴ I understand Smith's last stage in the process of 'becoming we' not as a dualistic distancing of 'us and them', but rather as a 'we and we' relationship in which all participants are postcolonial subjects and share the ethical responsibility for "the infinity of the Other" (Levinas).

The theoretical parameters of engaging in just relations with the Other were discussed in Chapter 2. The philosophical concepts selected for study were Levinas' the

³ W. C. Smith, *Religious Diversity: Essays by Wilfred Cantwell Smith*, ed. Willard G. Oxtoby (New York: Crossroad, 1982), 142 and 178, and W. C. Smith, *Patterns of Faith Around the World* (1962, Oxford: Oneworld, 1998), 134.

⁴ Smith, *Religious Diversity*, 142.

Other, Derrida's difference and Bhabha's in-between, hybrid space. This chapter builds upon the philosophical foundation established in Chapter 2 to explore the roots of the UCC vision of becoming an intercultural church in the religiously and culturally rich pluralistic world of Canada. Here, the discussion moves to the theological foundations for mutuality as suggested by the UCC report, *World Mission*, approved by the 22nd General Council in 1966.⁵ It proposes the principle of pluralism for its mission and interfaith dialogue and an *orthopraxis* approach to pluralism. This chapter traces the use the UCC has made of this principle and approach in its interfaith dialogue with other faith communities and in its fostering of cultural pluralism within the denomination. First, the context and motivations for *World Mission* and its theological implications for the development of the vision to become an intercultural church are reviewed. Selected UCC interfaith dialogue reports and the church's recent position on interfaith dialogue are analysed to show why the church should move to a mutuality model which emphasizes the importance of the process of working together. To develop a mutuality model, Paul Knitter's "Mutuality" and Mark Heim's "Acceptance" models will be explored to benefit from their approaches to interfaith dialogue. Finally, selected visions of the UCC held by people of different cultural heritages and policies relevant to them are explored. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how the UCC fostered religious and cultural pluralism in its move toward becoming an intercultural church, particularly through the various policies on interfaith dialogue and ethnic ministries.

⁵ UCC, *World Mission* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1966).

3.1. Grounding Mission: *World Mission* (1966)

Each Christian community is called upon to confess its faith and express its mission for its time and place.⁶ A faith community does not simply recite traditional creeds or dogmas; it interprets what it means to be Christian in a time and place, exposing its own contemporary faith statement to the world to invite conversation about its contextual relevance and credibility in its context.⁷ By confessing its faith, each generation identifies itself as a faith community and its intention to act according to that faith statement. Each generation's statement of faith becomes a valuable principle for building community. Here, the understanding of mission practice as interfaith dialogue, found in the 1966 UCC report, *World Mission* (1966), is proposed as the foundation for becoming an intercultural church.

In 1962, the same year that the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) of the Roman Catholic Church was convened, the UCC approved the setting up of a Commission on World Mission to conduct "an independent and fundamental study of how the United Church of Canada can best share in the World Mission of the Church."⁸ Among the 20 members, seven were former missionaries and others, including W. C. Smith, had various overseas experience.⁹ After two and a half years of study and consultation, the

⁶ Douglas John Hall, *Thinking the Faith: Christian Theology in a North American Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 55-56.

⁷ Recently the UCC developed a faith statement: "Song of Faith: A Statement of Faith of the United Church of Canada" approved at the 39th General Council in 2006.

⁸ UCC, "World Mission," in *Record of Proceedings of the 20th General Council* (1962), 298.

⁹ Editor of *Touchstone: Heritage and Theology in a New Age Inc.*, Mac Watts adds the following note to my article, "'To Share in God's Concern for All': The Effect of the 1966 Report on World Mission," 39. "Editor's Note: Any reader of this article who has some memory of the leadership in the United Church 30 years ago and beyond will recognize what a high-powered commission it was. Just to give a sense of its qualities, among the 20 members one was a scholar in world religions with a world-wide

Commission on World Mission presented its report, *World Mission: Report of the Commission on World Mission*, to the 22nd General Council (1966). The report, the most extensive mission consultation in the history of the UCC, has since become a foundation for its mission practice and interfaith dialogue. The more recent interfaith report, *That We May Know Each Other: United Church – Muslim Relations Today* (2004),¹⁰ employs an approach to relationship with Islam based on the missiology of *World Mission*.¹¹ It is evident that *World Mission* played a decisive role in the development of interfaith dialogue between the UCC and Muslims specifically and on the UCC policy of interfaith dialogue as mission practice. *World Mission* introduced a mutuality model of shared concern for justice as the basis for the practice of working together with other individuals and communities; anyone or group sharing a concern for justice in the local, national or world community was invited to dialogue and work together.¹² *World Mission* laid a firm foundation for interfaith dialogue as key to mission practice in a pluralistic world and for the vision of becoming an intercultural church. With this background in mind, the discussion here explores three contexts – institutional, ecumenical and theological – that

reputation, two were upcoming Moderators, one was the powerful Secretary of General Council, and another was soon to be Secretary, seven were former missionaries and others had had various overseas experience.” Donald M. Fleming (Chairperson), C. Douglas Jay (Secretary), Mrs. Horace Croome, Ross Flemington, H.C. Grant, John Webster Grant, Irwin Hilliard, Katharine Hockin, T.E. Floyd Honey, Ernest E. Long, N. Bruce McLeod, A.B.B. More, George Morrison, N.R. Richards, Cyril Shoemaker, William W. Small, Wilfred Cantwell Smith, Ruth Taylor, W.S. Taylor, Roy E. Webster. UCC, *World Mission*, 3.

¹⁰ Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Committee Relations (hereafter ICIF), *That We May Know Each Other: United Church – Muslim Relations Today* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 2004).

¹¹ See UCC, *World Mission*, 137 and ICIF, *That We May Know Each Other*, 5.

¹² The model (in lower case) is similar to but not the same as Paul Knitter’s “Mutuality Model.” It will be distinguished from Knitter’s model later.

influenced *World Mission*. These contexts are, of course, interconnected and influenced by each other. Their description and analysis sheds light on what led up to *World Mission*.

3.1.1. *The Contexts*

3.1.1.1. The institutional context

After Church Union in 1925,¹³ the world mission enterprise of the UCC was undertaken by two organizations – the renamed Board of Overseas Missions (BOM)¹⁴ and the Dominion Board of the Woman’s Missionary Society (WMS) – until the two were integrated in 1962. Often both organizations served in the same area. For example, according to the 1958 reports of the BOM and the WMS, their missionaries in Korea were working under the direction of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) in the areas of Iri, Seoul and Pusan. Missionaries from both organizations worked in the same institutions such as Severance Hospital in Seoul, the newly founded Wonju Union Christian Hospital in Wonju and the Christian Radio Station.¹⁵ While the BOM supported Yonsei University, the WMS supported Ewha Womans University whose aims and objectives focused on the well-being of women.¹⁶ Even though the two

¹³ The United Church of Canada was inaugurated on June 10, 1925 in Toronto, Ontario, when the Methodist Church of Canada, the Congregational Union of Canada, and 65-70 percent of the Presbyterian Church of Canada entered into an organic union. It was the first union of churches in the world to cross historical denominational lines and hence received international acclaim. Impetus for the union arose out of the concerns for serving the vast Canadian northwest and in the desire for better overseas mission. Each of the uniting churches, however, had a long history prior to 1925. See The United Church of Canada, “The Formation of the United Church of Canada,” in *The Manual 2013* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 2013), 3-9.

¹⁴ In 1944, General Council changed the name of the Foreign Mission Board to the Board of Overseas Missions.

¹⁵ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 18th General Council* (1958), 487-489 and 523.

organizations operated separately in the mission fields, missionaries sometimes worked for the other board.¹⁷

In 1956, at the 17th General Council, the Executives of the BOM and the WMS presented a joint recommendation: “Recognizing the real possibility of closer integration in the administration of all overseas work ... we respectfully request the General Council to appoint a committee representative of all parties concerned to study this problem.”¹⁸ Upon this request the next General Council in 1958 approved the report of the Committee on Integration of Overseas Missions Work.¹⁹ With their history of over 30 years of working separately yet together, why did the organizations want to be integrated? The report of the Commission on Integration notes that a desire for a closer union between the BOM and the WMS came from the overseas mission fields.²⁰ The missionaries of each Board were almost unanimous in favouring a closer union. They believed that union would benefit the whole overseas missionary programme by providing a broadened outlook of interest to all UCC members. Integration was especially welcomed by the WMS.²¹

¹⁶ One of the aims and objects of the WMS was: “To unite all the women of the Church for the World Mission of Christianity; to provide missionary education for children, teen-age girls and young women; to encourage study, prayer and giving on behalf of Christian Missions at home and abroad.” The Woman’s Missionary Society, *Manual for Missionaries* (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1950), 5.

¹⁷ For example, in the 1940s a WMS appointed medical doctor, Florence Murray, worked for a medical school and hospital operated by the BOM. William Scott, *Canadians in Korea: Brief Historical Sketch of Canadian Mission Work in Korea* (Toronto: Board of World Mission, United Church of Canada, 1975), 165-66.

¹⁸ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 17th General Council* (1956), 80.

¹⁹ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 18th General Council* (1958), 56.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 226

²¹ *Ibid.*

To understand why the WMS welcomed institutional integration, one needs to go back to 1953. From that year, women's organizations within the UCC such as the WMS, the Woman's Association, and the Deaconess Order and Women Workers began to work toward incorporation into a united women's organization in order to participate *fully* in the life and work of the church. One of the goals of the study for a united women's organization was to "further full partnership of women and men in the Church."²² Since the WMS actively participated in the amalgamation of the women's organizations, it is possible that they sensed the urgency for the integration of their overseas mission work with the BOM. The WMS often heard the growing voices within the organization and the mission fields: "I think it is good to have just one voice on the mission field.' ... [The] overseas people were confused and wondering why there were two parallel [organizations]."²³ To solve these concerns, on January 1, 1962 a unified women's origination was formed – United Church Women (UCW). At the same time, the WMS and BOM were integrated into the Board of World Mission.

At the 19th General Council in 1960, "Council expressed concern that the United Church of Canada should do more towards the proclaiming of the Gospel throughout the world."²⁴ Some people might have been concerned that the UCC overseas mission work would be reduced with the integration of the BOM and the WMS. The new Board of World Mission realized that "to accomplish its mission today, the Board must use *new*

²² Ibid., 214.

²³ Donna Sinclair, *Crossing Worlds: The Story of the Women's Missionary Society of the United Church of Canada* (Toronto: The United Church Publishing House, 1992), 114.

²⁴ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 20th General Council* (1962), 298.

methods and must work in conjunction with other churches.”²⁵ At its integration, the Board of World Mission decided it needed a new policy, direction and understanding of mission in the rapidly changing context within and outside the church. It also needed to employ new methods to work collegially with partners.²⁶ In this thesis it is suggested that the integration of the BOM and the WMS and the inauguration of Board of World Mission in 1962 were major stimuli toward the development of *World Mission*.

3.1.1.2. The ecumenical context

The restructuring of the Boards of the UCC responsible for mission was taking place about the same time as the integration of the International Missionary Council (IMC) with the World Council of Churches (WCC). The proposal for the latter integration was accepted at the IMC assembly held in at Achimota, Ghana from December 28th, 1957 to January 8th, 1958.²⁷ This proposal was in turn affirmed at the 3rd Assembly of the WCC in New Delhi, India in 1961; the IMC joined the WCC to form the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME). At that same Assembly the WCC endorsed a document entitled *Joint Action for Mission* and authorized the CWME

²⁵ Ibid; italics mine.

²⁶ UCC, *World Mission*, 126.

²⁷ David J. Bosch, *Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1980), 180. The International Missionary Council (IMC) was founded after the first IMC conference in Edinburgh in 1910. Before the IMC was integrated into the WCC, five international conferences had been held: Jerusalem (1928), Tambaram, India (1938), Whitby, Canada (1947), Willingen, Germany (1952) and Achimota, Ghana. The World Council of Churches on the other hand, was founded in Amsterdam in 1948 and was the outcome of the “Faith and Order” and “Life and Work” movements. The second assembly was held in Evanston, USA in 1954 and the third in New Delhi in 1961. For details see Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 369-71.

to seek to implement its proposals in consultation with churches, related mission agencies and national regional bodies.²⁸

The 21st UCC General Council in 1964 welcomed the WCC proposal *Joint Action for Mission* and affirmed “its conviction that through this proposal God is calling His Church today to a broader vision of her task and a deeper level of commitment to mission in unity.”²⁹ The UCC had already been participating in joint action for mission with partner churches. For instance, the new Wonju Union Christian Hospital in Korea opened in 1959 was made possible by the contributions of the two Boards of the American Methodist Church, two Boards of the UCC, the Korean Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK).³⁰ This practice of joint action for mission with its global partners was not new for the UCC. Why, then, did it take the WCC proposal so seriously that the General Council in 1964 passed the resolution to participate in *Joint Action for Mission*?³¹ The reason is that *Joint Action for Mission* broadened the vision of and deepened the commitment to mission by including all the bodies “concerned.”³² How, then, would different traditions in Christianity be enabled to work together to carry out a common mission? According to the report on *World Mission*, “[*Joint Action for Mission*] involves the *crossing* of confessional and denominational boundaries and is a demonstration of Christian unity as well as a means of achieving

²⁸ WCC, *The New Delhi Report: The Third Assembly of the World Council of Churches 1961* (London: SCM Press, 1962), 251-2.

²⁹ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 21st General Council* (1964), 179.

³⁰ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 19th General Council* (1960), 684.

³¹ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 21st General Council* (1964), 178.

³² UCC, *World Mission*, 77.

better results.”³³ *Joint Action for Mission* attempted to move beyond the traditional boundaries within Christianity and sought to work with ecumenical partners in mission: all who share a common concern are invited to work together in the mission of God.³⁴ However, this concept of missiology had hardly begun to be effectively implemented by the time of the next Assembly at Mexico in 1963. Here the CWME learned that a far more thorough programme of education for mission and evangelism would be needed to put the concepts of *Joint Action for Mission* into practice.³⁵

The Commission on World Mission of the UCC must have been influenced by the *Joint Action for Mission*'s inclusive understanding of mission. However, the Commission was not satisfied with the missiology of *Joint Action for Mission* because it did not address how the church would work with different faiths. Thus the Commission pushed the Christian ecumenical boundaries further so that the UCC could work more inclusively in mission in a “religiously pluralistic world.”³⁶ *World Mission* insists that “shared concern is of more fundamental importance than the existence of elements of thought or belief.”³⁷ As a result, *World Mission* crossed Christian boundaries so that all concerned could work together for the common good regardless of who was sharing the concern. In this thesis it is suggested that the WCC *Joint Action for Mission* was an important influence on the development of the inclusive missiology found in *World Mission*.

³³ Ibid; italics mine.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ WCC, *New Delhi to Uppsala* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1968), 29.

³⁶ UCC, *World Mission*, 25.

³⁷ Ibid., 54.

3.1.2.3. The theological context

The decisive difference between *Joint Action for Mission* (WCC) and *World Mission* (UCC) is the recognition of the changing context for the practice of mission; while the WCC developed its missiology within the sphere of Christian ecumenism, the UCC developed its for a religiously pluralistic world: recognition of the different contexts is crucial. Here is how the writers of *World Mission* understood their context: “The church has always lived in a religiously plural world, though it is now becoming more genuinely aware of this fact and of some of its implications. Perhaps the most important implication is that the church must be involved in this religiously plural world.”³⁸

Before the Commission began its work, W.C. Smith, delivered a series of lectures aired by the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) Radio’s *Ideas* programme in 1961 and published in 1962 under the title *The Faith of Other Men*.³⁹ Smith later became a member of the Commission. The Commission accepted Smith’s notion of the “‘evolving global religiousness of men’, within which God must be seen to be at work within the church as well as in other identifiable religious communities.”⁴⁰ The whole of *World Mission* was infused by Smith’s pluralistic understanding of religion.

Along with developing an understanding of pluralism in a religiously pluralistic world, the Commission rethought the nature of mission. *World Mission* noted that the theological ferment of the 20th century had challenged the church to *rethink* the nature of

³⁸ Ibid., 25.

³⁹ W. C. Smith, *Patterns of Faith around the World* (Oxford: Oneworld, 1998; first published in 1962 under the title *The Faith of Other Men: The Christians in a Religiously Plural World*).

⁴⁰ UCC, *World Mission*, 24.

mission as a whole.⁴¹ The concept of *missio Dei* (the mission of God) first emerged at the IMC in Willingen, Germany in 1952.⁴² *World Mission* adopted the concept of *missio Dei* as God's activity embracing the world and humanity. The church was invited to do God's mission.⁴³ For instance, *World Mission* stated, "The mission in which the church is engaged is *a mission* from God to man – to man in all continents – and not a mission from men in the west to men in the east."⁴⁴ *Missio Dei* is the singular mission of God, not a matter of church mission fields.⁴⁵

C. Douglas Jay, the Secretary of the Commission, reiterates this in his series of lectures in 1967. Jay says the traditional concept of missions transforms into *a mission* – the practice of the essence of the mission of God.⁴⁶ Jay deals with "secularization" at great length – in two lectures out of three. He says that "secularization ... is of great importance for the contemporary understanding of the mission of the church in the world."⁴⁷ *Missio Dei* understands that God's primary relationship is to the world, not to the church and that that very secularization manifests the concept of *missio Dei* in the

⁴¹ Ibid., 43-57.

⁴² Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 390. According to Bosch the classical doctrine of *missio Dei* is that God sends the Son, God and the Son send the Spirit and the Spirit sends the church into the world. I will elaborate the concept of *missio Dei* in Chapter 4.

⁴³ UCC, *World Mission*, 43.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 128, Finding 7; italics mine.

⁴⁵ I owe this understanding to Stephen Neill who says "The age of missions is at end; the age of mission has begun" in his book *A History of Christian Mission* (Penguin Books, 1966), 572. See Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 391.

⁴⁶ C. Douglas Jay, *World Mission and World Civilization* (Toronto, Board of World Mission, United Church of Canada, 1967), 12.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 15.

practice of mission. Secularization is not the dichotomized opposite of sacred; the sacred is not restricted to particular places, orders and functions.⁴⁸ Similarly, *World Mission* notes, “The theology of world mission today arises out of the act of God in sending Jesus Christ and the carrying out of His mission in which we share. ... Mission implies involvement with, and participation in, the life of particular human communities whether religion or secular.”⁴⁹

Missiologist David Bosch writes that in the 1960s, “After the devastation of two world wars, the optimism of the nineteenth century and of the Social Gospel had re-emerged.”⁵⁰ Secularization is the other face of the Social Gospel and even though “the terminology of the Social Gospel has been dropped ... the dynamics remained the same.” In the case of the UCC it was dramatically so; the spirit of the Social Gospel reappeared in the movement to engage with secularization.⁵¹ *World Mission* boldly recommends “that the United Church of Canada broaden its awareness of mission, seeking to relate its performance of each task at home and abroad to its understanding of God’s mission

⁴⁸ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology: Life and the Spirit History and the Kingdom of God*, vol. 3 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 380. Jay’s and Tillich’s understanding of secularization is different from that of the creators of the policy of Integrative Multiculturalism in Canada discussed in Chapter 1 in which secularization is understood as the decline and the privatization of religion. As we have discussed in Chapter 1 the meaning of secularization is a process of “creating an awareness of divine presence in all spheres of society against attempts to confine God’s work to the church,” whereas secularism is a “replacement of a religious world horizon with a worldview where science, technology and especially economy are given a divine role to define what life is about and where epistemology and ethics are limited to these areas.” See Elisabeth Gerle, “Multicultural Society: Dilemma and Prospects,” in *Theology and the Religions: A Dialogue*, edited by Viggo Mortensen (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 35.

⁴⁹ UCC, *World Mission*, 126-27.

⁵⁰ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 326.

⁵¹ According to Richard Allen the Social Gospel movement in Canada lasted from the 1890s through the 1930s. See Richard Allen, “The Social Gospel and the Reform Tradition in Canada, 1890 – 1928,” in *Canadian Historical Review* 49:4 (December 1968) and his masterpiece *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-28* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990).

(*missio Dei*) as embracing the whole world and as committed to the whole Church.”⁵²

Thereby the theological context for *World Mission* is the recognition of a religiously pluralistic world on the one hand, and participation in the mission of God and the embracing of secularization on the other. In this thesis it is argued that the concepts of pluralism, *missio Dei* and secularization influenced the missiology of *World Mission*.

3.1.2. *The Perspectives*

Of the three contexts that led up to *World Mission*, the theological context in particular challenged the Commission to rethink the relationship between Christianity and other faiths. The report recognizes that although there were no points of contact between “Christianity as a system and, say, Hinduism as a system,” whenever a Christian meets a *person* of another faith and they share their life “concerns” together,⁵³ there are almost limitless points of contact. *World Mission* presents a paradigm shift in thinking about interfaith dialogue from a religious perspective to a humanitarian one: “The Christian must clarify his attitude to other faiths, remembering always, however, that his attitude to other faiths is subordinate to his attitude to men of other faiths.”⁵⁴ In supporting a new perspective, the report critiques and distances itself from the two different approaches to other faiths discussed below.

⁵² UCC, *World Mission*, 135.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 53.

The first approach is akin to what Paul Knitter calls a *replacement model*.⁵⁵ In this model, “Christianity is radically opposed to all other faiths and must altogether displace them.”⁵⁶ There is no real point of continuity between Christianity and other faiths. Other faiths are seen only as those which must be replaced by Christianity. This model excludes the possibility of God’s revelation through other faiths. The replacement model emphasizes the uniqueness of the revelation of God solely in the person of the historical Jesus. Jesus Christ is *the one and only* way to salvation.⁵⁷ Even though the WCC adopted the document *Guidelines on Dialogue* in 1979 and was “pushing dialogue beyond the Replacement model,” Knitter argues that “its theology was still located in a perspective of *total* replacement.”⁵⁸ The replacement model reflects a Christian attitude that other faiths are false, misdirected and of no value and therefore inferior and in need of being replaced. This model still influences many evangelical Christians in their relationships to other faiths.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Any typology that attempts to classify models such as replacement, fulfillment or pluralistic carries the danger of simplification and misunderstanding and may be misleading. There are many different opinions about typological classifications; they are attempts to understand the theologies of religion and to engage in a discussion with other faiths to build just relations. See Perry Schmidt-Leukel, “Exclusivism, Inclusivism, Pluralism: The Tripolar Typology – Clarified and Reaffirmed,” In *The Myth of Religious Superiority: A Multifaith Exploration*, ed. Paul F. Knitter (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2005), 13-27 and also J. A. DiNoia, “Pluralist Theology of Religions: Pluralistic or Non-Pluralistic?” in *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*, ed. Gavin D’Costa (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2000), 119-134.

⁵⁶ UCC, *World Mission*, 53.

⁵⁷ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions*, 53-60.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 43; Knitter’s italics.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

The second approach rejected by *World Mission* is what is known as the *fulfillment* or *Christ-centred* model.⁶⁰ In this model “Christianity is the fulfillment of other faiths.”⁶¹ This model recognizes truth and grace in other religions, but in a final sense, Christianity alone fulfills God’s plan of salvation. In this model Christians “tend to emphasize the universal operation of the Logos among all people.”⁶² Christians understand that the Logos Christ embraces other faiths and that “*they*” live under the light of the Logos. In this model, Jesus is the *representative* of God’s salvation.⁶³ While the Commission on *World Mission* was wrestling with the problems of the relationship among Christianity and other religions, Vatican II declared its position using a fulfillment model. Chosen as the Roman Catholic model in the 1960s, the fulfillment model “embodies the majority opinion of present-day Christianity.”⁶⁴

World Mission moves beyond both the replacement and fulfillment models, which either claim exclusiveness for Christianity or subordinate other faiths to Christianity. The report suggests a different approach – seeking right relations between Christianity and other faiths in a religiously plural world. It develops a UCC position on interfaith dialogue and, while not using terminology like Knitter’s, it nonetheless clearly

⁶⁰ In this thesis, fulfillment and Christ-centered models are treated as interchangeable. Christ-centeredness is not considered the same as Christocentrism. Mark Heim, for example, is aligned with Christocentrism since he affirms both the uniqueness of Jesus and the uniqueness of other religious figures. See Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions*, 201.

⁶¹ UCC, *World Mission*, 53.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Logos Christology reappears about 30 years later in 1997 in the UCC study report, *Mending the World*. See ICIF, *Mending the World: An Ecumenical Vision for Healing and Reconciliation* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1997).

⁶⁴ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions*, 63.

recommends that the church move beyond replacement and fulfillment models to welcome the religious plurality of the modern world.⁶⁵ Based on the recognition of a pluralistic world, *World Mission* states, “God is creatively and redemptively at work in the religious life of all mankind.”⁶⁶ This approach differs from the replacement and fulfillment models in that God is constitutive of salvation and salvation can happen in a variety of ways. In this approach, belief in the same God is the motivation for dialogue. In this thesis such an approach is considered a (neo-) theocentric model under the umbrella of pluralism. This discussion will be expanded below. For now, it is important to stress how this statement of faith provided a fundamental foundation for future mission practice and interfaith dialogue in the UCC. *World Mission* presented a new understanding of its relations with other faiths in a religiously pluralistic world; the next generation took that foundation and developed specific interfaith dialogues with implications for those contexts.

3.1.3. *The Implications*

World Mission identifies relevant implications of three theological insights for the further development of interfaith dialogue as key to mission practice. As a way to overcome the replacement and fulfillment models, it proposes a new understanding of revelation as the foundational theology for a new model based on shared concern.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ UCC, *World Mission*, 54.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 137.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 54.

First, the report notes that there are two prevalent understandings of revelation, the second of which it affirms as more adequate to an interfaith context. The first is that God is a messenger and human beings are passive receivers. Accordingly, God's revelation, if heard by all people, would be similar in all religions. The second is that human beings do not passively receive the same message from God; rather, different people respond in very different ways. As a result, revelation is conceived as "radically different" in different faiths.⁶⁸ "Non-Christian systems may be seen as various kinds of responses to the challenge of a revelation of God."⁶⁹ Ovey Mohammed affirms the position of *World Mission* that human response to God's revelation is "always conditioned by history and culture."⁷⁰ Instead of a static and exclusive approach, its proposed understanding of revelation promotes dynamic and creative relations in interfaith dialogue. The report suggests that traditional understandings of revelation using either the replacement or the fulfillment approach may have to be surrendered, and that the contributions of other people be gratefully accepted.⁷¹ This opens the way to learn from and work with people of other faiths.

Second, *World Mission* identifies the premise of the "uniqueness" of Christ as problematic both practically and theologically.⁷² From the perspective of mission practice,

⁶⁸ Ibid., 55.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ovey N. Mohammed, *Muslim-Christian Relations: Past, Present, Future* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1999), 54. Mohammed provides an excellent summary of revelation. See pages 52-55.

⁷¹ UCC, *World Mission*, 55.

⁷² Ibid., 56. Theologians such as Mark Heim assert that uniqueness is not a problem and does not always impose a Christian understanding of salvation. Heim affirms not only the uniqueness of Christ but also that of other religious figures. For Heim and others, the concept of uniqueness can be read as

Western Christianity has tended to impose its own Western cultural interpretation of the uniqueness of Christ on other cultures.⁷³ *World Mission* understands that the up-to-then missionary imperative to depend upon the “Christian’s conviction that God sent Christ to penetrate the world and to redeem humanity from within”⁷⁴ has been misused to evoke quick antagonism toward other faiths. Christianity based on this conviction has played a critical role in a colonial approach to others.⁷⁵ Thus the notion of Western cultural interpretations of Christ has had disastrous results for Christian mission – the imposition of a westernized Christ and culture.⁷⁶ From a theological perspective the word uniqueness is troublesome; uniqueness suggests that Christ is wholly and completely different from anything that can be put beside him.⁷⁷ Therefore, as this perspective sets Christ apart from all other faiths, *World Mission* challenges it: “The Christian must make strenuous efforts to dissociate his presentation of Christ from western cultural interpretations.”⁷⁸ The implication is that the UCC should move beyond an imperialistic fulfillment model and colonial approach to other faiths and cultures.

difference. See *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*, ed. Gavin D’Costa (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2000), especially John Cobb, “Beyond ‘Pluralism,’” 81-95.

⁷³ UCC, *World Mission*, 55.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁷⁵ Musa W. Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000).

⁷⁶ UCC, *World Mission*, 56.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 56-57.

Third, *World Mission* suggests that “shared concern” is the ideal approach to the church’s mission in a pluralistic world.⁷⁹ Religious plurality provides a context for the church’s creative work with Others beyond their differences. Such a context evokes the question: How can Christians create just relations with other faiths when the partners are of different faiths? Pluralism is often misunderstood simply to mean a diversity of faiths. Does the concept of pluralism mean the recognition of a diversity of faiths or the promotion of mutual relations? This is Bosch’s question as he seeks to develop a new paradigm of mission: “Does the emerging postmodern paradigm proclaim a vision of unity or of diversity? Does it emphasize integration or divergence?”⁸⁰ The developers of *World Mission* seem to have asked themselves similar questions many years before Bosch. *World Mission* pushes the UCC to move beyond a pluralistic approach that is merely descriptive in acknowledging diversity without seeking a shared bond.

Shared concern is of more fundamental importance than the existence of elements of thought or belief. Where, for instance, there is a shared concern that the eternal reality of things unseen should be recognized as distinct from the temporality of things seen, there will be opportunities for honest and persuasive dialogue, and any dialogue which is honest must also be persuasive if it is about things that deeply concern us.⁸¹

World Mission answers the question of the meaning of pluralism in its vision of “shared concern” rather than in a common definition of faith or in a descriptive acknowledgment of the diversity of faiths. In its dialogue and mission practice the report moves from a

⁷⁹ Ibid., 54.

⁸⁰ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 367.

⁸¹ UCC, *World Mission*, 54.

religious to a “humanitarian approach.”⁸² In this way *World Mission* moves beyond ecumenical boundaries to work with people of different faiths and even with those of no ‘faith.’⁸³ I think Knitter would agree that this approach is close to his “ethical bridge” approach to the Mutuality Model in its focus on shared praxis rather than on doctrinal features,⁸⁴ a paradigm shift in the approach to interfaith dialogue and mission practice in the UCC.

3.2. A Critical Review of the United Church’s Interfaith Dialogue

When the UCC develops a faith statement, it does so by consulting its own previous statements along with those of other churches, recognizing that earlier ones do not reflect the contemporary context. When a church introduces a new faith statement there are often different responses according to different understandings of the time and place where the church undertakes its mission. After the Report of the Commission on *World Mission*, for example, was approved by the General Council (1966), Alfred C. Forrest, editor of *The United Church Observer* magazine referred in his Editorial to the report’s “radical change in mission.” The chairperson of the Commission, Donald Fleming, commenting on *World Mission*, responded that he did “not agree that the change [was] radical.”⁸⁵ The parallel “editorial controversy” between Fleming and

⁸² I will develop the concept of a humanitarian approach in Chapter 5 based on M. Thomas Thangaraj’s *missio humanitatis*. See M. Thomas Thangaraj, *The Common Task: A Theology of Christian Mission* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999).

⁸³ In this thesis the word faith denotes a system of religious belief or belief in God.

⁸⁴ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions*, 109-169. Knitter’s Mutuality Model will be explored further below.

⁸⁵ A. C. Forrest, “Radical Change in Mission,” *The United Church Observer* (October 15, 1966): 10.

Forrest lasted for several months in an exchange of letters and phone conversations.⁸⁶ Regarding the letters of Fleming and Forrest, it seems clear that the editorial controversy was about theology and an understanding of the current context, and about the dialogue between them. For Fleming and other Commissioners, *World Mission* may not have been radical enough. *World Mission* recommends: “that the church should be prepared constantly to adapt both its organization and its programme to meet new opportunities and changing needs and conditions.”⁸⁷ *World Mission* recommends that the church needs to dialogue constantly with contemporary theology, the rapidly changing context and with history to develop a missiology for our time and place. With this in mind, this section reviews and critiques the history and present position of the UCC on interfaith dialogue. The scope of research will be limited to the period from the early 1990s to the mid-2000s, during which time the UCC sought to express its understanding of itself as a faith community amidst other faiths in a pluralistic world.

3.2.1. Toward World-centred Ecumenism

Before delving into the development of the church’s interfaith dialogue from 1990 on, it is important to return to the 32nd General Council in 1988; that Council’s decision on ordination regardless of sexual orientation had a deep influence on the church’s ecumenism and interfaith dialogue. The decision in 1988 that caused so much tension for many, particularly those with a traditional understanding of the Bible and theology, was

⁸⁶ The United Church of Canada Archives (hereafter UCCA), Alfred Clinton Forrest Papers, Box 8 File 7. The author thanks Phyllis Airhart for the archival resource. For the controversy, see her monograph, *A Church with the Soul of a Nation: Making and Remaking the United Church of Canada* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2014), 241-243.

⁸⁷ UCC, *World Mission*, 136

“that all persons regardless of sexual orientation who profess faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to him, are welcome to be or become full members of the United Church of Canada.”⁸⁸ Accordingly, all members of the church are eligible to be considered for the Order of Ministry in the church; beyond sexual orientation, faith and obedience to Jesus Christ becomes the key factor for ordination. To fight against the decision of the Council in 1988, members holding to a traditional faith prepared two different sets of petitions for the next Council meeting to be held in 1990. The first set was to reverse the decision; around a quarter of those (about 70) were related to the issue of ordination and sexual orientation. The other set (about a dozen) was to affirm the unique saving significance of Jesus Christ proclaimed in the church’s official faith statement, the Basis of Union.⁸⁹ At the General Council in 1990 the petition to affirm “Jesus Christ as the cornerstone of the Church” was carried and the Council directed the Committee on Theology and Faith to “conduct extensive consultation throughout the United Church concerning our understanding of the saving significance of Jesus in a pluralistic world in which we are called to love our neighbour.”⁹⁰ The work had taken a decade when the 37th General Council in 2000 approved the report, *Reconciling and Making New: Who is Jesus for the World Today?*⁹¹ Further discussion on this will continue below.

⁸⁸ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 32nd General Council* (1988), 108

⁸⁹ At this time, the doctrine of one faith statement was examined – the Twenty Articles in the Basis of Union approved by the denominations (Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational) that merged to form The United Church of Canada in 1925. At the 41st General Council in 2012, three other faith statements were added to the Twenty Articles of the Basis of Union: the Statement of Faith (1940), the New Creed (1968, alt.) and A Song of Faith (2006).

⁹⁰ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 33rd General Council* (1990), 169.

⁹¹ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 37th General Council* (2000), 383-405.

Besides the work of the Committee on Theology and Faith in the early 1990s, the Inter-Church and Inter-Faith (ICIF) Committee presented its report, *Toward a Renewed Understanding of Ecumenism*,⁹² to the 34th General Council in 1992, but it was returned to the Committee for further work. While affirming the “centrality of Christ” the Council wanted the church’s ecumenical understanding and action as discussed in the 1966 report, *World Mission* included.⁹³ The Council recommended that the Committee consult *World Mission* because that report had been and is “part of an ongoing process of study and discernment.”⁹⁴ It remained to be seen how a later report, *Mending the World: An Ecumenical Vision for Healing and Reconciling* (1997), would incorporate the affirmations and recommendations of the Council that supported a world-centred approach on ecumenism. After all, *World Mission* had already moved beyond a Christ-centered perspective. In effect, reflecting conflicting theological viewpoints, the Council mandated that both approaches, the centrality of Christ and world ecumenism, be reflected in the report.

The affirmations and recommendations of the Council are reflected in the document reported to the 36th General Council in 1997, *Mending the World*. This report on ecumenism and mission asks how the UCC relates to other denominations and faith communities. In “Theological Foundations,” a lengthy part of the report, Jesus is described as *representative* of humanity, God and the whole creation.⁹⁵ Jesus, as the

⁹² ICIF, *Toward a Renewed Understanding of Ecumenism* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1992).

⁹³ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 34th General Council* (1992), 75.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ ICIF, *Mending the World*, 13-19.

mediator between God and the world, brings healing and reconciliation. The UCC's ecumenical imperative to participate in God's work with others of goodwill is derived from a Christ-centered perspective. The report notes that it uses a "representative model" of Christology.⁹⁶ This approach resembles a "fulfillment model," since, in it, Jesus clearly embodies and represents the fullness of God's saving love and truth.⁹⁷ Behind this approach is the mandate of the 1992 General Council when the Council wanted to affirm the saving significance of Jesus.

Mending the World may be read as an apologetic not only for those who claim a "traditional" understanding of atonement, but also for those who take an "inclusive" or "pluralistic" understanding as a comprehensive approach to world ecumenism. It recognizes a variety of voices in the church and embraces them as a "significant issue for Christians in the new ecumenical setting" in which our Christology must be articulated in a religiously pluralistic world.⁹⁸ *Mending the World* echoes *World Mission*: "God is creatively and redemptively at work in the religious life of all mankind,"⁹⁹ although without citation; again without citation, it also uses the concept, "share[d] concern," with reference to working collaboratively with others for the common good.¹⁰⁰ To the question of how the UCC should work with other denominations and faith communities, *Mending*

⁹⁶ Ibid., 13. Footnote 1.

⁹⁷ Paul F. Knitter, *One Earth, Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1995), 27-28. The fulfillment model is also called "inclusivism." This model concedes the presence of God in other religious traditions in which revelation and grace are experienced, but claims they are enhanced when Jesus, as the representative of God, enriches them, since all salvation is finally through Christ.

⁹⁸ ICIF, *Mending the World*, 17.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 20. See UCC, *World Mission*, 137 (Recommendation 11).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 21. See UCC, *World Mission*, 54.

the World answers that the church should work in partnership and through interfaith dialogue with others. It names this approach “whole world ecumenism.” The intent is to shift the paradigm from a traditional church-centred to a world-centred approach that includes “other religious traditions, ideologies and secular agencies.”¹⁰¹ This expanded approach appears to adopt the main thrust of *World Mission* – to work with others out of a shared concern for justice.

In 1997, the Committee on Theology and Faith distributed its study resource, *Reconciling and Making New: Who is Jesus for the World Today?*¹⁰² The resource contained a questionnaire asking for responses to the question, “What is the saving significance of Jesus Christ in a pluralistic world in which we are called to love our neighbour?”¹⁰³ The 2784 responses received in 1998 were classified by the author of this thesis according to Perry Schmidt-Leukel’s guide¹⁰⁴ into exclusivist (1182), inclusivist/fulfilment (551) and pluralist (762) models.¹⁰⁵ In Table 3.1, the fourth column answers were not classified as interfaith dialogue responses, because they (289) were

¹⁰¹ ICIF, *Mending the World*, 3. The shift was suggested by the ICIF in 1992 in its discussion paper, “Toward a Renewed Understanding of Ecumenism.” See UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 34th General Council* (1992), 287.

¹⁰² ICIF, *Bearing Faithful Witness: United Church – Jewish Relations Today* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1997); Committee on Theology and Faith, *Reconciling and Making New: Who is Jesus for the World Today?* (1997).

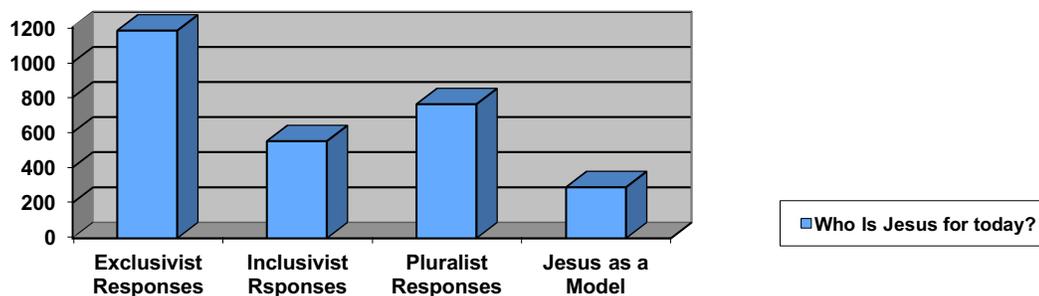
¹⁰³ Committee on Theology and Faith, *Reconciling and Making New*, 46.

¹⁰⁴ Schmidt-Leukel, “Exclusivism, Inclusivism, Pluralism: The Tripolar Typology – Clarified and Reaffirmed,” 13-27.

¹⁰⁵ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 37th General Council* (2000), 397.

judged to be too vague to put into a specific response or approach.¹⁰⁶ The vertical number indicates the number of responders and the horizontal column defines the category of the answers about who Jesus is for the world today.

Table 3.1. The saving significance of Jesus in relation to other faiths



Source: The United Church of Canada, *Record of Proceedings of the 37th General Council* (2000)

According to the report of the survey, the majority of the responses (51 percent) consider that salvation is not separate from Jesus Christ, but the writer of this thesis estimates this

¹⁰⁶ The following table shows the categorization of the responses to the question: Who is Jesus for the world today? I classify columns 1 and 3 as exclusivist responses, 4 through 6 as inclusivist and 7 through 9 as pluralist. Column 2 seems different so is classified separately.

Col.	Responses	Total
1	Jesus is saviour; Salvation is inseparable from the person of Jesus.	595
2	Jesus is a model for moral behaviour or ethical teaching.	289
3	Salvation requires explicit profession of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.	587
4	We cannot point to any other way to salvation than Jesus Christ; at the same time we cannot set limits to the saving power of God. (San Antonio Statement)	116
5	Those who make no explicit profession of faith in Christ may still be saved through Christ.	271
6	Jesus died to save all people – there may be other saviours.	164
7	There are many paths to God.	576
8	There are many paths to God, and we may learn from them.	82
9	We experience Christ in our encounters with people of other faiths; Christian faith may be transformed by such encounters in ways we cannot imagine.	104
	Total	2784

group at 62 percent.¹⁰⁷ Throughout the 1990s the UCC moved toward a Christ-centered/fulfilment approach.

Because of its use of this fulfillment model the church limited its options for dialogue and, as a consequence, a report written in an attempt to dialogue with Jewish faith groups, *Bearing Faithful Witness: United Church – Jewish Relations Today*, presented to the 37th General Council (2000), was not passed.¹⁰⁸ The main reason was that many of the respondents to the study resource and Council members supported an exclusivist position on interfaith dialogue. Although it had only slight revisions (mainly in the general statement of the report’s first presentation in 1997), an updated report accepted in 2003 affirms dual-covenants in which “the love of God is expressed in the giving of both Torah *and* gospel.”¹⁰⁹ *Bearing Faithful Witness* adopts a new Christology wherein the role of Jesus is not to fulfill the promises to the Hebrews: “The past is full and complete. . . . The promises of the Old Testament are also full and complete. In the life of Jesus they are confirmed and recapitulated by God.”¹¹⁰ This understanding of Jesus departs from a fulfillment approach and moves towards to a theocentric one: the two faiths are equally valued as paths to God. For the UCC, this was not an easy transition; it took six years after the first presentation of the report for study in 1997 to reach acceptance at the 38th General Council in 2003. The UCC might have found it easier to

¹⁰⁷ The 62 percent comprises two groups of responses – exclusivist and inclusivist. In this thesis inclusivist responses are included because in both approaches, salvation will be fulfilled eventually through Jesus Christ.

¹⁰⁸ ICIF, *Bearing Faithful Witness: United Church – Jewish Relations Today* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1997).

¹⁰⁹ ICIF, *Bearing Faithful Witness*, 2003, 9; italics mine.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 18.

move from a fulfillment to a theocentric or mutuality model if it had used the earlier faith statement of *World Mission* for the theological foundation for *Bearing Faithful Witness*?

The ICIF Committee must have learned something from its experience with *Bearing Faithful Witness* when it prepared a new report outlining why the church needed a new approach to interfaith dialogue. The report, *That We May Know Each Other: United Church –Muslim Relations Today* (2006) reflects the perspective of interfaith dialogue found in *World Mission*. Here are the relevant statements:

Affirms that God, whose love we have found in Jesus Christ to be boundless, creative, and resourceful, and who creatively and redemptively works in us, also works in others.¹¹¹ (*World Mission*, 1966)

Affirms that God is creatively and redemptively at work in the religious life of Muslims and that we share with Muslims a belief in one God and a common spiritual origin in the faith of Abraham.¹¹² (*United Church – Muslim Relations Today*, 2006)

The underlined words from *World Mission* demonstrate their importance for the purposes of interfaith dialogue in *That We May Know Each Other*. The latter report adopts its “new ways of theologically understanding Islam and its relationship with Christianity” – that “‘God is creatively and redemptively at work’ within Islam”¹¹³ directly from *World Mission* (1966). It is obvious that, even though about four decades later, *World Mission* played a decisive role in developing an approach to interfaith dialogue between the UCC and Muslim faith communities. *That We May Know Each Other* ‘preferentially’ selects the theocentric approach from the UCC’s Christology study resource, *Reconciling and*

¹¹¹ UCC, *World Mission*, 137; underlining mine.

¹¹² ICIF, *That We May Know Each Other*, 1; underlining mine.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 4-5

Making New (1997),¹¹⁴ to identify its perspective on interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Christians. For example, “Whatever ... language we use, we believe it is critical that the United Church find the theological language that allows it to affirm the plurality of the world’s religious life as a sign of a sovereign God who cannot be contained within one culture or tradition.”¹¹⁵ Clearly, *That We May Know Each Other* uses a theocentric model; it understands that there are many ways to God, one of which is Christianity.¹¹⁶ It “acknowledges the prophetic witness of Muhammad, and that the mercy, compassion, and justice of God are expressed in the Qur’an, which is regarded by Muslims as the word of God.”¹¹⁷ This acknowledgment is important for dialogue between Christians and Muslims; it answers two difficult questions: “Was Muhammad a prophet?” and “Is the Qur’an the word of God?”¹¹⁸ To both questions the UCC answers, “Yes.” *That We May Know Each Other* concurs with *Bearing Faithful Witness* that the UCC’s approach to interfaith dialogue is theocentric.

3.2.2. Coming down from the Mountain

The UCC’s interfaith dialogue with both Judaism and Islam was developed using a theocentric model. The transition from Christ-centredness to theocentrism was not easy.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 6. *That We May Know Each Other* indicates that its primary approach to interfaith dialogue with Muslim moves between the “inclusivist and pluralist positions” of *Reconciling and Making New*. The author of this thesis however considers that *That We May Know Each Other* adopts the latter position which is similar to a theocentric model.

¹¹⁵ ICIF, *That We May Know Each Other*, 6-7.

¹¹⁶ Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes toward the World Religions* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1985), 145-204.

¹¹⁷ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 39th General Council* (2006), 86.

¹¹⁸ Mohammed, *Muslim-Christian Relations*, 61.

Now interfaith dialogue presents the UCC with another challenge. Historically, the church has conversed mainly with faith communities from Abrahamic traditions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – which presuppose belief in the same God, but theocentrism is not appropriate for dialogue in the wider context of polytheistic traditions. Western theologians typically have used the theocentric image of the mountaintop in interfaith dialogue.¹¹⁹ Theocentrists believe that Christianity is one of many paths leading to a saving truth on a mountaintop shared by all religions. A theocentric framework, however, suggests the image of a warning sign at the entrance to the trail to the summit: *Only Monotheistic Traditions Permitted*. Traditions such as Buddhism and shamanism, and others who do not hold to a belief in a monotheistic God may be either prohibited from climbing or else interpreted as having an implicit theocentric character that is merely named otherwise. But such a position runs aground if one truly listens to what non-theistic traditions are saying. For example, Zen Buddhist Masao Abe says, “true Emptiness (absolute Nothingness) is absolute Reality which makes all phenomena, all existents, truly *be*.”¹²⁰ Most Buddhists do not speak of a substantial reality that could be named “God,” and Emptiness (無) is not considered to be an object of worship. The difficulty, then, is that theocentrists purport to open the door for interfaith dialogue for everyone but welcome only monotheistic traditions.

The theocentric model has not proven to be the pluralist model for interfaith dialogue that Christian theologians intended. It looks at other faiths through a Christian

¹¹⁹ Paul F. Knitter, “Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions,” in *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1987), 180.

¹²⁰ Masao Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, ed. William R. LaFleur (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1985), 94; Abe’s italics.

theological lens and runs the danger of assimilating other perspectives into an essentially theistic framework. Paul Knitter, once a theocentrist himself, confessed his and his colleague's imperialistic approach to other faiths:

I must admit, that by proposing God, instead of the church or Christ, as the common basis for dialogue, [John Hick and I] are implicitly, unconsciously, but still imperialistically imposing our notions of Deity or the Ultimate on other believers who, like many Buddhists, may not even wish to speak about God or who experience the Ultimate as *Sunyata* (Emptiness), which has nothing or little to do with what Christians experience and call God.¹²¹

Knitter admits that because it imposes the assumption of a Christian concept of God on other faiths a theocentric model will not work in a pluralistic interfaith dialogue, especially in dialogue with Buddhists. The mountaintop image seems more a reflection of the Western culture of imperialism than a neutral means to find a common ground. There is only enough space on that mountaintop for one kind of faith;¹²² it is necessary to struggle to attain and defend it against others.¹²³ This imperialistic concept of the mountaintop image is not appropriate in a pluralistic world. The exclusion of Buddhism and secular organizations of goodwill from the UCC's goal to become an intercultural church would be a barrier to the building of just relations. If the UCC were to keep theocentrism as its theological framework for interfaith dialogue, its mission practice

¹²¹ Knitter, "Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions," 184.

¹²² Diana L. Eck, *Encountering God: A Spiritual Journey from Bozeman to Banara* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 59. According to Eck the image of the mountaintop in Hinduism is different from Western thinking. Eck indicates that the prevalent understanding in Indian culture is that Mount Meru anchors the universe at its very centre and joins heaven and earth and provides enough room for cities of whole host of gods (59).

¹²³ This is supported by the myth of monotheism in the monotheistic traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam which values one or singularity as the proper number for questions of Truth. See Eck, *Encountering God*, 59. Also see Laurel C. Schneider, *Beyond Monotheism: A theology of Multiplicity* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 15-104.

would be limited to monotheistic traditions as its dialogue partners. The UCC must reach beyond theocentrism as the interpretive key to religious pluralism.

The theocentric view of religious pluralism is also problematic on other grounds. The sign at the foot of the mountain reads, “All different paths lead to the same mountaintop;”¹²⁴ the particular path one takes does not matter as long as one just keeps climbing, for ultimate salvation is the same. On the way to the mountaintop, however, Knitter warns that one needs to take “special precautions against sliding down the ‘slippery slopes of relativism.’”¹²⁵ In the end, does it really matter which path one takes? According to Knitter, Hick and others, although many paths may lead to the mountaintop, “Not all the religious paths are necessarily leading upward to the mountaintop.”¹²⁶ The important ethical criterion for Hick is whether and how much a religion promotes “compassion/love toward other human beings or towards all life” and brings about a transformation of human existence from “self-centeredness to Reality-centeredness.”¹²⁷ Knitter agrees that transformation is an ethical matter that bears practical fruit, not simply a matter of holding to a religious doctrine or tradition.¹²⁸ Relativism can be avoided by acting for peacemaking and by building just relations. Here, then, is another reason to move beyond theocentrism – to avoid the problem of relativism.

¹²⁴ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religion*, 118.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ John Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion: Human Response to the Transcendent* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 301. The ethical criteria used here may contain the same problem of imperialism, since it can be used to judge others.

¹²⁸ See Chapter 2 of this thesis for the discussion of Levinas’ ethical responsibility for the Other.

So far it has been argued that the theocentric model and its image of a mountaintop are not appropriate to interfaith dialogue for the UCC. In his monologue, *Introducing Theologies of Religion* (2002), Knitter, in order to move beyond the Abrahamic religions, drops the label “Theocentric Model” from his earlier book, *No Other Name?* (1985), but adapts the main thrust of that model to expand the concept of God as a Divine Being. He then incorporates three pluralistic approaches – “The Philosophical-Historical Bridge, The Religious-Mystical Bridge and The Ethical-Practical Bridge”¹²⁹ – developing them into an expanded theocentric model called the “Mutuality Model.”¹³⁰ This is confusing: the three bridges contributing to the Mutuality Model differ so widely in their approaches to other religions that it would seem too uncomfortable for them to reside together under one *big* tent. The *philosophical bridge* is grounded on a Divine Reality; this bridge would fall without positing that Reality. The purpose of this bridge is to move to a Reality-centred way of living. The *religious bridge* would fall without the supportive agreement of many religious people. This bridge does not include people of no faith into interfaith dialogue. The *ethical bridge* is founded on commitments to justice; this bridge would fall without the support of participation in the suffering of the world. Even though the purposes and functions of the bridges vary so widely, Knitter incorporates them into the Mutuality Model in order to emphasize the importance of the relationship among religions rather than that of their agreement on the principle of plurality.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religion*, 112-113.

¹³⁰ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religion*, 109-124; Knitter, *No Other Name?*, 145-204.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 110.

As discussed above, the *philosophical bridge* presupposes “one Divine Reality,”¹³² and thus can be classified as a neo-theocentric model, but, because it presumes a Western image of God, it is not supportive of a pluralistic interfaith dialogue. Upon facing the critique of the implicit ‘made-in-Christianity’ label and, in particular, to include Buddhists who are non-theist, John Hick no longer uses the word God nor any symbol of God.¹³³ As Hick and others broaden the image of God in the model, Knitter incorporates a ‘neo-theocentric model’ into his Mutuality Model so that it does not exclude Buddhists and others using different images of God. According to Hick, “one ... sees the great world religions as different human responses to the one divine Reality.”¹³⁴ In Knitter’s *philosophical bridge*, religions are understood as human responses to a single Reality. Because, he argues, all human knowledge is historically conditioned and socially constructed, no religion can claim the final, full, unsurpassable Divine Reality. While this model promotes moving from a self-centred being toward an ultimate Reality without which there can be no salvation, because the model insinuates a Western image of God in its use of the term Divine Reality, the trace of God language still lingers.

The *ethical bridge* is closest to the model, “all my relations” from the First Nations philosophy suggested in this thesis and discussed in Chapters 4 and 5; both approaches indicate that liberation lies not in belief alone but rather in belief accompanied by working together – action for justice. Rather than a common or similar

¹³² Ibid., 112.

¹³³ Ibid., 114.

¹³⁴ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religion*, 114. Quoted in John Hick, *God and the Universal Faiths* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1973), 131.

belief in Divine Reality as a motivation for collaboration among religious differences,¹³⁵ the main intention of the *ethical bridge* is to promote justice. The meaning of justice, as discussed in the Introduction and Chapter 1, is drawn from the Levinasian concept of ethical responsibility to the Other. The face of the suffering Other summons one's responsibility to act and effect justice. This imperative suggests that the focal point of the model must move from that of Divine Reality, in other words from the (neo-) theocentrism represented in *the philosophical bridge*, to that of mutuality in working for justice. Knitter notes his reason: "If a religion denies [the] experience and ...[the] challenge of widespread human suffering, then, ... a religion has lost its relevance, if not also its very validity."¹³⁶ The implication is that the intention of (interfaith) dialogue is to act together for justice built upon the "shared concern" of the participants, as expressed in *World Mission*.¹³⁷ The theological roots for the model is based on the "ecumenical" concept of *missio Dei* in which God's concern is recognized in the world and the church is invited to participate in God's mission.¹³⁸ This will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5. The "all my relations" model proposed in this thesis benefits from Knitter's *ethical bridge*'s criterion for participating in the dialogue and working on a concern shared in the community – that religious faith is not a condition; persons of faith or no faith all belong. In Knitter's model, only people of faith participate. In the proposed model, faith is not a requirement for working together; there are no excluding criterion for participation; all

¹³⁵ see Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religion*, 134-149.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 138.

¹³⁷ UCC, *World Mission*, 54.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 135. The basis for engagement with religious others lies not in belief systems but in shared concern. Therefore, people of many beliefs and no belief are welcome to join.

parties interested in the shared concern for justice are invited to work together. The “all my relations” model moves beyond religious boundaries to work with those of different faiths and of no faith, open to all of goodwill.¹³⁹ Regarding the substance of the model, whose concern for justice does this model promote, and does the goal of justice justify compulsory dialogue?¹⁴⁰ The new model aim to suggest that the keys to the model are ‘negotiation’ and a collaborative and reciprocal process to find a common ground.¹⁴¹ The status of religious convictions in such a model will be discussion further in Chapter 5.

The model for becoming an intercultural church being proposed in this thesis, “all my relations,” differs from another pluralistic approach to interfaith dialogue which Knitter calls the “Acceptance Model.”¹⁴² Knitter names the model “acceptance” because it includes the full extent of diversity of all faiths. Its foundation stems from the work of George Lindbeck in his ground-breaking book, *The Nature of Doctrine*.¹⁴³ Lindbeck

¹³⁹ A similar approach found in the Roman Catholic tradition speaks of why a mutuality model is appropriate for interfaith dialogue. The “Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue” (1984) presents four forms of dialogue: a. *dialogue of life*, b. *dialogue of action*, c. *dialogue of theological exchange* and d. *dialogue of religious experience*. The first form is the sharing of joys and sorrows and identifying mutually experienced human problems. The second is acting together on the shared concerns or problems. After the first two stages, participants share stories of their religious heritages and their spiritual values. In this process, the mutuality model is more practical than others since, without the sharing of life experiences and acting against injustice, theological or religious dialogue may be superficial. Beginning with the first stage – the sharing of life – is necessary to move into the third or fourth stages; here is found the “shared concern.” However, this model suggests that only faith traditions are invited to the dialogue. See Pontifical Council for Inter-Religious Dialogue, “Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflections and Orientations on Interreligious Dialogue and the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” in *Redemption and Dialogue: Reading Redemptoris Missio and Dialogue and Proclamation*, ed. William R. Burrows (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1994), 104.

¹⁴⁰ Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religion*, 200.

¹⁴¹ I borrow the concept ‘negotiation’ from Derrida. Negotiation entails an endless action and reflection process that ensures its continuation. See Chapter 2 of this thesis for the background of the concept.

¹⁴² Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religion*, 173-237.

¹⁴³ George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984).

argues for a “cultural-linguistic approach,” claiming that because people of diverse faiths are formed within different language frameworks, it is impossible to understand them in terms of some putative common ground between languages. There are different languages that shape the experiences of the faithful within a given language’s horizon, making for an unbridgeable gap between religions in that religions are untranslatable from one to another.

S. Mark Heim pushes Lindbeck’s notion of untranslatability in cultural and religious languages further in his discussion of multiple religious ends. Heim reframes Lindbeck’s idea by arguing that religions differ from the beginning so that different religions not only speak different languages but also seek different fulfilments. In this notion, all religions are moving in different directions, such that no single salvation is sought by all; instead there will be plural *salvations*.¹⁴⁴ Based on his extensive critique of John Hicks’ philosophical pluralism, Wilfred Smith’s historical pluralism and Paul Knitter’s ethical pluralism, Heim’s book, *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion*, proposes a new perspective on the solution of the problems of religious plurality.¹⁴⁵ He claims that religions are essentially different from each other because they seek different realities and goals in life. For example, Nirvana in Buddhism and communion with God in Christianity seek different fulfilments; the application of a “one-size-fits-all” eschatological understanding or doctrine may undermine the rich diversity of religious

¹⁴⁴ The notion of salvation for Heim is “communion with God and God’s creatures through Christ Jesus.” See S. Mark Heim, *The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 19.

¹⁴⁵ S. Mark Heim, *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1995), 13-98.

traditions and further, may introduce an imperialistic tendency in Christian attitudes towards other religions.

To develop his account of religious diversity, Heim adopts Nicholas Rescher's "orientational pluralism" which he uses to critique the above mentioned pluralistic theologians who claim to have a neutral "God's-eye view."¹⁴⁶ Orientational pluralism is a confusing term, since it includes the idea of orientational monism. According to Rescher, "the individual is inherently monistic. He has, or can develop, only a single value framework and must arrive at one particular set of weights and priorities."¹⁴⁷ Heim argues that one cannot have multiple orientations at the same time: It is impossible to hold, as some pluralistic theologians do, to a "meta-theology."¹⁴⁸ Orientational pluralism allows Heim to see the community and world through one particular framework because orientational pluralism does *not* ascribe the same weight to everyone's position.¹⁴⁹ In this view there is one and only one true position for oneself; others are penultimate. Heim's approach can be called "pluralistic inclusivism" because he challenges the pluralistic idea and reinterprets the concept of inclusivism.¹⁵⁰

Heim's pluralistic inclusivism consists of two key concepts developed from orientational pluralism – difference and commitment. Each cultural-linguistic framework has its unique cognitive-value orientation which contributes to the attainment of its own

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 105 and 153.

¹⁴⁷ Nicholas Rescher, *The Strife of Systems: An Essay on the Grounds and Implications of Philosophy of Diversity* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1985), 145.

¹⁴⁸ Heim, *Salvations*, 134-142.

¹⁴⁹ Rescher, *The Strife of Systems*, 148.

¹⁵⁰ Heim, *Salvations*, 152. He reinterprets the notion of inclusivism that he confessed "I am a convinced inclusivist." See Heim, *The Depth of the Riches*, 8.

version of salvation. Heim's meaning of salvation is "communion with God and God's creatures through Christ Jesus."¹⁵¹ Since each religion moves in its own direction to union with God, each seeking a different communion, there is no common ground for agreement or disagreement. Pluralistic inclusivism clarifies its different images of and journeys to God; each goes its own way without quarrelling with another's faith. The concept of difference relative to plural salvations is the bedrock of Heim's critique of pluralistic theologies – their claims that there is only one religious end for all deny real differences among religions. He further develops his concept of *salvations* in his treatment of the Trinity in his second book, *The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends*. In that context and by way of positing his model of religious pluralism as pluralistic inclusivism, he introduces another key concept, that of religious commitment.

Heim's main purpose in *The Depth of the Riches*, is to connect religious ends (salvations) with the Trinity.¹⁵² Whereas in *Salvations* he defined salvation as communion with God, now, in *The Depth of the Riches*, he explores how communion is related to the concept of the Trinity. In his writing about the Trinity he proposes that there is a community of differences among relationships upon which he lays a foundation for the trinitarian life. For Heim the Trinity is a lens through which to interpret religious pluralism; "the Trinity represents a universal truth about the way the world and God actually are."¹⁵³ For Christians Jesus Christ is the only way to relate with God and God's

¹⁵¹ Heim, *The Depth of the Riches*, 19.

¹⁵² Ibid, 123.

¹⁵³ Ibid, 127.

creatures. This does not mean that Christ is the only way to have communion with God; there may be many such ways including through Muhammad, the Buddha, or other religious figures. God, who creates things differently, relates to them in particular ways. The concept of the Trinity not only affirms one's religious end, but also challenges the acceptance of God's particular relationship with others and different religious ends. In his trinitarian theology, Heim insists that one's own religious end is the only ultimate one and that others are "penultimate."¹⁵⁴ Further, Heim's argument differs again from that of traditional inclusivists such as Karl Rahner that others would be better off in Christianity. Heim's pluralistic inclusivism allows different religious orientations each with their own ends and they are all considered valuable. His pluralistic inclusivism persuasively argues that one does not need to lose one's commitment to a Christian religious end while respecting different ends.

On a first reading of Heim's pluralistic inclusivism, it might seem a compelling and appealing approach; it promotes a diversity of religions, accepting the differences among them and respecting the freedom of each in their faith journey. His approach contributes to the prevention of religious conflicts, keeping a distance between each participant and affirming each one's faith journey without putting down other beliefs or religious figures. Moreover, his model makes an original contribution to the discussion of the relationship between Christianity and other religions by taking religious difference seriously.¹⁵⁵ The main purpose of Heim's approach is to affirm that each religion seeks its own end; it respects that there may be multiple salvations.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, 128

¹⁵⁵ Gavin D'Costa, "Review of *The Depth of the Riches: A Trinitarian Theology of Religious Ends* by S. Mark Heim," *Modern Theology* 18 (2002): 137. Other models such as Mutuality seem to consider

However, Heim does not consider all ends as equally valid; he insists that Christian salvation is the only worthy end and that all other ends are of a “lesser good.”¹⁵⁶ According to Catherine Cornille, “there is no doubt that Heim believes that the Christian conception of the ultimate goal as a participation in the Triune life of God offers the most integrative and thus the highest of conceptions of the ultimate end.”¹⁵⁷ Heim’s pluralistic inclusivism promotes Christianity by recommending the trinitarian formula to others to use to develop their own theological understanding of ultimate Reality. For the people of other faiths his approach would hardly seem inclusive since he would allocate them to a lower level of communion with God. Furthermore, because his model affirms only those participants of faith, thus excluding humanistic and secular perspectives, it is argued here that Heim’s pluralistic inclusivism, while showing strengths in some areas, is not overall an adequate model for becoming an intercultural church.

Heim’s pluralistic inclusivism model may be regarded as a goal-oriented approach; its main thrust is to affirm the safe landings at the end of different faith journeys. Christian scripture, however, reminds the seeker that the reign of God is experienced *in the process*, not the result. In the parables of the gospels the reign of God is compared to the growing of the mustard seed and transformative dynamics of yeast (Matthew 13: 31-33), not to the end result of the tree and the bread. The importance of process is affirmed in the Report on *World Mission* as one of the principles to govern

differences in its approach to other religions, however there is the unproven assumption all religions seek a common end.

¹⁵⁶ Heim, *The Depth of the Riches*, 44.

¹⁵⁷ Catherine Cornille, *The Impossibility of Interreligious Dialogue* (New York: Herder & Herder, 2008), 129. For Heim, the doctrine of the Trinity provides the referential value of how other religions can develop their own conceptual framework of ultimate Reality.

rethinking about traditional attitudes toward the relation between Christianity and other religious communities. A religious end is not the final stage: *World Mission* states, “we accept [the mission strategy] as a fact to be lived with, not as an ideal to be worked for.”¹⁵⁸ When people mutually work together for the common good the goodness will emerge; it is not necessary for them to believe it is the final stage. A goal-oriented approach, in spite of its positive intentions, may not promote the working together among religions for the common good.

The image of a goal is often referred to in interfaith dialogue among Western theocentric theologians as a mountaintop.¹⁵⁹ For many theologians the metaphor of climbing up to the mountaintop or summit has been used for one’s faith journey. Like the mountaintop image discussed earlier in this chapter, Heim uses the image of summits but he uses it differently. If the mountaintop stands for the truth, his image of different summits signifies different religious ends; “diverse religious fulfillments stand at their own summits.”¹⁶⁰ Unlike the mountaintop image described above, it is not necessary for the gathered on summits to defend their particular religious end because they share a faith. Even though each summit is connected to others by ridges, there is not much interaction with neighbouring summits; each summit is isolated. To dialogue with other faiths, it is necessary to come down from one’s summit. Just as the imperialistic image of the mountaintop is not appropriate in a pluralistic world, the image of summits does not serve well metaphorically in a culturally and religiously pluralistic world. In both cases

¹⁵⁸ UCC, *World Mission*, 55.

¹⁵⁹ Paul F. Knitter, “Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions,” 180.

¹⁶⁰ Heim, *The Depth of the Riches*, 278,

the climbers need to come down from the mountaintop or summit to ground level to better interact with each other (Matthew 17: 9; Mark 9: 9; Luke 9: 37). In the next chapter we will discuss why interfaith and intercultural dialogue are more appropriately placed not on the mountaintop or summit but on the banks of the river.

In conclusion it is argued here that a model of becoming an intercultural church needs to include not only the Abrahamic religions but also other religious and non-religious traditions, for example, Buddhism, Hinduism and humanists that work locally and globally out of a shared concern for the common good. The proposed “all my relations” model does not deny the importance of the end or the conception of ultimate Reality; neither does it simply accept difference or seek a common theocentric ground. The essence of the model aims to foster working together, sharing concerns for the common good. The new model is a process by which participants work together beyond their differences in a suffering world.

3.3. Becoming an Intercultural Church: the Historical Journey

After reviewing recent UCC faith statements on interfaith dialogue, this thesis argues that the UCC move from a theocentric model and from the idea of pluralistic inclusivism to one more appropriate for the church’s God’s mission in a pluralistic world. The purpose is to emphasize building just relations with Others and include both non-theistic and non-religious traditions in its collaborative efforts. It is important today to shift the focus of the discussion to how the church embraces ‘cultural pluralism’ when it moves across cultural boundaries to work with Others, a key component of the proposed model, “all my relations.” Religious pluralism is only one aspect of the discussion needed

by the UCC to attain its vision of becoming an *intercultural* church. Another important aspect is the process of engagement with cultural pluralism. Since the new model denotes that all participants, whether people of faith or not, are called to ethical responsibility for the Other, it extends beyond interfaith dialogue to a celebration of cultural difference where, as discussed in the previous chapter, different cultures join together for the common good.

The 39th Council in 2006 declared that the “church must be intercultural.”¹⁶¹ The Ethnic Ministries Unit of General Council proposed a vision for the church “where there is mutually respectful diversity and full and equitable participation of all Aboriginal, Francophone, ethnic minority, and ethnic majority constituencies in the total life, mission, and practices of the whole church.”¹⁶² The vision of the church at that time suggested that all people *within* the church, regardless of their racial and cultural backgrounds, be invited to participate equally in the building of mutual relations in its life and work.

That vision of the UCC seemed to promote its culturally pluralistic composition and the equitable participation of visible minorities in its life and work. While this is important, it is equally or even more important for the church to work with Others *beyond* its ecclesiastical boundaries. The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer once stated, “The church is the church only when it exists for others.”¹⁶³ He urged the church to move

¹⁶¹ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 39th General Council* (2006), 748.

¹⁶² Ethnic Ministries Re-visioning Task Group, “A Transformative Vision for the United Church of Canada,” 39th General Council (August, 2006), COMM-149.

¹⁶³ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, ed. Eberhard Bethge (1953, New York: Touchstone, 1997), 382.

from a church-centred to an Other-centred ecclesiology in order to “share in problems of ordinary human life.”¹⁶⁴ The word “other” can be problematic if understood as the object of mission; it is better understood as “the Other” in a Levinasian sense, the infinity of the Other. The mission practice promoted in *World Mission* widened its witness to include all who share a common concern for the good of the many. Accordingly, in this cultural varied and religiously pluralistic world, the vision of becoming an intercultural church reaches beyond its ecclesiastical boundaries to practice its mission with Others. This vision will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5 but for now, building on the UCC’s move to become intercultural, the main purpose is to suggest that different cultural heritages fostering cultural pluralism are invaluable contributions to the fulfillment of the vision.

The proposal to become an intercultural church is not the first expression in the history of the UCC of its intention to improve meaningful relationships among peoples of different cultural heritages. Over the years, various committees presented many proposals to address concerns raised by different cultural communities within the church, intending to contribute toward building an inclusive community.¹⁶⁵ At this point in the discussion,

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ On the evening of April 24th, 1975, about 60 delegates from the congregations of seven different cultural heritages (ethnic minorities) gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the UCC at Bloor Street United Church, Toronto, ON. where a Korean congregation worships. During the service they sang the anniversary song, “Shout of Celebration,” with one voice and then each group, in their traditional dress sang the first verse of the song. They were 16 Chinese, one Finnish, two German, six Hungarian, four Italian, 19 Japanese and 12 Korean groups. For the first time in the history of the UCC, different cultural heritage ministers and lay representatives were brought together to share their experiences and learnings with each other (UCCA, DMC fonds, “Conference of Minority Groups of Asiatic & European Origin,” *Minutes*, April 23-26, 1975.).

The embryo for building an inclusive community grew out of racial and cultural differences and pain. This historic conference was organized by the Task Force on Immigration and Minority Ministries, not then a standing committee so there was not continuous support and care for different cultural heritage congregations. In 1978 the Task Force became the National Ethnic Committee and thus a standing committee of the Division of Mission in Canada (DMC). Since the first national gathering of the ethnic

however, in order to make a case for the proposed model, selected historical issues relevant to the UCC's vision of becoming an intercultural church will be examined. Critiques by different cultural heritages of the church's colonialist approach laid the foundations for becoming an intercultural church.

3.3.1. *Issues Raised by Ethnic Ministries*¹⁶⁶

In the late 1970s, different cultural heritages in the UCC expressed concern that they were being treated differently depending on the “*mood*” of the Presbytery.¹⁶⁷ The word “mood” is a nuanced one: different cultural heritages experienced what they felt was unfair treatment – that they encountered various kinds of discrimination in their Presbyteries. To deal with these concerns, in 1979, the National Ethnic Committee (NEC) developed “Operational Guidelines” which claimed “Ethnic Ministry to be a national responsibility of the United Church of Canada and that, as such, the whole church had to be involved in an equitable manner.”¹⁶⁸ In the most relevant section, “Inherited

ministries, it has contributed to the UCC's building of an inclusive and just community. Some of its visions were expressed in: “The Ethnic Ministry Policy and Guidelines,” (UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 29th General Council* in 1982), 168-170; “The Proposed Model for the Ethnic Ministries Council of the United Church of Canada,” (*Record of Proceedings of the 35th General Council* (1994), 241–259; “That All May Be One: Policy Statement on Anti-Racism” (*Record of Proceedings of the 37th General Council* in 2000), 712-726 and “A Transformative Vision for the United Church of Canada,” (*Record of Proceedings of the 39th General Council* in 2006), COMM-140.

¹⁶⁶ For a previous version of this section, please see Hyuk Cho, “We Are Not Alone”: Historical Journey of the United Church of Canada's Response to Become an Intercultural Church,” *IRM* 100, no. 1 (April 2011): 48-61.

¹⁶⁷ UCCA, DMC fonds, NEC, “Operational Guidelines for Ethnic Congregations (first draft),” *Minutes*, 96.022C-box 1-file 5, 3 February 1980. The word “mood” was added in the third draft of the “Guidelines,” November 1980.

¹⁶⁸ UCCA, DMC fonds, NEC, “Operational Guidelines for Ethnic Congregations, third draft,” *Minutes*, November 1980.

Assumptions,” different cultural heritages expressed how they felt about the church, and the church openly acknowledged its discriminatory attitude toward them:

There is an unspoken conclusion that our culture is superior to any other, and our method of expressing the gospel is the norm. ... The church should be paternalistic in relationship with ethnic congregations. The church knows the needs of ethnic people, and thus the church does not have to listen to them, nor adopt their ways. The theology and ways of worship of ethnic people are dismissed as inferior, if they are even heard at all. ... In a generation or two, the need for ethnic work would be obsolete for assimilation should be complete.¹⁶⁹

The attitude of the UCC toward different cultural heritages was a colonial one. A “process of othering” (Russell) in the church had been operating to assimilate different cultures into the dominant one, either English or French. Different cultures were not welcomed, and self-determination and creative experimentation were discouraged.¹⁷⁰ The UCC was practising what Homi Bhabha called a “pedagogical discourse”¹⁷¹ in that the church was carrying out the myth of itself as an imagined holistic faith community called the *United Church*.

In its confession of its “Inherited Assumptions,” and with the conviction that it must move beyond them, the church took the important step to form a policy of action in order to build just relations with different cultural heritages. It recommended:

That the presence of ethnic people is a *gift* to the United Church of Canada; that different ways of worship, and different expressions of theology by ethnic people be viewed as a possible valuable contribution to the life of the whole church; that ethnic people participate with others in all parts of the United Church structure, and be treated equally by Presbyteries and Conferences across Canada in accordance with national policies.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 29th General Council* (1982), 168-9.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 169.

¹⁷¹ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (1994, New York: Routledge, 2005), 208-209.

¹⁷² UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 29th General Council* (1982), 169. italics mine.

These Guidelines had three implications for future ministry. First, the UCC, for the first time, confessed its colonial assumptions related to different cultural heritages and their ministries, although it should be noted that there was no direction about how to overcome those assumptions. The church began to recognize the presence of different cultures and different ways of doing ministry. Second, ministry with different cultural heritages was recognized as a national reality of the UCC and different cultures were seen as a potential gift. Third, by admitting its wrong relations with different cultural heritages, the UCC was opening the door for the apology to the First Nations, made in 1986 and 1998.¹⁷³

In the late 1980s, besides setting up the Ethnic Ministry Policy and Guidelines, the NEC was deeply involved in the combat of racism in the church. As a result, in 1987, the DMC published a resource about racism, *Moving Beyond Racism: Worship Resources and Background Material*.¹⁷⁴ This document recognized that “Racism lurks in all of us and surfaces in unexpected ways. Hopefully we can move beyond racism and learn to live side by side in mutual trust and respect.”¹⁷⁵ Two years later the Division of Mission in Canada (DMC) published another resource, *Exploring Racism*, a supplement to the 1987 publication; its goal was to build racial justice.¹⁷⁶ The NEC’s initiation to combat

¹⁷³ The UCC was involved in 13 Indian Residential Schools until 1973. The Residential Schools set up by the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches prior to Union were taken over by the UCC in 1925. The apology in 1986, however, was not considered sufficient by the First Nations, so, in 1998, the UCC made a second apology - to the former students of United Church Indian Residential Schools and to their families and communities.

¹⁷⁴ DMC, *Moving Beyond Racism: Worship Resources and Background Material* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1987).

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁷⁶ DMC, *Exploring Racism* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1989)

racism was a valuable contribution to the whole church, establishing a foundation for a just community and for later becoming an intercultural church.

In 1992, the 34th General Council received two petitions related to anti-racism.¹⁷⁷ Two conferences – Montreal and Ottawa and British Columbia – were concerned that racism was growing in their churches and communities. General Council also received five petitions to set up a task group to work on the establishment of a Division of Ethnic Ministry.¹⁷⁸ The petitions noted, “In view of a rapid growth and great potential of further growth, and of the diversity of traditions, the Ethnic Ministry Working Unit of the DMC is too small and limited, and thus not able to respond effectively to all the needs of ‘ethnic’ ministries in Canada.”¹⁷⁹ To continue its work the 34th General Council (1992) established two task groups: an Anti-Racism Task Group and a Feasibility Task Group on Ethnic Ministries. The Task Group on Ethnic Ministries expressed its Theological Statement as follows:

... In a denomination with deep roots in Anglo-European culture and theology, we have experienced Han, both individually and collectively, in such ways as:

- white racism,
- cultural and religious imperialism,
- ‘white God’ dogmatics,
- white elitism and systemic exclusiveness,
- patronization,
- monopolization of leadership, property and resources. ...

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 639-641.

¹⁷⁸ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 34th General Council* (1992), petitions no. 57, 58, 59, 60 and 61.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 574. In 1987 the NEC asked the DMC to replace the NEC with the Ethnic Ministries Working Unit in order to raise the profile of the Church among the various different cultural heritage communities. The purpose of the EMWU included: “To build on the opportunity and challenge of a rapidly growing ethnic population and the emerging multicultural mosaic in Canada [and to] encourage the United Church at various levels and in all its areas of mission to become culturally sensitive and receptive of the gifts brought by a variety of cultures” (UCCA, DMC fonds, “National Ethnic Committee,” *Minutes*, 96.022C-box 2-file 4, 29 April 1987, 11).

Where cultural diversity is not yet a reality.
 Our Han-ridden experiences continue today,
 with outside pressures toward
 Assimilation
 Segregation
 Rejection ...¹⁸⁰

The members of the Task Group reflected on their experience to develop a vision for recovering their identities and authenticity and for reclaiming their names and identities among the whole people of God. The participating group of people of different cultural heritages proposed Korean *minjung* theology as the basis for the building of a just community to overcome cultural and religious imperialism, and they invited the whole church to join in that vision. The 35th General Council in 1994 approved the establishment of an Ethnic Ministry Council (EMC) to fulfill that goal.¹⁸¹

3.3.2. Towards Becoming an Intercultural Church

The “Anti-Racism Task Group” set up in 1992 by the 34th General Council consulted closely with church members of both First Nations and different cultural heritages to develop an anti-racism policy and related strategies for action. According to its report to the 36th General Council (1997), “The United Church of Canada commits itself to working to end racism internally and in the wider society, with allocation of

¹⁸⁰ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 35th General Council* (1994), 244; the alignment is original. According to *Minjung* theologian Suh, Nam-dong, Han (恨) is an “accumulation of suppressed and condensed experiences of oppression. Thus accumulated *han* is inherited and transmitted, boiling in the blood of the people.” Nam-dong Suh, “Towards a Theology of Han,” in *Minjung Theology: People the Subjects of History*, ed. Young-bock Kim (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1983), 64.

¹⁸¹ UCC, Feasibility Task Group on Ethnic Ministries, “The Proposed Model for the Ethnic Ministries Council of the United Church of Canada,” *Record of Proceedings of the 35th General Council* (1994), 96–97, 119–126, 241–259.

resources to support this commitment.”¹⁸² The report’s “Goals and Strategies”¹⁸³ became the basis of the document, “*That All May Be One: Policy Statement on Anti-Racism*” presented by the DMC to the 38th General Council (2000).¹⁸⁴ The document’s Statement of Beliefs on Anti-Racism has important implications for the church’s hopes to build a just community.

We believe we are all equal before God; We believe racism is a *sin* and violates God’s desire for humanity; We believe racism is present in our society and in our church, and throughout time has manifested itself in many forms in varying degrees; We believe that the struggle against racism is a continuous effort. Therefore our anti-racism policy statement is only a first step. It provides the basis for the creation of a church where all are welcome, where all feel welcome, and where diversity is as natural as breathing. We believe change is possible. . . . We believe we are all called to work against racism and for a society in which the words of the Gospel are realized among us.¹⁸⁵

The church expressed its conviction that “racism is a sin” present in both church and society. This strong statement of faith proclaimed that the church’s vision was to dismantle racism because a community seeking to welcome cultural difference could not be built on the sin of racism. Here, it is noted how the UCC moved beyond a set of inherited assumptions in 1982 to divest itself from its historical colonialist approach to peoples of different cultural heritages.

¹⁸² UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 36th General Council* (1997), 525.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 526-530. The Goals are: to enable full inclusion and participation of minority persons within the United Church in just and equitable hiring and employment; to support and stand in solidarity with those who face racism within the UCC and wider society; to learn about racism and anti-racism and discover ways to promote positive multiracial and cross-cultural relationships in church and community, and to promote systemic transformation to create a more just church and society.

¹⁸⁴ UCC, *Record of Proceedings of the 37th General Council* (2000), 712-726

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 714; italics mine.

The Ethnic Ministries¹⁸⁶ Re-visioning Task Group (RTG) held its re-visioning process from 2005 to 2006; it noted that to fulfill the hopes of culturally diverse communities it was critical that the church's ministry "be built on a foundation of racial justice."¹⁸⁷ It stressed that it supports a "vision of a church that acts upon its commitment to grow in faith in Jesus Christ and to join with others in living out its commitment to racial justice in all places to create a national church."¹⁸⁸ It concludes that, "Ethnic Ministries constituencies need more partners in the church to be actively engaged in the systemic transformational work that racial justice requires."¹⁸⁹ The RTG recognized that racial justice was a necessary basis for its transformative vision of becoming an intercultural church.

It is noted that the RTG did not use the term multicultural church. Its report says, "Celebration of diversity is only the beginning. The term 'multicultural' church is problematic and loaded with political baggage."¹⁹⁰ The report does not expand on this statement, but it seems clear that the RTG understands the meaning of "intercultural" to transcend an emphasis on diversity. While the RTG welcomed "diversity" in the *Policy Statement on Anti-Racism* (2000), in its 2006 re-visioning it says clearly that celebration of diversity is only the beginning. Did this development have something to do with the

¹⁸⁶ The name Ethnic Ministry Council (1996) was changed to Ethnic Ministries when the UCC restructured the General Council Offices in 2001.

¹⁸⁷ Ethnic Ministries Re-visioning Task Group, "A Transformative Vision for the United Church of Canada," 39th General Council (August, 2006), COMM-140.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 141.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 142.

idea of mutuality among cultures? As argued in the discussion of Bhabha's notion of cultural difference in Chapter 2, while multiculturalism emphasizes the diversity of cultures, the problem remains that the dominant culture holds power and that racism is still rampant in society.¹⁹¹ The RTG found that even if the idea of a multicultural church emphasizes the celebration of diversity, it is *only* the beginning of what the church is hoping for.

According to theologian Robert Schreiter, 'intercultural' infers the crossing of cultural boundaries.¹⁹² An intercultural church crosses cultural boundaries. When doing so, power differences are often encountered, highlighting an asymmetrical relationship between cultures, especially given the dominance of white Anglo-European culture in the church. Thus crossing boundaries is a dangerous thing to do unless it involves racial justice. In Chapter 2 I related my own experience of power imbalance – the distractive power of the dominant white Anglo-European culture in a congregation. The vision that animates becoming an intercultural church is all the more meaningful because people of non-Anglo minority have usually been powerless in Canadian society.¹⁹³ The RTG, itself experiencing the vulnerability of belonging to cultural minorities, challenges not only the culturally Anglo-European congregations in particular but also the UCC as a whole to be open to those of all cultures, crossing traditional cultural boundaries to share power

¹⁹¹ Homi K. Bhabha, "The Third Space: Interview with Homi Bhabha," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 208.

¹⁹² Robert Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology Between the Global and the Local* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997), 29.

¹⁹³ For a discussion of the powerlessness of people of different cultural heritages, see Augie Fleras and Jean Leonard Elliott, *Unequal Relations: An Introduction to Race, Ethnic and Aboriginal Dynamic in Canada*, 2nd ed. (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1996), especially Chapter 4.

equitably and in mutual relations with one another, thus to achieve the vision of becoming an intercultural church.

Conclusion

The UCC is now facing a question similar to that raised by the Commission on *World Mission* in 1966: what is the UCC's mission in this richly religiously and culturally pluralistic world? An analysis of the historical development of the UCC position on interfaith dialogue as mission practice contributes to an answer to this question. This chapter has traced the movement of the UCC from the 1966 use of a mutuality model through a theocentric model for its interfaith dialogue with Jews in 2003 and Muslims in 2006. Because a theocentric interfaith dialogue among the Abrahamic Faiths precludes those outside monotheistic traditions, it is argued here that the UCC should move beyond theocentrism. To overcome this limitation, a model rooted in the 1966 *World Mission* report which seeks dialogue about "shared concern" as mission practice but does not emphasize "common elements of thought or belief" is proposed. The model being proposed in this thesis, "all my relations," argues for coming down from the mountaintop (theocentrism) and summit (pluralistic inclusivism) to the river of life on the plain to work together with those of different faiths and of no faith on matters of shared concern for justice for all people. Rather than entertaining options such as the (neo-) theocentric or pluralistic inclusivism that may end up forcing others to adopt a Christian understanding of God or merely emphasize differences among faiths without building genuine relationship between them, "all my relations" signifies that the collaborative processes of searching for justice and forging common ground together are

critical starting points for a more productive approach. Because they exclude those of different faiths or of no faith and therefore cannot build just relations, none of the replacement, fulfilment or (neo-) theocentric models serve the church's mission to build partnerships participating in *missio Dei* in a pluralistic world. Neither does the Acceptance Model, since it emphasizes differences among religious faiths; those of no faith yet with good may feel excluded. Another problem with pluralistic inclusivism lies in its goal-orientation - encouraging faith traditions to seek their own salvations; it does not provide a common ground to work together with Others. When interfaith dialogue is based on a mission practice model of acting together out of shared concern, right relations are valued, particularly with those who are suffering from injustice. Levinas' ethical responsibility for the Other, Derrida's difference and Bhabha's Third Space together provide a sound philosophical foundation for mutuality in mission. It is hoped that the proposed model, rather than debating different understandings of doctrines or merely seeking one's own salvation but acting together in accepting differences out of shared concern for just relations, will live out the UCC vision of becoming an intercultural church.

Herein the documents and policies of the UCC from 1980 to 2006 have been traced and analysed to explore its intercultural vision. The *Ethnic Ministry Policy and Guidelines* (1982) opened the door to a new relationship with peoples of different cultural heritages. In these Guidelines, in response to the issue of racism raised by different cultural heritages, the church recognized the presence of different cultural heritages as a gift. The *Policy Statement on Anti-Racism, "That All May Be One"* (2000), contributed to the vision of becoming an intercultural church. The anti-racism policy was a necessary

condition for the Ethnic Ministries' re-visioning of its ministry. Based on this anti-racism momentum in the church and the idea of doing mission out of shared concern, the UCC not only celebrates the gifts of different cultural heritages but also experiences the joy of working mutually for justice. An intercultural church overcomes traditional religious and cultural boundaries by working with people of other cultures, faiths and of no faith to build a just community for all. Further theological background will be provided in the next chapter to more fully address the concept of becoming an intercultural church.

Chapter 4

Intercultural Theology:

Practising Mission with the Other

To cross the boundaries of one's culture without realizing that another culture may have a radically different approach to reality is today no longer admissible. If still consciously done, it would be philosophically naive, politically outrageous and religiously sinful.

– Raimon Panikkar, *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics*

The Church was rather meant to be the place in which human beings, in all their difference and disparate itineraries, come together; and in this regard, we are obviously falling far short.

– Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*

Northrop Frye, arguably Canada's greatest literary critic, suggested in his book *The Bush Garden*, that earlier settlers in Canada had a "garrison mentality."¹ Reflecting on his review of early Canadian literature, Frye imagined that the garrisons of early Canada were "[s]mall and isolated communities surrounded by a physical or psychological 'frontier', separated from one another and from their American and British cultural sources."² Facing the vastness of nature and the separation from their homeland, the first action of the settlers in this land was to build a new homeland that resembled

¹ Northrop Frye, "Conclusion to a Literary History of Canada," in *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination* (Toronto: Anansi, 1971), 225.

² Ibid.

their original homeland's religion and politics.³ Frye said that garrison communities provided all that their members had in the way of distinctively human values, and that they fostered a great respect for the law and order that holds them together.⁴ Communities brought people together to protect them from the wilderness and interference from other nations. However, they faced the fear of isolation: "The real terror comes when the individual feels himself becoming an individual, pulling away from the group, losing the sense of driving power that the group gives him, aware of a conflict within himself far subtler than the struggle of morality against evil."⁵ The garrison mentality means that people tend to be kind to each other *within* a community; but they can be hostile to others *beyond* the community by building high walls and dwelling behind them.⁶ Frye noted that it is much easier to multiply garrisons that divide Canadian life, leading to the death of communication and dialogue. But Frye also was concerned "with a creative side of the garrison mentality, one that has had positive effects on our intellectual life."⁷ How, then, can we theologically foster the creative and positive sides of the garrison mentality so that people more easily huddle together beyond their

³ Northrop Frye, *Divisions on a Ground: Essays on Canadian Culture*, ed. James Polk (Toronto: Anansi, 1982), 21.

⁴ Frye, *The Bush Garden*, 225.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 226. More recently Cecil Foster suggests "ethnic ghettos" as an example of garrisons. Cecil Foster, *Genuine Multiculturalism* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queens University, 2014), 123.

⁶ In recent Canadian history, examples of building walls are the "Charter of Quebec Values" under the Parti Québécois in 2013 and Conservative MP Kellie Leitch's immigrant screening proposal of 2016. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/immigrant-screening-proposal-about-promoting-tolerance-leitch-says/article31737206/>. Accessed October 5, 2016.

⁷ Frye, *The Bush Garden*, 226.

differences and work to tear down the walls of separation?⁸

In the previous chapter the United Church Canada (UCC)'s history of developing faith statements and policies to deal with religious and cultural pluralism was reviewed. Throughout that journey the UCC developed a vision of becoming an intercultural church where diversity is respected and full and equal participation in the life and work of the church is valued as a gift. This vision has persisted but a question remains about the meaning of intercultural theology and the way by which the church will fulfill its vision. In this chapter the origin of intercultural theology will be explored, its definition for the purpose of this thesis clarified and implications for church's mission discussed. Then, two themes from Aboriginal cultures – All My Relations and the Two Row Wampum belt – will be proposed as helpful ways to understand how different cultures may coexist equally and with mutual respect without one controlling the other. Finally, the hermeneutics of the Korean *minjung* theologian, Nam-dong Suh's pneumatological-synchronic interpretation will be analyzed to demonstrate how faith and culture can work together for a common good. Building from this, John V. Taylor's *the go-between God* will be discussed because the Holy Spirit freely moves between intercultural spaces.

⁸ Frye sees the image of community as a sense of unity - the opposite to a sense of uniformity. "Uniformity, where everyone 'belongs', uses the same clichés, thinks alike and behaves alike, produces a society which seems comfortable at first but is totally lacking in human dignity. Real unity tolerates dissent and rejoices in variety of outlook and tradition, recognizes that it is man's destiny to unite and not divide, and understands that creating proletariats and scape-goats and second-class citizens is a mean and contemptible activity. Unity, so understood, is the extra dimension that raises the sense of belonging into genuine human life. Nobody of any intelligence has any business being loyal to an ideal of uniformity: what one owes one's loyalty to is an ideal of unity, and a distrust of such a loyalty is rooted in a distrust of life itself." Frye, *The Bush Garden*, vi.

4.1. Emerging Intercultural Theology

In the previous chapter, the emergence of the vision of becoming an intercultural church was reviewed. Here, the adjective, ‘intercultural’, a relatively new term in theological discourse, will be clarified. In 2010 Peter Lang (Frankfurt am Main) published the 150th volume in the trilingual book series, *Studies in the Intercultural History of Christianity*. At the beginning of the project in 1975 no publisher had been interested in the topic of the series, but since then it went on to become one of the most successful worldwide, especially in the fields of missiology and comparative religions. When the series began, the editors consisted of three European scholars, Hans-Jochen Margull (1925-1982, Hamburg), Walter Hollenweger (1927- , Birmingham) and Richard Friedli (1937- , Freiburg).⁹ In the early 1970s these missiologists intensely exchanged their thoughts and ideas on worldwide ecclesiastical and religious dynamics; they had little sympathy for the continuation of colonial and hegemonic approaches to mission.

4.1.1. *The Beginning of Intercultural Theology*

According to Werner Ustorf, “the book series of 1975 was primarily the result of the work of Margull’s research project at Hamburg University on the ‘social impact and self-awareness of the overseas variants of Christianity’, which was to have been carried out by an international team of up to twenty scholars.”¹⁰ Unfortunately, due to their lack

⁹ In the 1960s Hollenweger worked at the World Council of Churches (WCC) and in 1967 he was an editor of the WCC publication, *The Church for Others and the Church for the World*, which introduced the concept of *missio Dei*. Friedli published a book in 1974 to explore the future of Christianity and other religions by including two contexts: the “phenomenon of a global ‘cultural circulation’” and “the problem of coping with irreducible ‘otherness’ in terms of society, culture and religion.” Margul had a rich experience in Japanese Buddhism. See Werner Ustorf, “The Cultural Origins of ‘Intercultural’ Theology,” *Mission Studies* 25, no. 2 (2008): 230.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 235-6.

of understanding of social science research in the area of religion and culture, the funding bodies rejected it and the original project was discontinued. However, Margull liaised with his colleagues, Hollenweger and Friedli, to begin a new project on an intercultural history of Christianity. The archival records of 1971/72 reveal the background of the origin of the term intercultural theology. To quote one of five guidelines of intercultural theology: “The globalisation of Christianity had demonstrated that the non-Western variants of Christianity could no longer be described in theological or ecclesiological categories developed in the West. In fact, the diagnosis was that there is a profound ‘discontinuity with the European origin.’”¹¹ Margull and his colleagues suggested that the new context of worldwide Christianity evoked a new perspective, leading them to develop the term “intercultural theology.” Following the example of the surge of Third World Christianity, their theologies explicitly reflected their own social, political, religious and cultural contexts. At the beginning of the 20th century, two thirds of all Christians lived in Europe and North America; at the beginning of the 21st century, two thirds of all Christians live in the global south.¹² Mission churches now produced their own local theologies, different from those of the West. Christianity had become globalized at the same time indigenous churches and their theologies were localized.¹³ In this global and local mix, Margull and his colleagues started to recognize how important

¹¹ Hans-Jochen Margull, “Überseeische Christenheit. Markierung eines Forschungsbereiches anhand der letztjährigen Literatur,” *Verkündigung und Forschung* 16 (1971). Quoted in Ustorf, “The Cultural Origins of ‘Intercultural’ Theology,” 235-6.

¹² Frans Wijzen, “Intercultural Theology and the Mission of the Church,” *Exchange* 30 (2001): 221.

¹³ See Robert J. Schreier, *Constructing Local Theologies* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1985), especially Chapter 1 and *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997), Chapter 1.

cultural and religious diversity was for doing theology.

In retrospect, Friedli said that he and his colleagues tried to move away from “Eurocentric forms of church, theology and religion as a possibility for a newfound creativity and for the enrichment of occidental Christianity. [They] defined such developments as ‘intercultural.’”¹⁴ He added that the American missiologist Louis Luzbetak’s book, *The Church and Cultures*,¹⁵ had inspired them while they were in the planning stage of the series and that his models of “intercultural communication” had triggered such an eye-opening experience that they adopted the term intercultural for the series.¹⁶

At the beginning of the series, neither a conceptual editorial statement nor guidelines were in place, but Friedli wrote a short paragraph in 1976 for the publisher’s promotional use. Later Hollenweger included it in his various works on intercultural theology. The “five guiding principles” provide a clear picture of their approach to intercultural theology. Accordingly, intercultural theology 1) is ‘that scholarly theological discipline that operates within a particular cultural framework without absolutizing it’; 2) selects its methods appropriately; Western academic theology is not automatically privileged over others; 3) has a duty to look for alternative forms of doing theology (such as non-Western and narrative forms); 4) must be tested in social practice and measured

¹⁴ Richard Friedli, “Postscript” Variations on ‘Intercultural’: Retrospectives and Perspectives,” in Richard Friedli (eds.), *Intercultural Perceptions and Prospects of World Christianity*, 128.

¹⁵ Louis Luzbetak, *The Church and Cultures: New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology* (1963, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1989).

¹⁶ Friedli does not say the specific reason, but he insinuates he and his colleagues were excited at the methodology Luzbetak utilized in his book. Luzbetak has developed the method of applying anthropology for religious workers.

by its capacity for bridge building between diverse groups and 5) must not be confused with ‘pop-theology’ that escapes from self-critical reflection.¹⁷

Here three implications emerging from Hollenweger’s description for the future development of intercultural theology will be raised. First, intercultural theology is being developed from an understanding that all theologies are contextually and culturally conditioned. The ‘guiding principles’ assert that intercultural theology should self-consciously operate ‘within a particular cultural framework.’ In the same spirit, Stephen Bevans writes, “There is no such thing as ‘theology’: there is only *contextual* theology.”¹⁸ He goes on to say, “the writings of scripture and the content, practices, and feel of tradition did not simply fall from the sky. They themselves are products of human beings and *their* contexts.”¹⁹ Understanding that Christian faith only occurs in a particular context, it is clear that there can be no universal theology; contextual theology then becomes a theological imperative. As a contextual theology, *intercultural* theology insists that ‘culture’ becomes *loci theologici* with scripture and tradition. Each culture has a particular framework by which it responds to the sacred; culture becomes a source for the nurturing of a theology which witnesses the sacred in its context.

Second, as did the *World Mission* report discussed in Chapter 3, intercultural theology has begun to challenge the imperative of the Christian faith, breaking away from

¹⁷ Ustorf, “The Cultural Origins of ‘Intercultural’ Theology,” 237. This statement is summarized from Hollenweger’s article, “Intercultural Theology,” *Intercultural Perceptions and Prospects of World Christianity*, edited by Richard Friedli, Jan A.B. Jongeneel, Klaus Koschorke, Theo Sundermeier and Werner Ustorf (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010), 35-6. Ustorf’s updated article later appears in the book, *Intercultural Theology: Approaches and Themes*, eds. Mark J. Cartledge and David Cheetham (London: SCM Press, 2011), 11-28.

¹⁸ Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, revised and expanded edition (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2002), 3; Bevans’ italics.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 5; Bevans’ italics.

the past “transmission-centred approach [to] mission.”²⁰ In intercultural theology, David Bosch notes, Western theologies are among the many contextual theologies reflecting their cultures.²¹ Understanding Western theologies as limited and fallible achievements informed by their own cultures challenges their traditional sense of superiority over others. In this regard, the intercultural philosopher Ram Adhar Mall also asserts, “[intercultural philosophy] does not necessary give privileged treatment to any philosophy, culture, or religion. It also rejects the idea of a mere hierarchical gradation of cultures and philosophies. It takes seriously the idea of cultural plurality and deems it valuable.”²² Intercultural theology critiques privileging Western theology and the Western church as the normative barometer of Christianity and all religions. Instead it develops its theology in “the face of the Other.”

Third, each theology reflects its distinct culture and has something to offer to others, each able to learn from the Other. In Hollenweger’s extended explanation of his “guiding principles,” he suggests that learning from each other is “one way of escaping from our religious and academic ghetto and not only claiming but actually demonstrating theology’s place in the world in which we live.”²³ This signals that an intercultural

²⁰ Ustorf, “The Cultural Origins of ‘Intercultural’ Theology,” *Intercultural Theology: Approaches and Themes*, 19. Among intercultural theologians, there are different opinions about mission, specifically whether intercultural theology can replace the term mission or not. Walter Hollenweger says, “Intercultural theology is not a term which replaces mission,” whereas Werner Ustorf asserts intercultural theology completely replaces the terms mission or missiology. See Walter Hollenweger, “Intercultural Theology: Some Remarks on the Term,” in *Towards an Intercultural Theology*, eds. Martha Frederiks et al., (Uitegeverij Meinema: Zoetermeer, 2003), 93 and Ustorf, (2011), 15.

²¹ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1991), 456.

²² Ram Adhar Mall, *Intercultural Philosophy* (Lahman: Rowan and Littlefield, 2000), 6.

²³ Hollenweger, “Intercultural Theology,” 36.

approach to theology has implications that expand beyond an inter-Christian project toward interreligious dialogue: Christianity's truth claims are context specific and need to open the door to other faiths.²⁴ Intercultural theology offers a perspective for 'bridge building' between different faiths and cultures.

4.1.2. Definition of Terms

So far, the background, principles and implications of intercultural theology have been explored in order to discover its genesis without a clear definition; The term "intercultural" needs to be compared with similar terms. Since intercultural theology is a relatively new term it is essential to clarify the meaning of at least five prefixes that are used with *cultural* – *multi*, *intra*, *cross*, *inter* and *trans*. These prefixes sometimes overlap and/or are used as synonyms for one another, especially *cross* and *inter*. Meanings must be defined in context and usage. For each prefix we refer to definitions in the *Canadian Oxford Dictionary* (2nd edition, 2004).

Multicultural: *multi* refers to a quantitative feature, 'designating and pertaining to a society consisting of many culturally distinct groups.' When we speak about multiculturalism, it connotes a way of describing and managing different cultural heritages and racial diversities in a manner consistent with pluralistic principles.²⁵

Intracultural: *intra* means 'on the inside' or 'within.' Intra-cultural refers to communication between people from the *same* culture; on the other hand '*intercultural*'

²⁴ Ustorf, "The Cultural Origins of 'Intercultural' Theology," 237 and Richard Friedli, "Intercultural Theology," in *Dictionary of Mission*, eds. Karl Müller et al. (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997), 222.

²⁵ See Chapter 1 of this thesis for the critique of multiculturalism.

refers to communication between people from different cultures.

Crosscultural: *cross* means ‘relating to different cultures or comparison between them.’ Volker Küster’s definition is helpful: “cross-cultural illustrates the crossing of cultural boundaries either for comparing several cultures or for blending them with each other.”²⁶

Intercultural: *inter* denotes ‘between, among or mutually, reciprocally.’ According to Bhabha *intercultural* suggests the space “in-between” cultures.²⁷ It denotes the “Third Space” as a contact zone between different cultures. In that space different cultures freely meet and interact without being reduced to a dominant cultural framework or culture, unlike Canada’s integrative multiculturalism (as discussed in Chapter 1).

The two terms, “cross- and inter-,” are often used synonymously. For example, in his definition of intercultural, Robert Schreiter suggests, “intercultural communication might be defined as the ability to speak and to understand across cultural boundaries.”²⁸ This popular notion of intercultural has, in part, the meaning of crosscultural. What is the difference between the two? William Gudykunst and Young Yun Kim compare the two terms: “If we examine the use of self-disclosure in Japan and Germany, for example, we are making a cross-cultural comparison. If we contrast how the Japanese use self-disclosure when communicating with Germans and how Germans use self-disclosure

²⁶ Volker Küster, “The Project of an Intercultural Theology,” *Swedish Missiological Themes* 93, no. 3 (2005): 417.

²⁷ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (1994, London: Routledge, 2005), especially 2-27.

²⁸ Robert J. Schreiter, *The New Catholicity: Theology between the Global and the Local* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1997), 28.

when communicating with Japanese, we are looking at intercultural communication.”²⁹ In such a comparison, “crosscultural” emphasizes the comparative perspective, whereas “intercultural” emphasizes cultural interaction and mutuality.

Transcultural/transculturation: *trans* means ‘across’, ‘beyond’, or ‘on or to the other side of’, not very helpful here. The term *transculturation* was developed in a particular historical, political, economical and cultural context; it was coined in 1940 by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz to suggest a transformative process in the fusion and synthesis of the indigenous and the foreign cultures to create a new hybrid culture in Cuba. In contrast to the term, *acculturation*, used by American anthropologists in the late 1930s, Ortiz defines it thus:

Acculturation is used to describe the process of transition from one culture to another, and its manifold social repercussions. But *transculturation* is a more fitting term. I have chosen the word *transculturation* to express the highly varied phenomena that have come about in Cuba as a result of the extremely complex transmutations of culture that have taken place here.³⁰

Ortiz understands the term *acculturation* as a process of unilateral cultural assimilation when two different cultures meet, whereas the new term *transculturation* entails not merely acquiring another culture but a process of creating a new culture different from parents or previous cultures. *Transculturation* is:

the process also necessarily involves the loss or uprooting of a previous culture, which could be defined as a *deculturation*. In addition it carries the idea of the consequent creation of new cultural phenomena, which could be called *neoculturation*. In the end, ... the result of every union of cultures is similar to

²⁹ William B. Gudykunst and Young Yun Kim, *Communicating with Strangers* (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2003), 18-19. Quoted in Hans de Wit (eds.), *Through the Eyes of Another: Intercultural Reading of the Bible* (Amsterdam: Institute for Mennonite Studies and Vrije Universiteit, 2004), 28-29.

³⁰ Fernando Ortiz, *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*, translated by Harriet de Onís (1940, Durham: Duke University Press, 1995), 98; Ortiz’s italics.

that of the reproductive process between individuals: the offspring always has something of both parents but is always different from each of them.”³¹

Transculturation is comprised of several phenomena: it involves the process of the adoption of cultural elements from another culture (*acculturation*), the loss of cultural elements (*deculturation*) and the creation of new cultural elements (*neoculturation*). According to Ortiz, *acculturation* occurs when two or more interacting cultures are synthesized by a hegemonic culture, whereas *transculturation* occurs when interacting cultures influence each other bilaterally, eventually becoming one – a single, mixed cultural identity. Transculturation is a reciprocal process in which two cultures learn from and influence each other without losing their uniqueness.³² However, in reality, when cultures interact with each other it is hard to imagine a perfect marriage, if there is such a thing, since cultural engagements rarely happen in a vacuum where there is no power difference between cultures, as explored in Chapters 1 and 2. For Ortiz, marriage as a metaphor for a union between different cultures assumes no hierarchical relationship between them. The term *transculturation* is limited because it does not pay attention to cultural difference but denotes a mixing of cultures to produce a homogenizing hybrid culture as a new cultural identity.³³ For this reason transculturation is not an appropriate

³¹ Ibid., 102-3; Ortiz’s italics.

³² See Caleb Rosado, “Multicultural Ministry,” *Spectrum* 23, no. 31 (April 1994): 31 and Song No, “The Dynamics of Ortiz’s Transculturation in the *Contrapunteo Cubano*,” *Estudios Hispánicos* 41 (2006): 298.

³³ Recently, Ortiz’s use of *transculturation* was featured by Mari Louise Pratt’s famous phrase, the *contact zone*, where cultures “meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination, such as colonialism and slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today.” Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed., (New York and London: Routledge, 2008), 7. Pratt interprets Ortiz’s *transculturation* to mean that there are mutual transformative processes among different cultures in the contact zones even though there are often asymmetrical relations of power. In her understanding of Ortiz’s transculturation, Pratt may gloss over the homogenizing aspect of the term, whereby differences are erased in the contact zone, or perhaps

model for the vision of becoming an intercultural church. If only Ortiz had known the concept, *inculturation*, as it was introduced in the 60s and 70s, he might have considered using it for his new cultural model for Cuba in the 1940s.

Further, *intercultural/interculturization* should not be confused with the term *inculturation* which denotes the contextualization or adaption of the gospel in a local culture. Pedro Arrupe defines the meaning of *inculturation* in the late 1970s:

Inculturation is the incarnation of Christian life and of the Christian message in a particular local cultural context, in such a way that the experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question, but becomes a principle that animates, directs, and unifies a culture, transforming and remaking it so as to bring about “a new creation.”³⁴

When two cultures engage in Christian life and mission in a receiving culture a new creation emerges. In such images as sowing (Mark 4: 1-9), yeast (Matthew 13: 33/Luke 13: 20-21) or grafting (Romans 11: 16-18) the gospel plays a critical inculturational role in transforming another culture.³⁵ When the gospel is transmitted into a local culture it acts as a canon challenging and correcting the receiving culture. While sensitive to local cultures, the dynamic remains unidirectional in crucial ways, as the gospel acts as supra-cultural power and the receiving culture is considered inferior, to be enriched by the canon. Furthermore, as practised, inculturation tends to reproduce Western interpretations

strategically assimilated by a dominant culture: transculturation may contribute to the homogenizing aspect of “imperial eyes.”

³⁴ Pedro Arrupe, S.J., “Letter to the Whole Society on Inculturation.” Quoted in Peter Schineller, S.J., *A Handbook on Inculturation* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1990), 6. The term, inculturation, was first coined by Joseph Masson in 1962. In 1977 the Jesuit superior general, Pedro Arrupe introduced the term to the synod of Bishops. See Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 447 and Cark Starkloft, “Inculturation and Cultural System, part 1,” *Theological Studies* 55 (1994): 66-69.

³⁵ See Kyoung-jae Kim, *Christianity and the Encounter of Asian Religions: Method of Correlation, Fusion of Horizons, and Paradigm Shifts in the Korean Grafting Process* (Zoetermeer: Uitgeverij Boekencentrum, 1994), Chapter 4.

of the gospel. According to Bosch, Western Christianity has often “domesticated the gospel in its own culture while making it unnecessarily foreign to other culture.”³⁶ Inculturation, despite its laudable intentions to appraise culture positively, generally imposes one perspective on others, with the indigenous culture uncritically receiving the imposed culture (and its interpretation of the gospel) without recognizing the integrity of its own cultural values. In the process inculturation creates a hierarchical relationship with the gospel as the subject and receiving cultures as the object. From this perspective, the gospel or the church is presumed to be the truth and cultures encountered by the church – that is, receiving cultures – are presumed to be inferior and lacking true values.³⁷

Bosch goes on to argue that the term, inculturation is inappropriate because of its negative connotation and compares it with the term, interculturalism: “In a very real sense, what we are involved in is not just ‘inculturation’, but ‘*interculturalism*.’ We need an ‘exchange of theologies’ ... in which one way traffic, from the West to the East and the South, is suspended, first by bilateral and then multilateral relationships.”³⁸ In his understanding of interculturalism, Bosch echoes the vision of intercultural theology found in the “guiding principles” to the “series” by Friedli and his colleagues, arguing that intercultural theology is to do *bridge-building* among theologies. He notes that

³⁶ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 455.

³⁷ Orlando Espín points out that, “Inculturation, consequently, includes the possibility, and perhaps the reality, of colonization,” Orlando O. Espín, *Grace and Humanness: Theological Reflections Because of Culture* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2007), 15.

³⁸ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 456; Bosch’s italics.

intercultural enhances relationships and is beneficial to all partners in mutual solidarity in a post-colonial world context.

4.1.3. *The Intercultural Third Space*

In his book, *The New Catholicity*, Robert Schreiter uses intercultural hermeneutics to develop the metaphor of the bridge in order to define the meaning of intercultural. As noted above and in Chapter 3, according to Schreiter, intercultural means “across cultural boundaries.”³⁹ Thus, an intercultural church means a church crossing cultural boundaries. When traversing cultural boundaries, sensitivity about power difference is essential; a power difference would suggest the potential for injustice; without taking care for justice, crossing boundaries can be a dangerous affair. To prevent this danger, Bhabha coins the term, the “Third Space,” where different cultures meet each other without attempting homogenization or unity.⁴⁰

Cultures constructed through the bridge of the Third Space are, as discussed in Chapter 2, sites of multiple social matrixes and shifting terrains joined together yet also separate from each other in a process he calls “cultural enunciation.”⁴¹ In the Third Space there is no attempt to make “hierarchical claims to the inherent originality or ‘purity’ of cultures,”⁴² but rather, an affirmation of difference. Creating such spaces means taking

³⁹ Schreiter, *The New Catholicity*, 28.

⁴⁰ Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 53.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 55.

the effort to remain open for dialogue and for understanding one another even while acknowledging cultural differences, limited experiences and power differences.

There is a Third Space in the biblical story of the unnamed woman at the well (John 4:4-42). The background of the story is that Jews and Samaritans were bitter enemies (4:9), a history that went back to 300 BCE. when the Jews had banned the Samaritans from the Jerusalem temple. The Samaritans had to build their own temple on Mount Gerizim – it had been destroyed by Jewish troops in 128 BCE. The Jewish people called the Samaritans *Cutheans* because their blood was mixed with other races such as the Medes and Persians. The word “Samaritan” was a gross insult in the mouth of a Jew,⁴³ so, of course, the Samaritans did not get along with the Jews. At the well, the Samaritan woman asked Jesus one of the most challenging theological and political questions: “Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain [Gerizim], but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem” (John 4:20). Where is the proper place to worship God? It was not only her question but also the question of her people, the Samaritans. And it is not only the question of the Samaritans long ago, but also that of everyone trying to cross cultural boundaries. In the dialogue, the barrier between the Jew and Samaritan disappears in recognizing that “true worshipers will worship [God] in spirit and truth (4:23).” Proper worship is not limited to any particular place or way but is a matter of the spirit. This is a sign that the more than three hundred years of painful history is coming to an end and moving towards justice, peace and hope. At the well, a

⁴³ Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (SCM Press, 1969), 345-346.

Third Space is created in that both protagonists cross the boundaries beyond their differences: gender, nationality, culture, race and religion.⁴⁴

In the above story, the well provides a meeting space for quenching the thirst for justice by not imposing one's way but validating other's spiritual/cultural heritage. I want to lift up the concept of this space as a model for intercultural dialogue. We, as a faith community, need to create safe spaces, the Third Space, so that various differences will meet respectfully and peacefully to build a just community.⁴⁵ Hence, the vision of an intercultural church is to create welcoming, in-between spaces where all differences may meet freely and share their concerns so that finally, boundaries – not only denominational and ecumenical but also cultural and religious – are crossed while at the same time distinct cultural identities are honoured and maintained. The process of creating the Third Space entails what Thomas Reynolds calls “negotiating differences.”⁴⁶ In constructing a shared space, interlocutors are encouraged to work out their differences through ongoing dialogue and negotiation. In this vein, becoming an intercultural church intentionally

⁴⁴ Recently Dutch theologian Hans de Wit and his colleagues carried out an international research project with the core question: “What happens when Christians from radically different cultures and situations read the same Bible story and start talking about it with each other? Can intercultural reading of Bible stories result in a new method of reading the Bible and communicating faith that is a catalyst for new, trans-border dialogue and identify formation?” de Wit, *Through the Eyes of Another*, 4. See the objectives and backgrounds of the project pages 3-53.

More than 200 Bible study groups in different parts of the world came together to read the same story in John 4 and then read it again through the eyes of a partner group when one was available. Through this border-crossing dialogue each group was invited to reflect on the following questions: What were the similarities and differences that emerged? What role did culture play in the reading? Participants were invited to interact with the different cultural understandings that led to a new understanding of the texts and of other cultures.

⁴⁵ The Third Space is a term describing how cultures are formed at the sites of multiple boundaries; it is also a prescriptive call for just relations.

⁴⁶ Thomas Reynolds, “Beyond Secularism? Rethinking the ‘Secular’ in a Religiously Plural Context,” *Toronto Journal of Theology* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 251.

creates the spaces where all differences can meet in solidarity for a *common* good.⁴⁷ Iris Marion Young calls this ideal “differentiated solidarity.”⁴⁸ In differentiated solidarity there is a certain degree of separation among people and groups that seek each other out because of their different social, cultural, or religious affinities; yet, by sharing their concerns, boundaries are crossed in order to seek justice in “joint action.”⁴⁹

Because we human beings are created with different gifts to form community, we come together from various denominational, ecumenical and humanist backgrounds, and move within – yet – beyond those differences to seek a common good. In the in-between spaces of intercultural church, there is no attempt to imply a unification of different cultural groups – such as all Aboriginals or all Francophones with the ethnic majority in the UCC – nor is there a subordination of differences, under some guiding set of norms defined by a dominant group.⁵⁰ Thus a vision of becoming an intercultural church is a “political act that promotes the valuing of differences”⁵¹ and makes connections among all differences in solidarity for a common good. Building from this vision, in the next section we will explore First Nations’ philosophy and theology in order to develop an intercultural theology in a contact zone where different cultures meet for a common good.

⁴⁷ A common good can be found through “sharing concern for justice” as discussed in Chapter 3.

⁴⁸ Iris Marion Young, *Inclusion and Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 221. The concept of solidarity will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

⁴⁹ Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *Mujerista Theology: A Theology for The Twenty-First Century* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1996), 89.

⁵⁰ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 355.

⁵¹ María Cristina Ventura Campusano, “Between Oppression and Resistance: From the Capture of the Imaginary to the Journey of the Intercultural,” in *Feminist Intercultural Theology: Latina Explorations for a Just World*, eds. María Pilar and María José Rosado-Nunes (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2007), 192.

4.2. All My Relations and the Two Row Wampum Belt:

Gifts of the First Nations toward Becoming an Intercultural Church

In the summer of 2008, the author had the opportunity to participate in a week-long learning circle at the Francis Sandy Theological Centre (FSTC) in Paris, Ontario, then one of the theological schools for Aboriginal peoples in the UCC.⁵² The occasion was a joint learning circle of the students at FSTC and at the Toronto School of Theology in the University of Toronto. The Very Rev. Dr. Stan McKay (Cree), a former moderator of the UCC (1992-94), led the circle. This learning circle had a deep influence on my spiritual and theological journey toward engaging in God's mission in a pluralistic world and has since guided my theological reflection on intercultural theology.

4.2.1. All My Relations (*Akwe Nia'Tetewá:neren*)

Early one morning McKay invited us to a sacred fire ceremony. When I approached the sacred fire on the hill of the FSTC, I saw that there were four stakes tied with coloured ribbons marking the four directions: red (east), yellow (south), black (west) and white (north). We freely chose where to stand in the circle, regardless of cultural background, within the markers of the four directions. I felt the power of the circle's affirmation that we were all of equal value; here there was no indication of a hierarchy; there was no beginning or end – we were all equally connected with each other.

In his CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) Massey Lectures in 2003, after describing two creation stories from Native and Christian traditions, Canadian novelist Thomas King (Cherokee) said, “the elements in Genesis create a particular universe

⁵² It was amalgamated with the Saulteaux Spiritual Centre in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 2011.

governed by a series of hierarchies – God, man, animals, plants – that celebrate law, order, and good government, while in our Native story, the universe is governed by a series of co-operations – Charm [name of the good officer], the Twins, animals and humans – that celebrate equality and balance.”⁵³ The two stories represent two different worldviews. King continues, “if we see the world through Adam’s eyes, we are necessarily blind to the world that Charm and the Twins and the animals help to create. If we believe one story to be sacred, we must see the other as secular.” This view reflects the dualism of a Western (Greek) philosophical worldview that has influenced traditional Christian theology, ethics and practice of mission and supported hierarchical thought and practice in family, church and society for centuries. Metaphysical binary oppositions shape dominant theological patterns – God/people; people/earth; white/non-white – and divide reality into opposing spheres, as discussed in Chapter 2.

However, in the learning circle that morning I saw a different vision. Every morning the lighting of a candle began our worship service; we also lit a candle whenever we joined in the sharing circle. The colour of the candle was meaningful; each of the four colours indicates one of the four directions. Native writer Ed McGaa (Oglala Sioux) says, “All good things come from these sacred directions. These sacred directions, or the four sacred colours, also stand for the four races of humanity: red, yellow, black and white.”⁵⁴ Aboriginal peoples do not believe the Great Spirit works only for them; the four races are

⁵³ Thomas King, *The Truth about Stories: A Native Narrative* (Toronto: Anansi, 2003), 23-4.

⁵⁴ Ed McGaa (Eagle Man), *Mother Earth Spirituality: Native American Paths to Healing Ourselves and Our World* (New York: HarperCollins, 1990), 205.

the manifestations of the Great Spirit that comes from the four directions to all peoples.⁵⁵ They believe each person, regardless of racial or cultural background, has a “special relationship” with the Great Spirit.⁵⁶ This Great Spirit binds each individual person in a circle of equality and harmony.

This special relationship with the Great Spirit is not limited to human beings; it is extended to all relations. In his ground-breaking book in 1973, *God is Red*, native theologian Vine Deloria, Jr. (Yankton Sioux) says, “the task of the tribal religion, if such a religion can be said to have a task, is to determine the proper relationship that the people of the tribe must have with other living things.”⁵⁷ In fact Aboriginal peoples do not regard other living things as non-conscious species. Rather they are “peoples” in the same manner as the various tribes are peoples.⁵⁸ The Aboriginal concept of “people” is broader than that of non-Aboriginals, especially Westerners. Deloria applies the concept of “kinship” to animals, reptiles, birds and human beings.⁵⁹ Thus, beyond the boundary of human creatures, he extends the concept of kinship to all creatures, affirming a precious link that must be preserved. The task of the tribal religions is then to seek right relations.

⁵⁵ George Tinker, “Spirituality, Native American Personhood, Sovereignty, and Solidarity,” in *Native and Christian: Indigenous Voices Identity in the United States and Canada*, ed. James Treat (New York: Routledge, 1996), 123.

⁵⁶ Vine Deloria, Jr., “Creation, Creator and Tradition,” *First Peoples Theology Journal* 2, no. 1 (2001): 124.

⁵⁷ Vine Deloria, Jr., *God Is Red: A Native View of Religion* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1973), 102.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 103.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, In the Christian context, *mujerista* theologian Ada Maria Isasi-Díaz coined the term “kin-dom.” She prefers the word “kin-dom” rather than “kingdom,” because “the word ‘kin-dom makes it clear that when the fullness of God becomes a day-to-day reality in the world at large, we will all be sisters and brothers – kin to each other; we will indeed be the family of God.” Isasi-Díaz, *Mujerista Theology*, 89 and 103 n.8.

At the sacred fire, we were invited to offer tobacco with prayers to Mother Earth, a way of giving back something to the earth and to all Creation in order to maintain balance. In Aboriginal culture, “nothing is taken from the earth without prayer and offering.”⁶⁰ As they do in all human relationships, Aboriginal peoples care for other living beings as relatives. For example, in the Sioux Sun Dance, the Buffalo Calf Woman speaks to the tree and tells it that her people are sorry to have to take the tree’s life and explains, before it is cut down, why it is “highly important, for by doing it, the people will live.”⁶¹ Canadian Chief Walking Buffalo (George McLean, Stoney) asks, “Did you know that trees talk? Well they do. They talk to each other, and they’ll talk to you if you listen. ... I have learned a lot from trees; sometimes about the weather, sometimes about animals, sometimes about the Great Spirit.”⁶² In the same vein, McKay says, “The comparisons with the spirituality of indigenous peoples around the world may be centred on the notion of relationship to the whole creation. We may call the earth ‘our Mother’ and the animals ‘our brothers and sisters.’ Even what biologists describe as inanimate, we call our relatives.”⁶³ In Aboriginal thought, the philosophical understanding of extended relations is central.

Lakota and Dakota peoples use a short response, *mitakuye oyasin*, translated variously as all my relations; we are all related; all are related, as a refrain pattern after

⁶⁰ Tinker, “Spirituality, Native American Personhood, Sovereignty, and Solidarity,” 124.

⁶¹ McGaa, *Mother Earth Spirituality*, 85.

⁶² Deloria Jr., *God Is Red*, 103.

⁶³ Stan McKay, “An Aboriginal Christian Perspective on Integrity of Creation,” in *Native and Christian: Indigenous Voices Identity in the United States and Canada*, ed. James Treat (New York: Routledge, 1996), 53.

each section of a prayer, a speech or a story. As the meaning of *mitakuye oyasin* indicates, the phrase goes beyond the boundary of one's immediate family to include "fellow tribal members or even all Indian people. At the same time, the phrase includes all the nations of Two-Leggeds in the world and, in the ever-expanding circle, all the nations other than Two-Leggeds – Four-Leggeds, the Wingeds and all the Living-Moving Things of the Earth."⁶⁴ *Mitakuye oyasin* has no boundaries to exclude others but seeks interrelatedness and interdependences; *all* are relatives.

Mitakuye oyasin became manifest in the Mohawk language in the UCC but expresses the same spirit and same philosophy. In 2012, the 41st General Council approved a new crest (fig. 4.1.) to acknowledge the presence and spirituality of Aboriginal peoples in the UCC and to clearly identify that the UCC was built on Aboriginal heritage and territory. The crest changes include incorporating the four colours of the Aboriginal Medicine Wheel (yellow as a symbol of life and Asian people, black as a symbol of the south and dark-skinned people of the world, red as a symbol of the west and Aboriginal peoples, and white as the colour of the north and white-skinned people) and adds the phrase "All My Relations" in Mohawk, "*Akwe Nia 'Tetewá:neren*" to acknowledge that the first contact was made with the Mohawk communities of the East.⁶⁵ The UCC seeks to cherish the gift of the presence of Aboriginal peoples and their philosophy, "*All My Relations/Akwe Nia 'Tetewá:neren*," meaning to live in mutual respect for differences. All My Relations offers a sound basis for becoming an

⁶⁴ Clara Sue Kidwell, Homer Noley and George E. "Tink" Tinker, *A Native American Theology*, 51.

⁶⁵ UCC, "History of the United Church Crest," accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.united-church.ca/history/crest>

intercultural church, a church living in harmony and respect among different cultures.

Figure 4.1. The UCC's old crest (left), Medicine Wheel* centre and the UCC's new crest (right), used by permission



Note: * Different Indigenous communities place the colours in different directions and sometimes vary the colours.

The four sacred directions hold the circle of life together to remind us of “All My Relations.” I have begun to learn that the visible circles we made at FSTC were a manifestation of the ever-expanding circle and of the image of an intercultural church. The new crest invites us make a new beginning based on the philosophy “All My Relations” so that the UCC may live ever mindful of our interrelatedness and in mutual respect for our differences. In the next section the Two Row Wampum Belt will be presented as an example of how different cultures may live side by side in seeking a common good.

4.2.2. The Two Row Wampum Belt (Gus-Wen-Tah)

I came across the concept of the Two Row Wampum belt many years ago but was not able to develop it further because I could not imagine how the idea of ‘parallel paths’

might fit into the vision of becoming an intercultural church. It seemed to me that the concept of two parallel paths was contradictory to that of “All My Relations.” Perhaps that was due to the influence of the dualism of my Western education: thinking in terms of either/or⁶⁶ and not holistically. But in the learning circle at FSTC in 2008, Ray John of the Oneida Nation of the Thames in Ontario opened my eyes when he said, “The two paths are like my shoulders on right and left sides.” John said there is a connection between the two parallel paths. His interpretation led me to delve further into the concept of the wampum belt.

The idea of making beads from the Northern Quahog clamshell has a long history along the Atlantic coastal peoples from Main to New Jersey. Necklaces over 2000 years old, made of long cylindrically shaped shell beads as well as discoidal shell beads of various sizes, have been found in burial grounds in Mohawk Valley.⁶⁷ Wampum-like shell beads about 1/4 inch long and 1/8 inch diameter in both white and purple, similar to modern ones, were used in pre-colonial days. In the Algonquian languages, the beads were called *wampompeage* or, in some localities, *sewan* or *zewand*; generally *sewan* prevailed among the Dutch, and *wampum* among the English.⁶⁸ The word *wampum* derives from *wompi*, meaning white.

According to Tehanetorens (Ray Fadden, Mohawk), wampum was introduced to the Iroquois by a leader of Onondaga, Hiawatha (also known as Ayonwatha), at the time

⁶⁶ Jacques Derrida deconstructs a dualistic understanding of either/or opposition since both cannot exist without the other. See the discussion in Chapter 2.

⁶⁷ Gilbert W. Hagerty, *Wampum War and Trade Goods West of the Hudson* (Interlaken: Heart of the Lakes Publishing, 1985), 105.

⁶⁸ Ashbel Woodward, *Wampum: A Paper Presented to the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia* (Albany: J. Munsell Printer, 1878), 8-9.

of the founding of the Iroquois Confederacy of the Five Nations (the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas and Senecas) in the 15th century.⁶⁹ Hiawatha brought the idea of a Confederacy that would bring a binding peace within the Five Nations. At the Confederacy, 50 chiefs from the five nations joined hands together in a circle at the first Council Fire that is symbolized by the Circle Wampum (fig. 4.2). The big circle with the fifty wampum strings of the Circle Wampum represents the Confederacy chiefs connected by the unbroken Great Law of Peace. The concept of the Circle Wampum appears in the Hiawatha Belt (fig. 4.3), visually signifying the unity of the Five Nations. The Hiawatha Belt is a broad wampum belt with a purple background and the white emblem. The Great Tree of Peace in the Belt is situated in the centre and on either side two white squares are connected by a line that extends through and links each Nation, side by side. Oren Lyons (Onondaga and Seneca) asserts that the Five Nations completed a peace treaty known as the Iroquois Confederacy (Grand Council) and that the Hiawatha Belt had been developed before the Aboriginals made any contact with the European colonists and settlers.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Tehanetorens (Ray Fadden), *Wampum Belts of the Iroquois* (1972, Summertown: Book Publishing, 1999), 11. The Tuscarora joined as the sixth nation in the early 18th century.

⁷⁰ Oren Lyons, "Land of the Free, Home of the Brave," in *Indian Roots of American Democracy*, ed. José Barreiro (Ithaca: Akwe:kon Press, 1992), 30-33.

Figure 4.2. The Circle Wampum

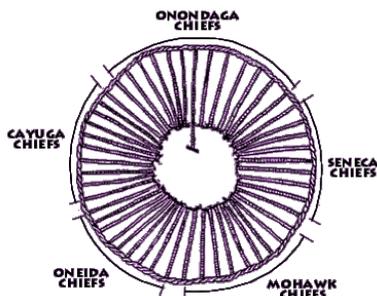


Figure 4.3. The Hiawatha Belt



Source: Tehanetorens, *Wampum Belts of the Iroquois* (Book Publishing, 1999), 16 & 20.

Early in the seventeenth century, several treaties were signed between Aboriginal nations and such European settlers as the Dutch, French and English. Aboriginal peoples claim that the first treaty between the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) and the Dutch was recorded in the Two Row Wampum belt (*Gus-Wen-Tah*) in 1613: other scholars argue that the year of the treaty is questionable.⁷¹ Proof of the existence of the treaty is extremely difficult, if not impossible to achieve since many European and colonial documents were lost in Holland⁷² or destroyed by fire in the Albany Museum, NY in

⁷¹ Richard W. Hill, "Oral Memory of the Haudenosaunee: Views of the Two Row Wampum," in *Indian Roots of American Democracy*, ed. José Barreiro (Ithaca: Akwe:kon Press, 1992), 154-56; Lyons, "Land of the Free, Home of the Brave," 33; Chief Irving Powless Jr., "Treaty Making," in G. Peter Jemison and Anna M. Schein (eds), *Treaty of Canandaigua 1794* (Santa Fe: Clear Light Publishers), 24. Some scholars insist the treaty in 1613 is highly questionable. See Francis Jennings (ed.), *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An Interdisciplinary Guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and Their League* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1985), 158; Charles Gehring et al., "The Tawagonshi Treaty of 1613: The Final Chapter," *New York History* (October, 1987): 373-393. This article exclusively discusses about the authenticity of Van Loon's document: "Tawagonshi: The Beginning of the Treaty Era," *The Indian Historian* 1:3 (Summer 1968), 22-26; Kathryn Muller, "The Two 'Mystery' Belts of Grand River: A Biography of the Two Row Wampum and the Friendship Belt," *American Indian Quarterly* vol. 31, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 129-164. Muller insists that the Tow Row Wampum is a fairly recent development.

⁷² See E. B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York Procured in Holland, England and France*, vol. 1: Transcripts of Documents in the Royal Archives at the Hague and in the Stad-Huys of the City of Amsterdam – Holland Documents: I-VIII, 1603-1656 (Albany: Weed, Parsons and Co., 1856), xlix. The volume notes: The "Secrete Resolutien ... Registers contain the proceedings of the States General in regard to subjects which it was deemed proper to record in separate volumes, such as treaties, declarations of war, &c., &c. The volume 1609-1615 is missing."

1911. Aboriginal cultures do not have much in the way of written records; their history and culture is passed down orally. Except for the debate on the year of the treaty in 1613 there has been little discussion in the literature beyond Aboriginal circles about the concept and implication of the Two Row Wampum belt.⁷³ However, according to a leading Native legal academic Robert A. Williams Jr., the principles of the Two Row Wampum belt were the basis for all treaties and agreements between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the European nations in terms of respecting each other's vision.⁷⁴ The Two Row Wampum belt (fig. 4.4), in my view, offers a model for how the UCC may develop mutual relations among different cultures.



Figure 4.4. A replica of the Two Row Wampum belt (*Gus-Wen-Tah*) Displayed in the Woodland Cultural Centre Museum, Brantford, ON. Photograph taken by the author

The following is a description of the treaty found in the record of the Two Row Wampum belt, written in dialogue style. In it, the Onkwewonweh means the Aboriginal peoples of the land. It is quoted in some length.

The whiteman said, "How is the Onkwewonweh going to describe our friendship?" The Onkwewonweh replied, "We must thank the Creator for all his creations, and greet one another by holding hands to show the Covenant Chain

⁷³ One of the excellent discussions on the implications of the Two Row Wampum belt is Celia Haig-Brown's "Working a Third Space: Indigenous Knowledge in the Post/Colonial University," *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 31, no. 1 (2008): 253-267.

⁷⁴ Robert A. Williams Jr., "The Algebra of Federal Indian Law: The Hard Trail of Decolonizing and Americanizing the White Man's Indian Jurisprudence," *Wisconsin Law Review* 291 (1986): 291.

that binds our friendship so that we may walk upon this earth in peace, trust, love and friendship, and we may smoke the sacred tobacco in a pipe which is a symbol of peace.”

The whiteman said that he would respect the Onkwehonweh’s belief and call him “son.” The Onkwehonweh replied, “We respect you, your belief, and what you say. You pronounced yourself as our father and this we do not agree with because the father can tell his son what to do, and can punish his son. We suggest that we call each other brother.”

The whiteman said, “The symbol of this Covenant is a three link chain which binds this agreement made by us, and there is nothing that will come between us to break the links of this chain.” The Onkwehonweh replied, “The first link shall stand for friendship, the second will stand for our good minds, and the third link shall mean there will always be peace between us. This is confirmed by us.” The Onkwehonweh said, “This friendship shall be everlasting and the younger generation will know and the rising faces from Mother Earth will benefit by our agreement.” ...

The whiteman said, “I confirm what you have said and this we shall always remember. What we do about our own ways of belief, we shall both respect having our own rights and power.” The Onkwehonweh replied, “I have a canoe and you have a vessel with sails and this is what we shall do. I will put in my canoe my belief and laws. In your vessel you shall put your belief and laws. All my people will be in my canoe, your people in your vessel. We shall put these boats in the water and they shall always be parallel, as long as there is Mother Earth, this will be everlasting.”

The whiteman said, “What will happen if your people will like to go into my vessel?” The Onkwehonweh replied, “If this happens, then they will have to be guided by my canoe.” Now the whiteman understands the agreement. ...

The Onkwehonweh called the wampum belt “Guswhenta.” One of the two paths signifies the whiteman’s laws and beliefs, and the other signifies the laws and beliefs of the Onkwehonweh. The white background signifies purity, good minds and peace, and they should not interfere with one another’s views.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Hill, “Oral Memory of the Haudenosaunee,” 154-6. Hill notes that the translation and interpretation of the Two Row wampum was provided by Jacob Thomas, an elder Cayuga sub-chief whose father had been responsible for the belt, and Huron Miller, Onondaga, also a recognized culture-bearer in the oral tradition. For the full length of description of the wampum belt, see Huron Miller, “Record of the Two Row Wampum Belt,” *Turtle Quarterly* (Winter 1980).

A short version of the description told by Tehanetorens appeared in the Report of House of Commons’ Special Committee, *Indian Self-Government in Canada* (Canada, House of Commons, 1983), backcover. “When the Haudenosaunee first came into contact with the European nations, treaties of peace and friendship were made. Each was symbolized by the Gus-Wen-Tah or Two Row Wampum. There is a bed of white wampum which symbolizes the purity of the agreement. There are two rows of purple, and those two rows have the spirit of your ancestors and mine. There are three beads of wampum separating the two rows and they symbolize peace, friendship and respect. These two rows will symbolize two paths or two vessels, travelling down the same river together. One, a birch bark canoe, will be for the Indian people, their laws, their customs and their ways. The other, a ship, will be for the white people and their laws, their customs and their ways. We shall each travel the river together, side by side, but in our own boat. Neither of us will try to steer the other’s vessel.”

The Two Row Wampum belt outlines the principle of how the two different cultures coexist equally and in mutual respect without controlling the other. The belt consists of two rows of purple wampum *separated* and *connected* by three rows of white. The two separate purple rows (canoe and vessel) symbolize the two different cultures coexisting together, parallel to each other. The three white rows symbolize “friendship, good minds [respect] and peace.” These three linked chains connect and separate the two cultures so that they live in peace and friendship forever; the peoples of the two different cultures are traveling the river of life separately but together. The two purple rows are equal in size denoting the equality of all life and one end is not finished denoting the ongoing relationship into the future.⁷⁶

The Two Row Wampum belt became an intercultural protocol to bind diverse cultures and nations with the spirit of friendship, respect and peace, and the principle of the belt influenced other wampum belts. The Iroquois knew that equal coexistence could not be achieved by a Western understanding of the father-son relationship. The Iroquois

⁷⁶ Oren Lyons, “Indian Self-Government in the Haudenosaunee Constitution,” *Nordic Journal of International Law* 55 (1986), 119. Moravian missionary John Heckewelder (1743-1823) reports how the wampum belt is used when the Iroquois initiate relationships with Americans. This report presents how well the Iroquois maintain the principle of the Two Row Wampum belt: “The Indians generally, but their chiefs more particularly, have many figurative expressions in use, to understand which requires instruction. When a nation, by message or otherwise, speaks to another nation in this way, it is well understood; but when they speak to white people after this manner, who have not been accustomed to such language, explanations are necessary. Their belts of wampum are of different dimensions, both as to the length and breadth. White and black wampum are the kinds they use; the former denoting that which is *good*, as peace, friendship, good will, ... Roads from one friendly nation to another, are generally marked on the belt, by one or two rows of white wampum inter woven in the black, and running through the middle, and from end to end. It means that they are on good terms, and keep up a friendly intercourse with each other.” John Heckewelder, *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations, who once inhabited Pennsylvania and the Neighboring States*, William C. Reichel notes and introduction (1818, Philadelphia, PA: Historic Society of Pennsylvania, 1881), 109; Heckewelder’s italics.

rejected the proffered hierarchal relationship and instead suggested the term “brothers.”⁷⁷ Throughout history First Nations continued to call the Europeans, and later Americans, “brothers.”⁷⁸ This symbol of equal relationship became a principle feature of future treaties including the Treaty of Niagara of 1764. Upon rapid expansion of the colonies into First Nations’ land in the Ohio valley and elsewhere in the West by European settlers, many conflicts arose due to disputes about political and territorial jurisdictions between various First Nations and the Crown.⁷⁹ To solve this conflict two treaty parties representing about 2,000 leaders of over 24 First Nations and the Crown met and renewed and affirmed their “nation-to-nation relationship”⁸⁰ in what is called, “the Treaty of Niagara of 1764.” During the Treaty affirmation ceremonies, Sir William Johnson (1715-1774), English Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the northern colonies, presented the large belt⁸¹ and in turn, the First Nations presented a Two Row Wampum belt to confirm the mutual engagements.⁸² Indigenous Law academic John Borrows

⁷⁷ For other example see Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies from Beginning to the Lancaster Treaty of 1744* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1984), 193.

⁷⁸ Hill, “Oral Memory of the Haudenosaunee,” 157.

⁷⁹ John Borrows, “Wampum at Niagara: The Royal Proclamation, Canadian Legal History and Self-Government,” in *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada: Essays on Law, Equity, and Respect for Difference* edited by Michael Asch (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997), 156-165.

⁸⁰ Recent *The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada* reaffirms the Treaty of Niagara of 1764 as the nation-to-nation relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown. See the recommendation 45. <http://aptn.ca/news/2015/06/02/read-94-recommendations/>

⁸¹ Sir William Johnson (1715-1774), English Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the northern colonies, presented the wampum belt to Chippewa (Ojibwa) nation: “Sir William produced a large Belt with a Figure representing Niagara’s large House, and Fort, with two Men holding fast on each side, and a Road through it.” Sir William Johnson, *The Papers of Sir William Johnson* vol. 11, eds. Milton W. Hamilton (Albany: University of the State of New York, 1953), 307.

⁸² Public Archives of Canada, Record Group 10 (PAC, RG 10), vol. 391, Head to Glenelg, 1936 August 20. Quoted in Borrows, “Wampum at Niagara,” 163.

asserts, “the two-row wampum belt reflects a diplomatic convention that recognizes interaction and separation of settler and First Nation societies.”⁸³ In the Treaty, the two parties agreed never to obstruct the path of the other culture and land so that they would journey together side by side in friendship, respect and peace.

Again, in 1789, the belt of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, made between the Government of George Washington, military officer and later president of the United States of America, and the Iroquois Confederacy, shows thirteen large figures of men representing the thirteen states, their hands joined in friendship with the two central figures, standing at each side of a longhouse (see fig. 4.5). “Among promises made by the United States in this treaty was that the United States acknowledge the lands reserved to the Six Nations to be the property of the Six Nations and that the United States would never disturb these lands, that the lands were to remain theirs.”⁸⁴ This belt symbolizes the equal, respective relationship between the two cultures.

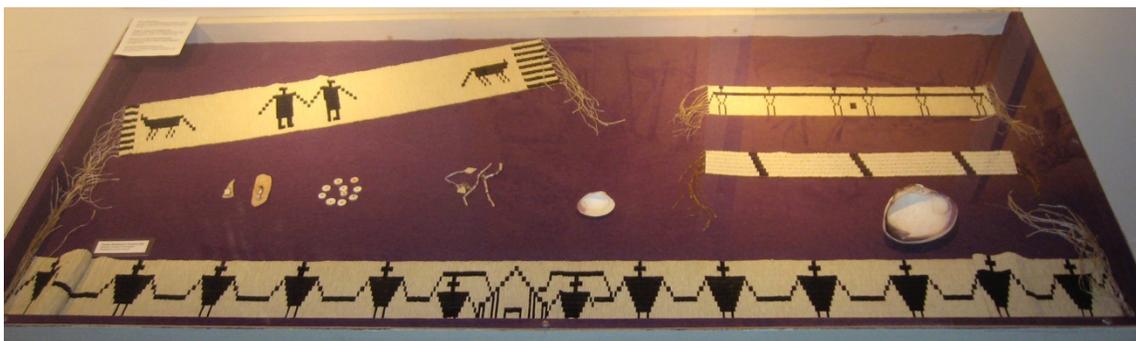


Figure 4.5. Wampum Belts displayed in the Woodland Cultural Centre Museum, Brantford, ON. Clockwise from the upper right corner, Women’s Nominating Wampum Belt, Hospitality Wampum Belt, George Washington Wampum Belt, Wolf Wampum Belt. Photograph taken by the author

⁸³ Borrows, “Wampum at Niagara,” 164.

⁸⁴ Tehanetorens, *Wampum Belts*, 42.

The Six Nations considered the wampum sacred. “No action of public council could be proposed or ratified unless ‘sealed’ by the wampum; nor was any treaty proffered by the ‘paleface’ recognized or considered valid until authorized by the exchange of wampum belts.”⁸⁵ Twice a year at a special council, a Wampum Keeper called a gathering of the people to talk about each wampum belt and string, holding it aloft so that everyone could see and recite its meaning, its message and the treaty agreement. And then the wampum strings and belts were passed around among the gathered people so that everybody would remember them. Wampum in the Iroquois cultures were the recording devices of the councils and treaties and served the mnemonic function of recalling details of an agreement.⁸⁶ Wampum were used not only for official purposes as discussed above but also for religious functions from the time of their development.⁸⁷ Deganawidah, the Peacemaker, used the wampum to console and wipe away the tears of Hiawatha at the death of his daughters. Ever since that first Condolence Ceremony, it has existed without change down to the present day.⁸⁸ About 130 years ago, the American medical doctor Ashbel Woodward noted, “[Wampum strings and belts] were among the Indian race the universal *bonds* of nations and individuals, [recognized

⁸⁵ Harriet Maxwell Converse, *Myths and Legends of the New York State Iroquois* – Museum Bulletin 125, ed. by Arthur C. Parker (Albany: New York State Museum, 1908), 142.

⁸⁶ Michael K. Foster, “Another Look at the Function of Wampum in Iroquois-White Councils,” *The History and Culture of Iroquois Diplomacy: An Interdisciplinary Guide to the Treaties of the Six Nations and Their League*, edited by Francis Jennings, et. al. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1985), 99-114.

⁸⁷ George S. Snyderman, “The Function of Wampum in Iroquois Religion,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 105, no. 6 (Dec. 15, 1961), 571-608.

⁸⁸ Tehanetorens, *Wampum Belts*, 11-12; Daniel K. Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse: The Peoples of the Iroquois League in the Era of European Colonization* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 32.

as] the inviolable and sacred pledges of word and deed. No promise was binding unless confirmed by gifts of wampum.”⁸⁹ Thus wampum were considered sacred: the message they conveyed was that the treaty was to be kept and the activity was meant to console the people so that they could be in peace and living in right relations.

The concept of the wampum belts is very similar to that of the Aboriginal philosophy, “*all my relations*,” since the main idea is to connect with each other in respect. After explaining the meaning of two rows and white beads of the Two Row Wampum belt, Chief Powless reflects, “As we travel down the road of life together in peace and harmony, not only with each other, but with the whole circle of life – the animals, the birds, the fish, the water, the plants, the grass, the trees, the stars, the moon, and the thunder – we shall live together in peace and harmony, respecting all those elements.”⁹⁰ Just as the wampum belt is formed through the connection of many beads, it binds not only a treaty partner but also all creatures to live in the spirit of peace, harmony and respect. In this way the Two Row Wampum belt is a tangible incarnation of *Akwe Nia’Tetewá:neren* (all my relations) and a worthy symbol of living together beyond differences.

In 2006, Doreen Silversmith of the Six Nations delivered a message at the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in Geneva, Switzerland to protest the attack of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) on April 20 against the Six Nations over a land issue in Caledonia, Ontario. She said, “we maintain that the relationship with [the] Crown is based on the principles outlined in the Two Row Wampum. We would travel

⁸⁹ Woodward, “Wampum,” 24; italics mine.

⁹⁰ Chief Irving Powless Jr., “Treaty Making,” 23.

together, each in our own vessel, on distinct and separate paths; never to interfere with the Laws of each other.”⁹¹ Here she was recalling the principles of the Two Row Wampum belt as a treaty and insisting that they be kept by the government. Her message underscored the importance of the wampum to First Nations peoples. That year, negotiators of the Six Nations met with representatives from the federal and provincial negotiating team to deal with the land issue in Caledonia, ON. On the table of the negotiating team are two wampum belts (fig. 4.6), the Two Row Wampum (right) and the Friendship Wampum (left). For the Six Nations, the Two Row Wampum belt offers guiding principles of how relationship with others should be made and how promises and treaties should be kept.



Figure 4.6. The Two Row Wampum Belt in the land negotiation (2006)
 Courtesy of the *VIBRANT Magazine* (Brantford: The Expositor, January 2008), vol. 4-1.
 Photograph taken by Brian Thompson

Four hundred years after the first treaty in 1613 to celebrate and commemorate the Two Row Wampum belt, a group of people (the Onondaga Nation and Neighbours of the Onondaga Nation) began the “Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign” to propagate “a mutual, three-part commitment to friendship, peace between peoples and living in

⁹¹ Doreen Silversmith, “Clan Mothers' statement to United Nations,” accessed October 5, 2014, <http://sisis.nativeweb.org/actionalert/updates/060501clanmothers.html>

parallel in perpetuity.”⁹² This goal reflects not only the principles of the first treaty, but also suggests how the people were to live out the spirit of the Two Row Wampum belt. The belt suggests how different cultures contact and connect in friendship, respect and peace without violating each other’s identity.

4.2.3. “*Holding Hands*” Together

On the first day of the learning circle at the FSTC we were asked to share the joys in our life. It was a very moving experience to listen to other people’s joys; while I was listening, I felt I was moving into their stories. With each telling, other persons’ stories met together with mine and theirs became mine. Most participants said joy came from members of their family. I asked myself why family members are such an important source of joy. Is it because of the kinship relationships we have in our families? The sharing circle affirmed for me that joy comes from this kinship relationship. Soon another question came to my mind: how do we extend this kinship to other relationships in life?

During the learning circle I began to think how valuable the two concepts of *all my relations* and the Two Row Wampum belt could be to the UCC’s vision of becoming an intercultural church. *All my relations* provides the fundamental background of how we, as a faith community, are related. Based on the concept of *all my relations*, the Two Row Wampum belt developed the image of two different cultures meeting in friendship, respect and peace. The two rows of purple wampum symbolize the independent integrity of each culture with its own customs, beliefs and languages. If the two diverse rows were merged into one as in a melting pot, the key principles of the Wampum would be lost and

⁹² See “Two Row Wampum Renewal Campaign,” accessed October 5, 2014, <http://honorthetworow.org/>

the treaty would be broken. The Aboriginal peoples believe good things come from not one but all four directions; community is not built on sameness but on difference. Feminist theologian Letty M. Russell maintains, “You cannot even create community and experience the possibility of new gifts of partnership without diversity.”⁹³ As discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, genuine community is built on the gifts of difference, a circle of creative engagement and mutual respect among all. This theme will be explored further in Chapter 5.

In the Two Row Wampum belt, the three white rows adjacent to the purple rows not only divide the two purple paths but also connect them each with the other. Each culture needs its own space to maintain its own traditions; yet each needs interaction with other cultures if the Third Space is to be negotiated productively, equitably and peacefully. Mutual influences between different cultures have been central to the development of all cultures throughout the world. We can imagine that, just as the canoe and the vessel move on the river of life, there will be a chance for the people in each to see the other in the canoe or vessel across the in-between spaces, across the differences. The space in-between is not meant to divide the canoe and vessel from each other but to create new sites of interaction and engagement, the Third Space at the boundary. In this interactive space there is the potential for the unpredictable, ambiguous and complex encounters of different cultures, and amidst the constant tensions of negotiation, a space for listening, learning and growing.⁹⁴

⁹³ Letty M. Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 195.

⁹⁴ Haig-Brown, “Working a Third Space,” 260.

Michael Nausner argues that boundaries are not lines neatly dividing one from the other but the site of negotiation and hybridity,⁹⁵ and that “safe space” is provided by mutual respect, which honours integrity of difference. Referring to Bhabha’s analysis of the vain attempts of the British colonizers to maintain control and separation in India in the 1850-60s, Nausner defines boundaries as follows:

Boundaries, rather, can be understood as complex places of exchange in both their geographical and cultural significance. . . . In their constructedness they are not natural lines of separation, but rather highly relevant places for the production of meaning. Boundaries emerge as privileged fields of encounter, where differences and commonalities are continuously negotiated.⁹⁶

Traditionally understood as lines of separation, division and limitation, now boundaries become places of encounter, negotiation and exchange. The Two Row Wampum belt suggests that two different cultures influence each other in mutual respect without controlling the other’s identity and tradition. Further, the Two Row Wampum belt affirms, “We must thank the Creator for all his creations, and greet one another by *holding hands* to show the Covenant Chain that binds our friendship so that we may walk upon this earth in peace, trust, love and friendship.”⁹⁷ In Mohawk the name for the Covenant Chain of Peace is *tehontatenentsonterontahkhwa* meaning “the thing by which they link their arms.”⁹⁸ According to Richard Hill (Tuscarora), linking arms or holding hands is a “Haudenosaunee metaphor for establishing, building and maintaining peace

⁹⁵ Michael Nausner, “Homeland as Borderland: Territories of Christian Subjectivity,” in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, Catherine Keller et al, eds. (St. Louis: Chalice, 2004), 123.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁹⁷ Hill, “Oral Memory of the Haudenosaunee,” 154; italics mine.

⁹⁸ Richard Hill, “Linking Arms: The Haudenosaunee Context of the Covenant Chain,” in *Mamow Be-Mo-Tay-Tah/Let Us Walk Together* (Toronto: Canadian Ecumenical Anti-Racism Network, 2009), 17.

through the united minds and actions of the participants.”⁹⁹ The participants at the Iroquois Confederacy held hands together beyond their national and cultural differences to nurture the Great Tree of Peace symbolized in The Hiawatha Belt (fig. 4.3). The Two Row Wampum belt resists the disruption of dialectical thinking by creating a Third Space ensuring the treaty be a living entity. A treaty is not meant to exclude others; it should unite minds to create safe and welcoming spaces so that all can join in an ever-enlarging circle of peace, trust, love and friendship.

4.3. Doing Mission in the “Third Space”:

Converging Faith and Culture in *Minjung* Theology

Through the intercultural insights of *all my relations* and the Two Row Wampum belt, we have discussed the nature of the Third Space that an intercultural church strives to create. This space nurtures appropriate boundaries and builds relational bridges, connecting partners to each other while keeping intact the uniqueness and difference of each, coming together yet remaining distinct.¹⁰⁰ The philosophy of *all my relations* uses the concept of the Two-Row wampum belt, which both separates and connects all relations. Within such a framework, the Christian faith can be conceived as creating and maintaining just relations with other cultures without bleaching out either its own or the other’s identity.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Miroslav Volf observes the creation story in Genesis as thus. See his book, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), 65.

In 1971 Robley Whitson introduced the concept of “convergence” in his book, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions*.¹⁰¹ However, the book received little attention from the theological academia.¹⁰² According to Whitson there are three paths to interreligious relationships: conformism, separate coexistence and convergence.¹⁰³ After critiquing the first two relationships – ‘conformity’ as a mechanistic unity of traditions by imperialistic power and ‘separate coexistence’ as minimal social interaction to preserve the identity and experience of individual traditions – Whitson seeks to move away from such static, isolated and closed relationships to the dynamic and open unity of the many. In his concept of convergence, Whitson tries to overcome the extreme approaches of both uniformism and of radical pluralism: “The singularity in civilization rests upon the degree of sharing open to the participants in which common achievement is made possible.”¹⁰⁴

Whitson explains religious convergence through the *via negativa*:

As with general cultural convergence, religious convergence is unitive yet diversified. It excludes reduction and substitution as emerging from the unitive process, expecting, rather, some form of unitive pluralism. Religious convergence is not syncretism: it does not consist in a selection of similarities, reducing the many to one on the presumption that they are nothing more than relatively minor variations of the same reality. Religious convergence is not imperialism: it does not consist in the emergence of any one tradition as simply dominant and absorbing the other, allowing at most a residue of minor variant forms.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰¹ Robley Edward Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* (New York: Newman, 1971).

¹⁰² Bernard Lonergan wrote several articles on Whitson. See Lonergan, “Prolegomena,” 65-70, notes 21, 22; “Ongoing Genesis of Methods,” 159, note 7 and “Philosophy and Religious Phenomenon,” 401, notes 10,11. See Darren J. E. Dias, “The Contributions of Bernard J.F. Lonergan to a Systematic Understanding of Religious Diversity” (PhD diss., Toronto School of Theology, 2008), 186; John Dadosky, “Sacralization, Secularization and Religious Fundamentalism,” *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* (Summer 2007): 526

¹⁰³ Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions*, 23.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 52.

For Whitson the concept of convergence is a paradoxical “processual understanding of reality” in which “[human beings] are becoming truly one insofar as *all* that they are can be brought into dynamic interrelationship.”¹⁰⁶ In the process the individual tradition does not lose its identity but moves toward a “unitive pluralism.” Whitson envisions a unitive pluralism as expecting “to find that [religious] differences, so often accentuated as opposites to ensure separation, are actually meaningful together, contribute to each other and constitute the new unity out of their diversity.”¹⁰⁷ We may interpret the concepts of *all my relations* and the Two Row Wampum belt as fostering such a unitive pluralism, in which each culture is present separately while at the same time being fundamentally connected together. How can different faiths and cultures converge in the river of life?

4.3.1. *The Convergence of Faith and Culture*

To help explore the question above, I draw on the *minjung* theology of Korean theologian Nam-dong Suh, since it demonstrates powerfully the virtues of preserving faith and culture while working together cooperatively for a common good. *Minjung* theology grew out of Korean Christians’ theological reflections on the resistance to the unjust military dictatorships of the 1970s and 80s. Under these dictatorships Christians sought to witness to the people’s suffering and respond faithfully to the oppression in the Korean political milieu. The reality of their experience challenged them to read the Bible critically, to study Christian history and to enter into Korean culture through the eyes of the *minjung*. The word *minjung* (민중/民衆) is a combination of the two characters: *Min*

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 27; Whitson’s italics.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 52-53.

(民) means people and *jung* (衆) means group. Thus literally *minjung* means a group of people. In the context of *minjung* theology the definition of *minjung* varies according to scholars, but here the *minjung* are the people who are politically oppressed, culturally alienated and economically exploited. Through their struggle Korean Christians came to know the “*minjung*” as the subject of history and also of theology.¹⁰⁸ The approach of *minjung* theology differs from that of orthodox theology: Korean Christians did *minjung* theology, not from above, but from below, from the experience of the *minjung*.¹⁰⁹

In Korean theological circles, Nam-dong Suh (1918-1984)¹¹⁰ was called “the antenna of the Korean theological world.”¹¹¹ In his first book, *Theology at a Turning Point* (1974), he wrestled with Western theologies such as Bonhoeffer’s secular theology (1965), Altizer’s death of God theology (1966) and Moltmann’s theology of hope (1968). From 1969 to 1974 he immersed himself in studying the theology of science, especially focusing on eco-theology. During this time he published seven articles on eco-theology.

¹⁰⁸ The subjectivity of Korean *minjung* is realized through their epistemological privilege of moving beyond the present history and their struggles against oppressive power and repressive social structure. See Young-bock Kim, “Messiah and Minjung: Discerning Messianic Politics over Against Political Messianism,” in *Minjung Theology: People as the Subject of History*, ed. Young-bock Kim, (Singapore: Christian Conference of Asia, 1983), 185-188.

¹⁰⁹ In *minjung* theology the word *minjung* comes from the Greek word found in the Gospels, ὄχλος. The first written gospel, Mark, deliberately avoids the term *laos* (λαός) meaning the common people and uses the term *ochlos* (ὄχλος) to indicate the multitudinous *minjung*: Mark uses ὄχλος 36 times whereas there is no use of the word λαός except two quotations from the Hebrew Bible (7:6, 14:2). The followers of Jesus were *ochlos* not *laos*; the *ochlos* journeyed with Jesus to the Jerusalem. The *ochlos* followed Jesus since they saw a new vision in him and he responded to their desires for a new world without any conditions.

¹¹⁰ Suh, Nam-dong studied at Toshiba University, Japan (1941) and Emmanuel College, Canada (1956). Between studies, he served Korean Presbyterian churches in Korea for ten years. He taught at *Hanshin University* (1952-1962) and *Yonsei University* (1962-1975). He was awarded an honorary Doctor of Divinity from Victoria University of the University of Toronto in 1984 and died two months later in Korea.

¹¹¹ Tong-shik Ryu, *한국신학의 광맥 [The Vein of the Korean Theology]: Introduction to the History of the Korean Theological Thought* (Seoul: Chunmangsa, 1982), 317-321.

Then, Suh set out to radicalize his theological vision by opening it up to the field of *minjung* theology.¹¹² He believed that a genuine disposition for doing theology required it to echo the suffering of the *minjung*.¹¹³ He was dismissed from his professorship at *Yonsei* University when he became involved in the Korean *minjung* movement and, in 1975, was imprisoned because of his defiance of the military dictatorship. It is significant that Suh developed his theology in prison and on the streets, not primarily in the library or classroom.

In 1979 Suh published an important essay, “Converging Two Stories,”¹¹⁴ in which he articulated his hermeneutics of *minjung* theology; the article is filled with inspiration from the *minjung* and presents a method of the convergence of faith and culture. Here is a glimpse of his vision:

The task for Korean *minjung* theology is to witness that there is a convergence of the Christianity *minjung* tradition and the Korean *minjung* tradition in the mission of God (*missio Dei*) in Korea. We regard the present events which are happening before our eyes as the intervention of God into history, the work of the Holy Spirit and the Exodus event, and participate in these events and translate them with theological interpretation. We need some references to participate in and interpret these events [in maintaining both traditions.] I call this pneumatological-

¹¹² Nam-dong Suh, *전환시대의 신학* [*Theology at a Turning Point*] (Seoul: Korea Theological Institute, 1974), 8.

¹¹³ Nam-dong Suh, *A Study of Minjung Theology* (Seoul: Hangil Press, 1983), 3. He experienced a theological conversion at the “Faith and Order Commission” of the World Council Churches held in Nairobi in 1975. He was deeply moved by the struggle of the third world for liberation and by the presentation of Hans Weber of “The Cross in Many Cultures.” In the presentation Weber referred to Korean poet Chi-ha Kim’s poem, “Worshiping A Six-chambered Revolver,” as his climactic understanding of the cross over the two thousand years of Christian thinking. Weber saw the Korean Churches as involved in God’s confrontation with the military powers to liberate human beings. When Weber asked him about the poet, Suh was then putting so much of his energy into studying eco-theology and not involved in the Korean *minjung* movement that he realized that he did not know much about the Korean *minjung*’s struggle. Suh, *A Study of Minjung Theology*, 24-27.

¹¹⁴ The original title in 1979 was “Minjung Theology,” but Suh changed the title to “Converging Two Stories” when he expanded it in 1983.

synchronic interpretation, which I would contrast with the traditional Christological-diachronic interpretation.¹¹⁵

There is much to unpack in this statement. My locus for doing theology is Canada but I bring my experience of interpreting Suh's theology from the convergence of the Christianity *minjung* tradition (faith) and the Korean *minjung* tradition (culture) in *missio Dei*. At that time the contemporary context was the perspective of the history of Korea and the critical events during the struggle for justice and democracy over the decades of military dictatorships following 1945. Suh's *minjung* theology is still valid in the Canadian context where various cultures live side-by-side as neighbours and where there is potential for the liberation of the *minjung* and for the coming community envisioned in becoming an intercultural church.

4.3.1.1. The first principle: to be rooted in the *Minjung* traditions

Suh states that the task of *minjung* theology is to witness to the convergence of faith (the Christian *minjung* tradition) and culture (the Korean *minjung* tradition). It may seem a large task to join the two traditions, but Suh finds a common ground in the *minjung* traditions. He understands that the Galilean and Korean people, for example, meet together beyond time and place in their *minjung* traditions through the Spirit who works in liberating and reconciling events. Transcending differences of faith and culture, *minjung* tradition provides a converging ground whereby the two traditions may meet for

¹¹⁵ Suh, *A Study of Minjung Theology*, 78. Bracketed part from an English translation, *Minjung Theology*, 179.

the liberation of the *minjung*.¹¹⁶ For Suh, both the biblical and the cultural *minjung* traditions become equally valued references for the liberation of the *minjung*.

A prerequisite for the convergence of faith and culture is the uncovering of the *minjung* traditions. Suh understands that when faith meets culture, faith must be founded in the “*minjung* tradition.” Faith founded in the *minjung* tradition moves forward to meet another culture. Why is it important that faith be founded in the *minjung* tradition? Carl F. Starkloff tells a story he heard from an Aboriginal man of the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming.

[The Aboriginal man] pointed to the Wind River mountains, and reminded me that Wind River and the Little Wind River flow from two different forks in the mountains, meandering separately across some thirty miles of the reservation land until they meet the town of Riverton and become simply the Wind River. “This is what I believe will happen with the Indian’s religion [Little Wind River] and the white man’s religion [Wind River],” [the Aboriginal man said.]¹¹⁷

This story is reminiscent of how Western Christianity often absorbed other cultures when meeting them; it placed other cultures within its substructure and thus swallowed them up. Yet we remember that all missionary works were not colonizing activities.¹¹⁸ As the church moves forward to become an “intercultural church,” it is important to remember who we are as a faith community, reflecting on our history to find the “*minjung*

¹¹⁶ Suh’s concept of liberation is close to that of Gustavo Gutiérrez: He describes liberation as “liberation from social situations of oppression and marginalization; liberation from all forms [of] inner servitude; and liberation from sin, which breaks our friendship with God and other human beings. Gutiérrez equates ‘to liberate’ with ‘to give life.’” See Virginia Fabella and R.S. Sugirtharajah, eds., *Dictionary of Third World Theologies* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2000), s.v. “Liberation.”

¹¹⁷ Carl F. Starkloff, “The Problem of Syncretism in the Search for Inculturation,” *Mission: Journal of Mission Studies* 1, no. 1 (1994), 83.

¹¹⁸ Hyuk Cho, “Partnership in Mission: William Scott’s Ministry in Korea,” *Touchstone* vol. 31, no. 1 (February 2013): 57-66.

traditions” in our church and society from a liberation perspective. This provides the basis for meeting another culture with respect: otherwise the church might cause “*han* (恨)”¹¹⁹ or suffering to the other when it crosses boundaries. This is the very harsh lesson that faith communities in Canada are learning from our experience of the “Indian residential school system.”¹²⁰ Suh warns that faith *should not* add further to the *han* of the *minjung* of another culture. The power of Western Christianity is based historically on complicity with colonial power and its imperial motives.¹²¹ In the UCC, Anglo-European congregations still retain power inherited from the colonial culture. Thus, when Christian faith attempts to cross boundaries to meet other cultures, awareness of whether its faith tradition is rooted in the *minjung* tradition is crucial.

¹¹⁹ According to Andrew Sung Park, *han* can be defined as “the critical wound of the heart generated by unjust psychosomatic repression, as well as by social political, economic, and cultural oppression. It is entrenched in the heart of the victims of sin and violence, and is expressed through such diverse reactions as sadness, helplessness, hopelessness, resentment, hatred, and the will to revenge. *Han* reverberates in the souls of survivors of the Holocaust, Palestinians in the occupied territories, victims of racial discrimination, battered wives, children involved in divorces, the victims of child-molestation, laid-off workers, the unemployed, and exploited workers.” Andrew Sung Park, *The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 10. When the heart is hurt so much it ruptures symbolically; it aches. When the aching heart is wounded again by external violence, the victim suffers a yet deeper pain. The wound produced by such repeated abuse and injustice is *han* in the heart. Park, *The Wounded Heart of God*, 20. Thus, according to Suh, “*han* (恨) is an accumulation of suppressed and condensed experiences of oppression. Accumulated *han* is inherited and transmitted, boiling in the blood of the people.” Suh, *A Study of Minjung Theology*, 100.

¹²⁰ The United Church of Canada was involved in 13 Indian residential schools by 1973. The Methodist and Presbyterian Churches set up residential schools prior to the Union in 1925 when the UCC took them over. See John W. Grant, *Moon of Wintertime: Missionaries and the Indians of Canada in Encounter since 1535* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1984) and Thompson Ferrier, *Our Indians and Their Training for Citizenship* (Toronto: Methodist Mission Rooms, 1913?).

¹²¹ Dube, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible*; Letty M. Russell, “God, Gold, Glory and Gender: A Postcolonial View of Mission,” *International Review of Mission* 93. no. 368 (January 2004): 39-49.

How do we know our faith or culture is rooted in *minjung* tradition? Douglas John Hall offers a useful tool in his “Guidelines for Discerning the Times.”¹²² The following questions guide us to reflect on who the *minjung* in our time and place are.

- (a) Who *are the victims* of our society? (b) How is our society perceived and depicted by its own *most reflective members*? (c) How do the pursuits and values of our society compare with images of the human in *our authoritative sources*? (d) Within the *corporate dialogue* of the disciple community, what emerges as the problematic of our culture?¹²³

These guidelines would reveal a cultural map of the *minjung* or reflective members in our society and how they are depicted individually and collectively. Finding the *minjung* is the most important process in the convergence, since the *minjung* perspective acts as a lens to uncover the *minjung* in various cultures and guides the dialogue with others based on that perspective, which is crucial in sharing concern for justice and building right relationships among different cultures. Hall underscores the point by suggesting that, since one’s experience has to be tested against the experience of another, theology should be “a dialogical and communal enterprise from start to last.”¹²⁴ In dialogue with others, he notes, the voices of the *minjung* will be heard – and for Hall these may include racial minorities, the victims of economic injustice and moral outcasts such as homosexual persons that have been ignored by dominant forms of Christianity.¹²⁵ Hall’s questions act as a template, guiding processes of contextual discernment that seek to discover certain

¹²² Douglas John Hall, *Thinking The Faith: Christian Theology in a North American Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 134-141; Hall’s italics

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 134; Hall’s italics.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 140.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 141.

common assumptions and goals in the community/society so that its participants act together on the basics of shared concern for justice.

4.3.1.2. The second principle: to participate in the mission of God (*missio Dei*)

For Suh, the convergence of faith and culture occurs when Christians participate in God's mission (*missio Dei*). He adopts it as a way to work with others for a common good. It plays a critical role in the development of his *minjung* theology of doing mission with others. Further, the concept provided a theological foundation for many Korean Christians as they began to struggle against the dictatorships following the Korean War and for the democratization and human rights movements of the 1970s and 80s. Once they grasped the concepts of *missio Dei*, activists broke out of their church walls to work with the *minjung* in factories and slum districts.

Korea was at war from 1950 to 1953, the very time when the concept of *missio Dei* was in its initial stage of development in the West,¹²⁶ so the Korean church was not able to send a delegation to the International Missionary Council (IMC) Conference held in 1952 in Willingen, Germany.¹²⁷ It was not until much later, in 1969, that *missio Dei* was discussed at the General Council of the National Council of Churches in Korea

¹²⁶ In the late 1940s many western Christian communities were in a state of tumult; the aftermath of World War II and the closure of mission fields in China by the Communist government in 1949 brought about the existential crisis for Anglo-American missions previously experienced by German missions. The shocking events prompted the church to go through a period of self-critical evaluation. In particular, the end of the China mission raised fundamental missiological questions about the church's missiological identity and demanded a new method of mission.

¹²⁷ Soo-il Chai, "Missio Dei – Its Development and Limitations in Korea," *International Review of Mission* 367, vol. 92 (October 2003): 540.

(NCKK)¹²⁸ and became the foundation for the mission policy of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) at its General Council 1969.¹²⁹ In 1968, before *missio Dei* had yet been widely discussed in Korea, Suh writes that Christianity means cult (祭儀), system (制度) and ecclesiastical authority (教權) and that the Christian community needs the concept of *missio Dei* to revise history and reanimate humanity.¹³⁰ Suh regrets that the missiology and mission practice of the Korean churches has lost its saltiness. He hopes *missio Dei* will recover and restore the relevancy of Christianity. Before exploring Suh's understanding of *missio Dei*, a discussion of the development of the "ambiguous" concept will be helpful.¹³¹ The evolution of the term is traced through various reports of the IMC and later, the WCC (World Council of Churches) from their different perspectives. The shaft during the 50s and 60s in understanding the concept of *missio Dei* in what Jacques Matthey classifies as "classical" and "ecumenical" will be reviewed.¹³²

The classical idea of *missio Dei* surfaced in 1952 at the Willingen Conference although the term *missio Dei* itself did not appear in its documents.¹³³ The Willingen

¹²⁸ Jeong-Kwon Kim, "Missio Dei in Today's Korea [오늘 한국에 있어서의 하나님의 선교]," *Christian Thought [기독교 사상]* 130 (March 1969):121-131.

¹²⁹ Jae-Young Ju, "Missiology in the 1970s [1970년대 선교신학]," *Theology Thought [신학사상]* 36 (Spring 1982): 73.

¹³⁰ Suh, *Theology at a Turning Point*, 242

¹³¹ John G. Flett, *The Witness of God: The Trinity, Missio Dei, Karl Barth, and the Nature of Christian Community* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2010), 161, see chapters 1-4.

¹³² Jacques Matthey, "Missiology in the World Council of Churches: Update," *International Review of Mission* 359, no. 4 (2001): 429-433.

¹³³ Karl Hartenstein coined the term *missio Dei* based on Karl Barth's use of the word *missio* in the lecture, "Theology and Mission in Present Times," at the Brandenburg Missionary Conference in April 1932. In 1934 Hartenstein said, "Mission today is called to examine itself in every way and always anew

theme, “The Missionary Obligation of the Church,” was reflected in the report, “The Theological Basis of the Missionary Obligation.”¹³⁴ However, the progressive report was not adopted because it emphasized God’s work outside the church – God acts in “political and social life ... [and] in the process of scientific discovery.”¹³⁵ This concept of the mission of God was perhaps too radical for the delegates. In place of the original, a traditional-leaning report, “A Statement on the Missionary Calling of the Church,” was accepted.¹³⁶ The new statement differed from the original in its discussion of the relationship of God to the world. As a result, the mission of God *through the church* was emphasized and the mission of God as working outside the church was deleted. The majority of the delegates at Willingen affirmed this church-centred view of mission as the basis of the mission of God. Thus the new statement read: “God sends forth the Church to carry out His work to the ends of the earth, to all nations, and to the end of time.”¹³⁷ Willingen’s understanding of *missio Dei* is that God is primarily related to the church and only secondarily to the world by means of the church.¹³⁸

before God, to determine whether it is what it ought to be: *missio Dei*, the sending of God, that is the sending which Christ the Lord commands to the Apostles.” See Karl Hartenstein, “Wozu nötigt die Finanzlage der Mission,” *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* 79 (1934): 217. Quoted in Flett, *The Witness of God*, 130.

¹³⁴ Norman Goodal, ed., *Missions Under the Cross: Address Delivered at the Enlarged Meeting of the Committee of the International Missionary Council at Willingen, in Germany, 1952; with Statements issued by the Meeting* (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1953), 238-245.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 240.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 188-192, 238-245. A committee consisting of L. Newbigin, P. Lehmann, J.J. Chandran and K. Hartenstein produced this document. Hans J. Margull, *Hope in Action: The Church’s Task in the World*, trans. Eugene Peters (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962), 25.

¹³⁷ Goodal, ed., *Missions Under the Cross*, 190.

¹³⁸ Vicedom summarizes the classical concept of *missio Dei*: “The mission, and with it the church, is God’s very own work. We cannot speak of ‘the mission of the church’, even less of ‘our mission.’ Both the church and the mission have their source in the loving will of God. Therefore we can speak of church

The classical notion of *missio Dei* is based on the theology of “the Triune God.” The record of the Willingen proceedings, *Missions Under the Cross*, reflects the traditional missionary movement: “Out of the depths of His love for us, the Father has sent forth His own beloved Son to reconcile all things to Himself. . . . God sends forth the Church to carry out His work to the ends of the earth, to all nations, and to the end of time.¹³⁹ The Willingen stance gained popularity among evangelical circles. However, questions about the Trinitarian-based missionary movement as imperialistic began to surface: with its one-way direction – God’s sending-ness and the church’s sent-ness – it maintained a hierarchical relationship with others.¹⁴⁰ The church may impose its beliefs, practices and structures on others. According to a recent study by John G. Flett, classical *missio Dei* bears the central theological “problem”: “The Triune God acts in breaking down and building up, and the corresponding missiology act identifies and participates in this act.”¹⁴¹ Through the use of the classical concept of *missio Dei*, the church may plant

and mission always only with the understanding that they are not independent entities. Both are only tools of God, instruments through which God carries out His mission. The church must first in obedience fulfill His missionary intention. Only then can she speak of her mission, since her mission is then included in the *missio Dei*. Georg F. Vicedom, *The Mission of God: An Introduction to a Theology of Mission*, trans. Gilbert A. Thiele and Dennis Hilgendorf (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965, first published in 1960 in German), 5-6. His emphasis.

¹³⁹ Goodal, ed., *Missions Under the Cross*, 189-190.

¹⁴⁰ A similar concern for the Trinitarian *missio Dei* was expressed at the Edinburgh Conference 2010. *Edinburgh 2010* reports: “This classical formulation of *missio Dei*, affirming that mission is God’s sending forth, was expanded in ecumenical discussion in the twentieth century to include the participation of the church in the divine mission. This conviction led to a reconsideration of mission as ultimately proceeding from a trinitarian God, The way in which the triune God sends forth has been variously understood in recent years. Placed alongside classical hierarchical formulations has been an emphasis on the relational. Community has been emphasized: the triune God is a ‘...dynamic, relational community of persons, whose very nature is to be present and active in the world, calling it and persuading it towards the fullness of relationship that Christian tradition calls salvation’ and equality and justice are modelled on trinitarian relationships.” Daryl Balia and Kirsteen Kim, eds., *Edinburgh 2010: Witnessing to Christ Today*, vol. II (Oxford, UK: Regnum, 2010), 23.

¹⁴¹ Flett, *The Witness of God*, 148.

its culture in other cultures, “lie on top of them and ... provide the governing and orienting structures.”¹⁴²

A new theological paradigm broke radically with the Enlightenment approach to theology at Willingen. It differed from the previous approach which put humans rather than God in the centre of mission. In *missio Dei*, the “missionary initiative comes from God alone”: mission is God’s primary activity.¹⁴³ After Willingen the church recognized it had to turn itself outwards toward the world rather than keep its “heretical structures” which “impede the *missio Dei*.”¹⁴⁴ When the IMC was incorporated into the WCC in 1961, the WCC embarked on the project, “The Missionary Structures of the Congregation” (1961–1966). The project’s final reports published in the book, *The Church for Others and The Church for the World* (1967), were prepared respectively by the Western European and North American Working Groups.¹⁴⁵ Each study began with a review of the existing structure in which God’s primary relationship is with the church. From the sequence, God – church – world, God’s concern shifts from “inside the church

¹⁴² John G. Flett, “A Theology of *missio Dei*,” *Theology in Scotland* 21, no. 1 (2014): 71.

¹⁴³ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 390.

¹⁴⁴ WCC, *The Church of Others and The Church for the World* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1967), 19. Basic to the background of these studies was a recognition of secular society in the 1960s. The Western European Group defined secularization as a fruit of the Gospel (8-12).

¹⁴⁵ Reacting to the WCC’s missiology, evangelicals led by Billy Graham organized the Berlin World Conference on Evangelism in 1966 and the Lausanne International Congress for World Evangelism in 1977. The evangelical groups’ approach to mission resembled the “classical” formulations. Matthey, “Missiology in the World Council of Churches: Update,” 497. Korea was not the only country where the concept of *missio Dei* became a divisive issue. According to Soo-il Chai, “In the history of the Korean church, *missio Dei* has broken down barriers but it has also created new ones: barriers between conservatives and progressives, between evangelism and humanization, between saving souls and social involvement. Chai, “*Missio Dei*—Its Development and Limitations in Korea,” 548.

to the ‘outsiders’ in the world.”¹⁴⁶ *The Church for Others and The Church for the World* affirms that God is active in the world through people of good will whoever and wherever they are; the church is called to participate in God’s mission. Thus the new sequence of God’s mission is: God – world – church.¹⁴⁷ Matthey calls the new structure of *missio Dei* arising from the study and from the debate at the Uppsala assembly of the WCC in 1968 the “ecumenical” position.¹⁴⁸

The Church for Others and The Church for the World uses a theocentric rather than an ecclesiocentric basis for mission. According to Bosch, the attention of the reports was focused on “God’s work in the secular world.”¹⁴⁹ Letty Russell, a member of the North American Working Group interprets the implication of the shift: “The church becomes more modest in its claims to be the medium of God’s action and instead sees itself as a sign or instrument of that action, which is taking place in and through all parts

¹⁴⁶ WCC, *The Church of Others and The Church for the World*, 17. The title is reminiscent of Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s letters from prison: “The church is the church only when it exists for others.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, ed. Eberhard Bethge (1953, New York: Touchstone, 1997), 382.

¹⁴⁷ Central to the paradigm change regarding God’s relationship to the world, was the Dutch missiologist Johannes C. Hoekendijk. He challenged the church-centred view of mission begun in the 1950s and continued into the 1960s. Before Willingen, Hoekendijk argued, “Church-centric missionary thinking is bound to go astray, because it revolves around an illegitimate centre.” J. C. Hoekendijk, “The Church in Missionary Thinking,” in *International Review of Mission* vol. 41 no. 163 (July 1952); 332. Hoekendijk understood that the mission of God was to create God’s *shalom* in the world and that the church was invited to participate in this mission. According to Bosch (*Transforming Mission*, 392), “The influence of Hoekendijk is clearly discernible” in both the WCC’s Western European and North American Working Groups’ final reports in 1967. Both reports confirmed Hoekendijk’s thinking: “God – world – church” and the church’s role as a participant in *missio Dei*. WCC, *The Church of Others and The Church for the World*, 13-14, 16-17, 69-71, 75-77.

¹⁴⁸ Matthey, “Missiology in the World Council of Churches: Update,” 494. The WCC assembly in Uppsala, 1968 enthusiastically embraced the final reports of *The Church for Others and The Church for the World* (1967); this became the culminating moment for the “secularization” and “humanization” of *missio Dei*. David Bosch, *Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Theological Perspective* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1980), 190.

¹⁴⁹ Bosch, *Witness to the World*, 190.

of the groaning universe.”¹⁵⁰ Elsewhere, Russell continues, that in a postcolonial world, God’s mission is a gift of welcome for all to participate in God’s work, creating spaces of liberation in making all things new (Isa. 43: 18-21; Rev. 21: 5).¹⁵¹ In the underlying shift, there is a new understanding of the Trinity: the new concept of *missio Dei* suggests a shift from a hierarchical direction to a *perichoretic* (περιχώρησις) relationship; accordingly the role of the church changes to one of witnessing concern for the common good with others.

In the above “ecumenical” notion of *missio Dei*, God’s mission begins with people, not the church and is for people as they are and where they are. Matthey says, “the starting point of mission is to respect people and their communities in terms of their struggle, ideology and religion, then to struggle with them according to their priorities.”¹⁵² Having reviewed two major shifts in the concept of *missio Dei*, it is clear that the “classical” understanding of *missio Dei* is certainly not that of Suh’s. He draws the concept of *missio Dei* from the “ecumenical” position; the fullness of life is for all (John 10:10). His theology is developed from his context; he sees Jesus in the face of the poor (Matthew 25). Suh affirms, “we regard the present events which are happening before our eyes as the intervention of God into history, the work of the Holy Spirit and the Exodus event, and participate in these events and translate them with theological

¹⁵⁰ Letty M. Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993), 89.

¹⁵¹ Letty M. Russell, “God, Gold, Glory and Gender: A Postcolonial View of Mission,” *International Review of Mission* 93, no. 368 (January 2004): 45.

¹⁵² Matthey, “Missiology in the World Council of Churches: Update,” 494.

interpretation.”¹⁵³ Here is Suh’s understanding of *missio Dei*: God *is* in the midst of human life and we participate in God’s being and witness God’s acts in the lives of the *minjung*. In the next chapter the discussion will focus on how God’s concern is for the world.

4.3.1.3. Tae-II Chun: An embodiment of the convergence of faith and culture

Suh claims that the convergence of faith and culture had already happened in Korea in the person of Tae-il Chun (1948-1970). Chun worked in a garment sweat-shop in the Seoul Peace Market (서울평화시장).¹⁵⁴ He immolated himself on November 13, 1970 at the age of 22 after witnessing the horrific treatment of young female co-workers who were forced to work for 15-16 hours a day with only two days off a month and on meagre wages. Chun helped them fight for their rights, written into but not observed by the Labour Standards Law. He tried in vain to fight the cold indifference of the state and the employers in an effort to improve the lives of all the exploited and oppressed *minjung*. However, the labourers’ lives were not improved. He went to a church retreat centre on a mountain to wrestle with God and he stayed there for six months to pray. After four months at the centre and three months before his death, he wrote his affirmation of faith in his diary.¹⁵⁵

I have hesitated and agonized for a long time over this, but at this moment I have come to an absolute decision. I must go back, to be alongside my poor brothers and sisters to the heaven of my hearts, to the young hearts at the Peace Market

¹⁵³ Suh, *A Study of Minjung Theology*, 78.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 78 and 223-4.

¹⁵⁵ Cho, Young-rae, *전태일 평전 [A Single Spark: The Biography of Chun Tae-il]*, trans. Chun, Soon-ok (Seoul: Dolbegae Publishers, 2004), 30.

who are my whole life. The vow I have made in these long hours of contemplation: I have to protect those fragile lives. I will throw my self away, I will die for you. Be patient, wait only a little bit more. I will sacrifice my self, so as not to leave you. You are the home of my heart. . . . God, have mercy on me. I am struggling to be the dew for countless withering innocent lives.¹⁵⁶

Suh sees the Christian *minjung* tradition and the Korean *minjung* tradition converging in the person, life and work of Chun, a Christian *minjung* and a bearer of the Korean *minjung* tradition.¹⁵⁷ This convergence became a spark for the *minjung* movement in 1970s and 1980s.

Through such a convergence the Korean church began its industrial mission and theologians started to develop *minjung* theology. The Korean labour and democratic movements were organized and many people became involved in them. In the convergence, the Christian *minjung* tradition (faith) and the Korean *minjung* tradition (culture) both experienced a deepening and widening of their horizons. In the embodiment of the two traditions in Chun's life, the church and those outside the church were mutually enriched: The church moved beyond its traditional boundaries to work with other faith communities and organizations, and others, in turn, also realized that the church could be a companion in the Korean democratic movement. Through these two principles of being rooted in the *minjung* traditions and participating in *missio Dei* for just relations, faith and culture converged in the action for the liberation of the *minjung* in Korea.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 253-254.

¹⁵⁷ Suh, *A Study of Minjungh Theology*, 223.

4.3.2. *The Holy Spirit: The Go-Between God*

In the first and second principles described above, the *minjung* traditions of faith and culture converge in the activity of *missio Dei*. Since there is a gap between the two traditions – faith and culture – in time and space, a bridge is needed to connect them. Suh develops a method he called “pneumatological-synchronic interpretation” in which the different traditions meet in the work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵⁸ The Spirit working back in the time of Jesus is also working now in support of the liberation of the *minjung*. To clarify his “pneumatological-synchronic interpretation,” he contrasts it with a “Christological-diachronic interpretation.”

In the Christological-diachronic interpretation, Jesus of Nazareth died ‘for me’ or ‘on my behalf’, yet in the pneumatological-synchronic interpretation, I represent Jesus, and the Jesus’ events occur here and now. These two views are not alternative choices, but complementary. However, *minjung* theology is concerned with the work of the Holy Spirit and the received traditions work as references for interpretation.¹⁵⁹

The main thrust of Suh’s pneumatological-synchronic interpretation suggests that the work of the Holy Spirit is not limited to a particular time and place; the wind blows where it chooses (John 3:8). The Spirit moves beyond spatiotemporal limitations, beyond cultural and ecclesiological boundaries, and beyond the power of the postcolonial empire to affirm the “preferential option for those who suffer more.”¹⁶⁰

In Suh’s pneumatological-synchronic interpretation, Jesus’ passion on the side of the *minjung* (*ochlos*) is acted out in the *here and now* through the work of the Holy Spirit,

¹⁵⁸ Suh, *A Study of Minjung Theology*, 78.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁶⁰ Anselm Min, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World: A Postmodern Theology after Postmodernism* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2004), 114.

whereas the Christological interpretation stresses the individual atonement of *pro me*, reflecting a traditional Western theology in which the cross has been understood as the *once and for all* event. Pneumatological interpretation does not stress the factual truth of a set of doctrines nor see the Jesus-event as the condition for atonement, but emphasises the universality of God's grace carried out in the work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁶¹ Suh recognizes the two interpretations as complementary but he finds the pneumatological interpretation helpful in realizing the Jesus-event in contemporary daily life. When considering whether to participate in the "Occupy Movement," for example, one may refer to biblical references to how Moses and/or Paul tried to identify and carry out what they discerned as God's will. In Suh's pneumatological interpretation, this is not merely an historical inquiry, for the Bible becomes a reference toward the interpretation of current events and the discernment of action, with the Holy Spirit being the primary source for decision-making. However, "if the present activity of the Holy Spirit is only secondary and the inspiration of Paul in the past is primary, God is the God of the past, not the God of the present. The Holy Spirit is a living God."¹⁶² For Suh, pneumatological interpretation is a spiritual activity; liberation happens here and now in the activity of the Holy Spirit.

Suh sees evidence of *missio Dei* in the history of Korea, which witnesses to the work of the Holy Spirit in liberating the *minjung*.¹⁶³ But Suh's pneumatology widens his understanding of *missio Dei*, seeing the Bible as not the only source for interpreting

¹⁶¹ Suh, *A Study of Minjung Theology*, 165.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, 166.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 41.

current events; other cultures may also be references for the liberation of the *minjung*. According to Suh's interpretation, *missio Dei* respects other cultures as gifts of God and the Holy Spirit as working in the spaces between faith and culture for the liberation of the *minjung*; the mission of God is working here and now in the in-between spaces.

In the 1970s, the British theologian John V. Taylor asserted, "In every ... encounter there has been an anonymous third party who makes the introduction, acts as a go-between, makes two beings aware of each other [and] sets up a current communication between them."¹⁶⁴ Taylor calls the Holy Spirit the "go-between God," who does not simply stand between one person and another but activates each one from the inside. In the work of the Holy Spirit, the line between subject and object is blurred. The Spirit opens our eyes to recognize the Other in a movement toward mutuality of evocation and response.¹⁶⁵ Further, the go-between God is also working with others who are different from us. The Spirit works in the in-between spaces to generate a current of liberating communication that respects and welcomes each other's truth.¹⁶⁶ The work of the Spirit, the go-between God, does not force the Other to become like me or vice versa, but acts in the in-between spaces making real both separateness and the conjunction of togetherness. The Spirit is the animator Third Space, of convergence between faith and culture.

The Bible story of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21) reflects the above-mentioned understanding of the go-between God working in the in-between spaces. The Holy Spirit

¹⁶⁴ John V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God: The Holy Spirit and Christian Mission* (London: SCM Press, 1972), 17.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 23.

at Pentecost describes how the multitudes from different cultures and languages live together without the regulation of a totalitarian or segregational structure. In his book, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb*, Eric Law suggests that the story of Pentecost should be read as a miracle of both the tongue and of the ear.¹⁶⁷ The story of Pentecost would not be complete without both. Law recognizes that the story has usually been told as a miracle of tongues in that the disciples were empowered to speak in different languages to communicate the works of God (Acts 2:1-4). If we understand Pentecost as a miracle only of tongues, we may draw implications from only half of the Pentecost story. What is the other half? When we read the story further to verses 6 and 7, the multitude knew that the disciples were speaking Galilean and yet they were able to understand them in their own languages.¹⁶⁸ The people spoke in their own tongues, but at the same time they understood the disciples who were speaking in their first language. For instance, it is as if although I may be speaking in Korean, others understand me in their own mother tongues without translation, or as if someone speaks to me in Chinese and I understand it in Korean even though I do not know Chinese at all. The Holy Spirit comes into our midst where we are – in the midst of different cultures and languages. Without diminishing my cultural heritage, the Spirit works through my own language and culture. The go-between God lives in various cultures speaking different languages, eating different foods, wearing different clothes and so on. At Pentecost we celebrate the gift of difference; the here-and-now go-between God dwells in our differences.

¹⁶⁷ Eric H. F. Law, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice, 1993), 45-51.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

According to Law, God empowers the previously powerless disciples, who fear further persecution after the death of Jesus, to speak in tongues, and even further, to preach in public spaces.¹⁶⁹ The God at Pentecost empowers those living in fear under the Empire to speak out boldly for justice. At the same time, powerful others, the “devout Jews from every nation who dwell in Jerusalem,” are given the miracle of the ear, that is, ears to listen rather than to speak. They are given the gifts of listening and understanding that leads to building a new community where people share what they have (Acts 4:31-35). When the powerless and the powerful together open their hearts, minds, hands and ears to the holistic Spirit, they begin to start to learn how to live together with Others in creating the new economy of community.¹⁷⁰ The story of the miracle of ears and tongues demonstrates the Spirit at Pentecost working together in shared concern for a common good. The go-between God moves beyond the baptised community to work with the peoples of different faith traditions and even of no faith. The go-between God does not work in a way that forces differences to assimilate, the other becoming like oneself, since otherness cannot be “reduced, abated, merged, or interchanged.”¹⁷¹ Rather she empowers all parties – in their differences – to work for the needs of the Other in “solidarity with the marginalized,”¹⁷² a testimony to how the mission of God works in the world through the activity of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 48.

¹⁷⁰ Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life: The Holy Spirit and the Theology of Life* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 104.

¹⁷¹ Taylor, *The Go-Between God*, 194.

¹⁷² I am indebted to Anselm Min’s “Solidarity of Others.” I will present Min’s concept further in the next chapter. See Suh, *A Study of Minjung Theology*, 379; Min, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World*.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed intercultural theology from the visions of the founders of intercultural theology and from Bhabha's Third Space. Intercultural theology operates in a given culture without absolutising a single culture and without subjugating other cultures to a single culture. Intercultural theology accepts that theology is culturally conditioned and that every Christian theology is conceived in a particular culture. Accordingly, along with scripture and tradition, culture is one essential source for doing theology. Intercultural theology studies how to create in-between spaces when different cultures meet, so as promote mutual interaction. An intercultural church, then, boldly creates safe and welcoming spaces inside and outside itself to facilitate shared concern in the crossing of cultural boundaries to live faithfully. It seeks solidarity with other faith groups or communities and those of no faith in seeking a common good of justice for all.

As a way of conceptualizing the development of the church's mission strategy for becoming an intercultural church, the discussion here considered the wisdom of the Aboriginal philosophy, *mitakuye oyasin*: all my relations, wherein all peoples live in mutual respect for differences. *Mitakuye oyasin* offers a sound basis for becoming an intercultural church, a church living in harmony and balance among different cultures. The discussion also recommended considering the Two-Row Wampum belt as a symbol of how different cultures may coexist equally and with mutual respect for one another without violating others' identities. The image manifests how two different cultures may be both separated and connected in "friendship, respect and peace." Imagine how the UCC might live into its vision of becoming an intercultural church based on such gifts! In an intercultural church there would be no divisive boundaries excluding certain cultures

and faiths. Like the distinct paths of the Two Row Wampum belt, each culture would keep its own identity as it chooses, even as each culture learns from the other. I have envisioned the space between rows from the Two Row Wampum belt as a space for listening, learning and growing. On the journey toward becoming an intercultural church, the Aboriginal philosophy *all my relations* would symbolize how we are all related and the Two Row Wampum belt would model the way for the different cultures to interact with each other.

The concepts of *all my relations* and the Two Row Wampum belt are operative in that faith and culture converge without violating each other's identity. Nam-dong Suh's model of converging faith and culture has been proposed as a contribution to the UCC's vision of becoming an intercultural church. Two principles, (1) to be rooted in the *minjung* traditions and (2) to participate together in the mission of God, are proposed to promote the convergence of faith and culture. In this convergence there is no attempt to violate the other's identity, but both traditions are maintained and mutually enriched. In the convergence there may be gaps between the traditions in time and space. Suh's hermeneutics of pneumatological-synchronic interpretation bridges the gap where faith and culture meet through the work of the Holy Spirit. Suh differentiates his pneumatological-synchronic interpretation from Christological-diachronic interpretation to emphasize the activity of the Holy Spirit in the here and now. To support Suh's hermeneutics we have drawn on John V. Taylor's *the go-between God*, a God who freely moves and works with peoples of different faiths and cultures. The go-between God does not reduce the other into oneself or vice versa, but empowers those who yearn to work together for a common good. In the next chapter, a model, "all my relations," will be

proposed as a way for an intercultural church to work together beyond different faiths and cultures.

Chapter 5

“All My Relations”:

A Model for Becoming an Intercultural Church

The true union or true togetherness is not a togetherness of synthesis, but a togetherness of face to face.

– Emmanuel Levinas, *Ethics and Infinity*

Plurality is the condition of human action because we are all the same, that is, human, in such a way that nobody is ever the same as anyone else who ever lived, lives, or will live.

– Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*

The period from the mid 10th to the mid 12th centuries CE in Islamic Spain was a time when Christians, Jews and Muslims lived together in relative harmony. Historians use the term *convivencia* to describe this time of living with mutual respect in community.¹ The word *convivencia* is defined as coexistence or living-togetherness; it connotes mutual interpenetration and creative influence on each other while maintaining a sense of one’s own identity.² In reaching beyond their differences the various religious communities achieved a model of harmonious living among diverse religions and cultures. A millennium later, the concept is still being lived out in different parts of the world. For example, the German theologian Theo Sundermeier introduced the concept of

¹ Vivian B. Mann, Thomas G. Glick and Jerrilynn D. Dodds, eds., *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain* (New York: George Braziller, 1992); Maria Rosa Menocal, *Ornament of the World: How Muslims, Jews, and Christians Created a Culture of Tolerance in Medieval Spain* (Boston: Little, Brown 2003).

² Thomas F. Glick, “Convivencia: An Introductory Note,” in *Convivencia: Jews, Muslims, and Christians in Medieval Spain*, 1.

convivence from his experience in Latin America in the 1960s and 70s.³ He referred to its practice in African communities where people accepted and respected the differences of others.⁴ *Convivence* indicates a way of living together where we learn from one another, we help one another, and we celebrate togetherness with one another.⁵ Such togetherness strengthens each party's uniqueness and difference while at the same time joining them fundamentally to each other.

The question here is how a church yearning to be intercultural practises *convivence* in its ministry and mission. The issue has been implied throughout this thesis, and now comes to the fore directly as a way to bring the discussion to some final form. While the current context is different from that of Medieval Spain and Latin America, the question is how the United Church of Canada (UCC) can live together with various faith communities and secularists, sharing its concern and the concern of others while celebrating difference.⁶ This question is addressed in this chapter, building from the discussion in the previous chapters and several key proposals are presented. First, the proposed mutuality model, "all my relations," is revisited and discussed along with contributions from Indigenous culture as a foundational metaphor for the vision of

³ Theo Sundermeier, "Konvivenz als Grundstruktur ökumenischer Existenz heute," in *Konvivenz und Differenz: Studien zu einer Verstehenden Missionswissenschaft* (Erlangen, 1995), 43-75.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁵ Theo Sundermeier, "My Pilgrimage in Mission," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 31, no 4 (October 2007), 201 and Sundermeier, "Konvivenz als Grundstruktur ökumenischer Existenz heute," 55.

⁶ We should not ignore the tension between *convivence* and difference but accept it in mutual respect. To this concern Sundermeier says, "Convivence makes possible to accept and respect the other's being difference." See Theo Sundermeier, "Convivence – The Concept and Origin," *Scriptura: Journal of Bible and Theology in Southern Africa* (Special Issue, S 10, 1992) and Volker Küster, "Toward an Intercultural Theology: Paradigm Shifts in Missiology, Ecumenics and Comparative Religion," in *Theology and the Religions: A Dialogue*, edited by Viggo Mortensen (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003), 171-184.

becoming an intercultural church. Second, Anselm Min's "solidarity of others" is examined and proposed as a process for practising mission together. Finally, the critical yet little-known historical 1966 UCC resource, Report on *World Mission*, is proposed as a foundational missiology for the developing model for becoming an intercultural church, "all my relations."

5.1. The Intercultural Vision and *the Double Vision*

Since the 1960s, Canada has experienced rapid growth in its cultural and religious diversity. The 2011 National Household Survey conducted by Statistics Canada showed that while the Christian and Jewish populations were dwindling, other religious communities such as the Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist were growing fast.⁷ In the last two decades, globalization fostered rapid flows of capital and people to the global North, including Canada; this trend is expected to intensify religious and cultural diversification.⁸ When people come to this country they come with their religious and cultural heritages and second generations usually embrace these heritages. In recent survey by the Environics Institute between November 2015 and January 2016, young Muslims have found to have more attachment to their religious identity than older

⁷ See Statics Canada, "Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada," (National Household Survey, 2011); Statics Canada, "Religion in Canada," (National Household Survey, 2011).

⁸ I have relied especially on the following works: Michael Hardt & Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2001); Daniel Groody, *Globalization, Spirituality and Justice: Navigating the Path to Peace* (Maryknoll: Orbis 2007); Hans Küng, *A Global Ethic for Global Politics and Economics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Max L. Stackhouse, *Globalization and Grace. Vol. 4, God and Globalization* (New York: Continuum, 2007); Naomi Klein, *No Logo: Taking Aim at the Brand Bullies* (Toronto: Vantage Canada, 2000).

Muslims.⁹ This finding does not support the popular secularization hypothesis that religion will eventually recede as an important influence in modern society (see Chapter 1). From this perspective the challenge is how people of different cultural and religious backgrounds may not only live in the vision of *convivencia*, but perhaps even learn to stretch beyond their own religious/cultural boundaries to join others in an effort to work for a common good.

In Chapter 2, the philosophical discussion of alterity, the self and the Other, through Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida was discussed. The Western imaginary of relationship is expressed as “relation without relation” in which the self and the Other are separated yet connected by the face of the Other and one’s very subjectivity is constituted in the responsiveness to the Other. The idea of relationship has been further explored through the Indigenous ontological phrase, “all my relations,” and the Two Row Wampum belt in Chapter 4. Along with the UCC’s scriptural founding motto, *Ut Omnes Unum Sint* (“That All May Be One” in Latin)¹⁰ the phrase “all my relations” became a part of the UCC’s crest in 2012. In this last chapter “all my relations” will be proposed as the metaphor becoming an intercultural church.

Mitakuye oyasin, commonly translated as “all my relations,” is a response often used at the beginning or end of a prayer, talk or story.¹¹ It is commonly repeated in sweat

⁹ The Environics Institute, *2016 Survey of Muslims in Canada*, accessed October 18, 2016, <http://www.environicsinstitute.org/uploads/institute-projects/survey%20of%20muslims%20in%20canada%202016%20-%20final%20report.pdf>

¹⁰ According to John Webster Grant, church unionists liked to quote Jesus’s prayer in John 17:21, “that all may be one” as the vision of unity. John Webster Grant, “What’s Past Is Prologue,” in *Voices and Visions: 65 Years of the United Church of Canada*, ed. Peter White (Toronto: United Church of Canada Publishing House, 1990), 127. The original crest was officially adopted in 1944 by the 11th General Council.

¹¹ Thomas King, “Introduction,” in *All My Relations: An Anthology of Contemporary Canadian Native Fiction*, ed. Thomas King (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990), ix.

lodge ceremonies among the peoples of the Lakota and Dakota. Other Indigenous communities have a similar phrase in their language. In Mohawk, for example, *mitakuye oyasin* is known as “*Akwe Nia’Tetewá:neren.*” In the prayer the response, *mitakuye oyasin*, is somewhat equivalent to the “Amen,” at the end of a Christian prayer, a declaration of affirmation. According to George Tinker, *mitakuye oyasin* is “polyvalent” in its meaning; the phrase includes the immediate family, fellow tribal members, all Aboriginal peoples, all the two-legged (Black, Red, Yellow and White), four-legged, the winged and all the living-moving things of the earth are connected.¹² The ontology is created and affirmed in the epistemological notion of *mitakuye oyasin* through various ceremonies: the affirmation goes out to all relations that no one exists alone but all are related to each other. The immanent relationship symbolizes interrelatedness and interdependence of all life.¹³ *Mitakuye oyasin* seeks reciprocity rather than control over others and other life forms.¹⁴ It seeks just relations out of mutual concern for each other, since “all the createds of the world are our relatives and commend our respect as fellow

¹² George E. Tinker, “Creation,” in *A Native American Theology*, edited by Clara Sue Kidwell, Homer Noley and George Tinker (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2001), 50-51.

¹³ Stan McKay, “An Aboriginal Christian Perspective on the Integrity of Creation,” in *Native and Christian: Indigenous Voices Identity in the United States and Canada*, ed. James Treat (New York: Routledge, 1996), 53.

¹⁴ Tinker shares a story in which we glimpse a relationship towards to nature: “Heavily dressed for the two feet of snow covering the hillside, a small group of people stood quietly around what looked like a perfect, if rather large, Christmas tree. These were Christian Indians from a variety of tribes and members of an Indian congregation, who were engaging in an act of prayer, speaking prayers on behalf of the tree in preparation to cutting it and taking it with them back to their church. It could have been most any annual congregational outing to harvest a Christmas tree for their church, except that these prayers were a thorough mixture of Christian prayers and traditional Indian tribal prayers. The two Indian ministers held tobacco in their hands, ready to offer it back to the Creator, to offer it for the life of this tree, to offer it in order to the four directions, above and below, to offer it maintain the harmony and balance of Creation even in this imminent perpetration of an act of violence.” *Ibid.*, 32.

created.”¹⁵ Thomas King writes “‘all my relations’ is an encouragement for us to accept the responsibility we have within this universal family by living our lives in a harmonious and moral manner.”¹⁶ “All my relations” is an expression of communal responsibility for the well-being of all life forms.

The UCC adopted the concept of *mitakuye oyasin* in Mohawk, “*Akwe Nia’Tetewá:neren*” along with the concept of the Aboriginal Medicine Wheel in its crest as a way of acknowledging the presence and spirituality of Aboriginal peoples in the Church. In the Medicine Wheel the four colours signify different cultures and they reside side by side to form a full circle in which there is no beginning or end; “all created participate together, each in their own way, to preserve the wholeness of the circle.”¹⁷ We cannot imagine that there are clear dividing lines between cultures; there is always and already the “in-between space” or the “Third Space” (Homi Bahbha), where we meet each other without attempting homogenization but respecting each other’s space and differences. The space is reminiscent of the Tow Row Wampum belt in which two cultures are separated, yet they journey together side by side in the spirit of friendship, respect and peace.

The revised crest of the UCC (fig. 4.1) is an expression of the faith to do God’s mission not only with different faiths but with different cultures. Upon reviewing the UCC faith statements and reports related to its mission and interfaith dialogue, a mutuality model “all my relations” was developed to fulfill the vision of becoming an

¹⁵ George E. Tinker, “Spirituality, Native American Personhood, Sovereignty, and Solidarity,” in *Native and Christian*, 124.

¹⁶ King, “Introduction,” ix.

¹⁷ Tinker, “Creation,” 50.

intercultural church. The UCC report *World Mission* (1966) provides the missiological foundation for the model to be used in interfaith and intercultural dialogue, to learn from each other and to seek mutual transformation through dialogue and interaction. The model respects the differences of faith and culture and affirms each other's journey towards their own salvations or convictions.

Mitakuye oyasin and the Two Row Wampum belt symbolize reciprocity in deep reverence to each other's presence, creating balance and harmony. "All my relations" seeks a common concern even if there is "no shared culture or history, no shared religion or political views, no shared language or social class. No common values. We had nothing in common – or so it seemed."¹⁸ Mary Jo Leddy shares her experience of finding a common good in the in-between space of Romero House for Refugees and neighbouring houses – the street.¹⁹ "The street was the place that none of us owned but all of us could be responsible for." The Third Space, the street, becomes the place where strangers become neighbours and doubts turn to trust. In the in-between space the Other is embraced, differences are affirmed and fellow createds are respected as relatives. The space becomes the place for working together for a common good beyond difference in the spirit of mutual responsibility and strengthening the wholeness of the circle.

¹⁸ Mary Jo Leddy, "Reflection on Religion and Citizenship in a Post-Secular Society," *Toronto Journal of Theology* 31, no 2 (2015): 274.

¹⁹ Leddy lives in a house filled with refugees from all over the world. They applied to the Committee of Adjustment at City Hall for a permit to make electrical improvements in the coach house in the backyard. By the time their application was set for review, a small group had whipped up the entire neighbourhood, and forty neighbours went down to City Hall to present their objections: "There would be a ten-story apartment in the back yard; it would be a place of prostitution and drugs, gangs and warfare." Leddy wondered how we could invite refugees, already once threatened in their own countries, to face such daily hostility? What could we possibly have in common with the people on the street? However, the story does have a happy ending. Slowly, over a period of years, the refugees and strangers became neighbours. Both parties share a street party that has become the yearly gathering event of the entire neighbourhood.

In his posthumous book, *The Double Vision*,²⁰ based on his three lectures at the Emmanuel College alumni reunion in May of 1990 and an additional article, Northrop Frye says “the single vision of God sees in him the reflection of human panic and rage, its love of cruelty and domination, and, when it accepts such a God, calls on him to justify the maintaining of these things in human life.”²¹ The single vision is a reflection of exclusion and domination which leads to destruction. The double vision, however, is to “separate the human mirror from God’s reality” and connect “his reality . . . far closer to human life”²² For Frye the double vision comes from the image of the “Incarnation” (John 1:14) that the Word becomes the otherness of God in order to become one with us. The double vision stirs our imagination to stand with others as if God resides among us and to realize “the double vision of a spirituality and a physical world simultaneously present.”²³

Frye’s double vision may be seen as radical relatedness: the interrelated imagery between the human and the divine and the relationship towards others who are excluded by single vision. The double vision exemplifies a dynamic relationship among human beings, “individuals retain identity while simultaneously relating to the other.”²⁴ Here may be heard the Aboriginal prayer, “All my relations,” now in the newly revised crest of

²⁰ Northrop Frye, *The Double Vision: Language and Meaning of Religion* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1991). This is his last effort to make an accessible version of his longer books, *The Great Code* and *Words with Power*, to relate the Bible to secular culture. It is the grace which invites us to reflect on the vision of the church.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 83.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, 85.

²⁴ Stephen W. Need, “Language, Metaphor, and Chalcedon: A Case of Theological Double Vision,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 88, no. 2 (April 1995): 252.

the UCC. The intention to add the prayer, “All my relations,” and the Aboriginal Medicine Wheel beside the UCC’s motto, “That all may be one,” is to embrace *all* people, respect difference and affirm the interrelatedness of life without losing its identity as a faith community; the founding vision is refreshed and reinterpreted. The vision of becoming an intercultural church may be practised as “the double vision.” How the vision of becoming an intercultural church can be lead into action (*praxis*)?²⁵

Akwe Nia’Tetewá:neren. [aw gway -- nyah day day waw -- nay renh]²⁶

(All my relations.)

5.2. *The Solidarity of Others: Seeking Justice Together*

The metaphor “all my relations” testifies to the relational nature of reality reflecting the other not as an extrinsic, accidental addition, but as an indispensable being in building just relations. As noted earlier in Chapter 2, an ethical responsibility for the Other in an asymmetrical relationship may indicate that the essence of dialogue and action is a response to the Other. In a communal search for a common good, however, more than a dual relationship – between the self and the Other – is required if others are to be included in seeking justice together. How do participants work together so that the intercultural vision is realized?

²⁵ I draw the concept of *praxis* (πρᾶξις) from Hannah Arendt’s work, *The Human Condition* (1958), where she recovers a valuable realm of human action, *praxis*, from Plato’s contemplation claimed in the allegory of the cave in *The Republic* in which contemplation (*theoria*) subordinates action (*praxi*). Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

²⁶ UCC, “United Church Crest,” accessed October 10, 2016, <http://www.united-church.ca/community-faith/welcome-united-church-canada/united-church-crest>. I owe this pattern of ending each section in this chapter to Bright Earth Warrior, Judith Favia. She ends each section of her prayer with: *Mitakuye oyasin* (We are all connected); Ho. *Hetch etu aloh* (It is very much so). See Judith Favia, “Prayers to the Six Powers of the Universe,” in *Mother Earth Spirituality: Native American Paths to Healing Ourselves and Our World*, Ed McGaa (New York: HaperCollins, 1990), 217-219.

At this point in the discussion, it will be helpful to invoke the work of Emmanuel Levinas again. He keeps intact the ethical responsibility in the relationship between the self and the Other while also opening up infinite responsibility among the Other's others.²⁷ In an ethical relationship, the Other does not demand a clandestine, exclusive, private relationship with the self as if there were only the two of them in the world. Levinas' face to face relationship opens up the possibility of connecting with a larger circle of other Others and humanity as a whole.²⁸ He goes beyond the relation between the two to "concern everyone," so that the ethical relationship "places itself in the full light of the public order."²⁹

5.2.1. *The Third Party*

In moving beyond Buber's "self-sufficient I-Thou" relationship, Levinas introduces what he calls "the third party (*le tiers*)," claiming that it looks at the self with the eyes of the Other and demands "justice."³⁰ As noted previously, Levinas' concept of justice is found in the asymmetrical relationship between the self and the Other: "Justice consists in recognizing in the Other my master."³¹ Levinas extends the concept of justice

²⁷ Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity: An Essay in Exteriority*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1969), 212-214.

²⁸ In an interview with Mortley, Levinas says, "I cannot live in society on the basis of this one-to-one responsibility alone." See Emmanuel Levinas, *Is It Righteous to Be? Interviews with Emmanuel Levinas*, ed. Jill Robbins (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 18.

²⁹ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 212.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 213.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 72.

in relation to the notion of the third party.³² He does this by demonstrating how the face of the Other relates to humanity as a whole.³³ He states: “The third party is other than the neighbour, but also another neighbour, and also a neighbour of the other, and not simply his fellow.”³⁴ The face of the Other reveals and bridges not only the uniqueness of the Other, but also that of a third, a fourth or innumerable other Others. In Levinas’ concept of justice, one’s relationship with the Other and with other Others engages with the “absolute asymmetry of signification, ... the-one-for-the other.”³⁵ Each relationship involves an “infinite chain of asymmetrical responsibility” for Other(s).³⁶ The appearance of the third party does not abrogate one’s infinite responsibility to the Other; it opens up the possibility of a just community where each is responsible for all.

There is a radical inequality and asymmetry between the self and Others.³⁷ How does Levinas define the relationship between the Other and the other Others, the third party? “The other is from the first the brother of all the other men. The neighbor that obsesses me is already a face, both comparable and incomparable, a unique face and in

³² Ibid., 213.

³³ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 213. Levinas first introduced the term, *le tiers* (the third party) in his article “The Ego and the Totality” in 1954 and in a few pages from *Totality and Infinity* (1961) in the section of “The Other and the Others.” He developed the concept further in *Otherwise than Being* (1974).

³⁴ Emmanuel Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, trans. Alphonso Lingis, (1981, Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1998), 157.

³⁵ Ibid., 158.

³⁶ Victoria Tahmasebi-Birgani, *Emmanuel Levinas and Politics of Non-Violence* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2014), 30.

³⁷ For Levinas inequality and asymmetry are not material or systemic, but ethical issues; it is a matter of responsibility.

relationship with faces, which are visible in the concern for justice.”³⁸ In the relationship between the Other and the third party, the ethical responsibility is not so much because the Other is equal to all Others; this equality does not reduce or cancel out any Other’s ethical responsibility to the Other nor the asymmetry of the relationship, but creates what Adriaan Peperzak calls a “double asymmetry.”³⁹ It is the relationship between and among Others that is involved in a double asymmetric dynamic. The equality of the Other to all Others binds humanity in unique ways of transcendence and relationality both at the same time.

For Levinas, the epiphany of the third party transforms human relations into one of justice and fraternity. The presence of the third party opens humanity as a whole to a dynamic in which, although “the interlocutors remain absolutely separated,” humanity remains “a kinship of men.”⁴⁰ In the conclusion to his book, *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas asserts that in the face of the Other, the relationship of the self with the third party is transformed into the form of a “We.”⁴¹ The Other binds the self with the third party,

³⁸ Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 158.

³⁹ Peperzak defines the concept as: “When A is infinitely obliged by B, B can still be infinitely obliged by A. This reciprocity does not necessarily entail that A is allowed to claim as much from B as the existence of B claims from A (nor that B may claim from A the same sacrifices the existence of A demands from B). Reciprocally the existence of A and of B as others demand much more from the ego (of B or A) to which they reveal themselves than that which these egos are allowed to claim for themselves.” Adriaan Peperzak, *To the Other: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Emmanuel Levinas* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 1993), 172.

⁴⁰ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 213-214.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 300. Elsewhere, Levinas says: “The third party introduces a contradiction in the saying whose signification before the other until then went in one direction. It is of itself the limit of responsibility and the birth of the question: What do I have to do with justice? A question of consciousness. Justice is necessary.” Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 157.

becoming a *we* community.⁴²

Becoming a *we*, for Levinas, cannot be wrought by the “human race as a biological genus,” since, in that effort, “the essence of society is lost sight of.”⁴³ Levinas explains further: “The biological human brotherhood – conceived with the sober coldness of Cain – is not a sufficient reason for me to be responsible for a separated being.”⁴⁴ Levinas finds his reason in the concept of *fraternity*, which is “radically opposed to the conception of humanity united by resemblance.”⁴⁵ Fraternity is, therefore, a way of weaving with other Others not by the threads of similarity but of difference.

The relation with the face in fraternity, where in his turn to the Other appears in solidarity with all the others, constitutes social order, the reference of every dialogue to the third party by which the *We* – or the *parti [sic]*– encompasses the face to face opposition, opens the erotic upon a social life, all signifyingness and decency, which encompasses the structure of the family itself.⁴⁶

Fraternity connects the Other with the third party, respecting their differences without reducing them to a totality. For Levinas, the dangerous pull of totality is overcome not only by the face of the Other, but also by the notion of fraternity where difference is respected and where the Other and the third party join together to become a *we*. How, then, is the self’s relation with the third party and the Other to be constituted?

⁴² Thomas Reynolds’ meaning of a “we” is helpful: “‘we’ is the property of the many, a mosaic of differences united by willingness of each to share a common space of ongoing discussion and action.” Reynolds, “Beyond Secularism? Rethinking the ‘Secular’ in a Religiously Plural Context,” *Toronto Journal of Theology* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 246.

⁴³ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 213.

⁴⁴ Emmanuel Levinas, “God and Philosophy (1975),” in *Emmanuel Levinas: Basic Philosophical Writings*, ed. Adriaan T. Peperzak, Simon Critchley and Robert Bernasconi (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996), 142.

⁴⁵ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 214.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 280; Levinas’ italics.

5.2.2. *Solidarity: A Communal Responsibility*

Levinas' notions of the third party and fraternity are of significance for this thesis in that they help provide conceptual leverage to open a way to build a *we* community, one based on symmetric 'material' relations with other Others while the ethical asymmetry of justice is still involved. In many discussions about the nature of just communities, the concept of solidarity is used over that of fraternity: The notion of fraternity has begun to be replaced with that of solidarity.⁴⁷ The connotation of fraternity generally evokes a common interest and sameness or brotherhood, rather than the unfamiliarity and difference of alterity, even though Levinas did not intend his philosophy to be interpreted in the former way. The term "solidarity" may be better suited here, suggesting the latter meaning in the binding of human beings together.

Solidarity has a long history; it has been undergoing development in recent decades, particularly in sociology.⁴⁸ The term goes back to Roman civil law in 6 CE where the Latin *solidum*, meaning solid or secure, was originally used as a legal concept to mean that everyone participates in a group responsibility for the repayment of a loan to creditors.⁴⁹ A commentary on Roman law, *the Institutes of Justinian (Institutiones Justiniani)*, noted that "the contract might be so made that the co-promisors would not be

⁴⁷ See Kurt Bayertz, "Four Uses of 'Solidarity,'" in *Solidarity*, edited by Kurt Bayertz (Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1999), 3.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

⁴⁹ Thomas Lambert Mears, *Analysis of M. Ortolan's Institutes of Justinian, Including the History and Generalization of Roman Law* (Stevens and Sons, 1876), 263; Robin Evans-Jones and Geoffrey MacCormack, "Obligation," *A Companion to Justinian's Institutes*, edited by Ernest Metzger (New York: Cornell University Press, 1998), 138-140; Andreas Wildt, "Solidarity: Its History and Contemporary Definition," in *Solidarity*, 209-220.

joint and several obligees, *i.e.*, there would be no *solidarity*.”⁵⁰ The concept of solidarity indicates that each one has an obligation for the joint debt for which co-debtors take the same oath: *obligatio in solidum*.⁵¹ The German sociologist Hauke Brunkhorst interprets the concept as follows:

Everyone assumes responsibility for anyone who cannot pay his debt, and he is conversely responsible for everyone else. Free riding is ruled out legally, without appealing to morality. The bond of solidarity is solid not only for the debtor community itself but also for the creditor, who can, if necessary, turn to the surrogate who is able to pay. Thus, *obligatio in solidum* already binds together unfamiliar persons, complementary rolls, and heterogeneous interests in the medium of abstract law.⁵²

This concept of solidarity suggests a mutual responsibility for the less fortunate members within a family or a community. It is a compassionate, risky act of taking responsibility for unlimited liability as a joint-debtor. Solidarity binds each to the other beyond family boundaries in responsibility for a collective debt. The Latin origin of solidarity denotes a communal responsibility for the welfare of the whole.

Rooted in Roman law, solidarity historically has conveyed the legal concept of binding people together. Later, in the 18th and 19th centuries’ context of the French Revolution, the original meaning of solidarity evolved into a sociological and political concept of mutual support with the interchangeable use of the mantra *fraternité* with

⁵⁰ Mears, *Analysis of M. Ortolan’s Institutes of Justinian*, 263; italics are original.

⁵¹ *Institutes Justinian* Book III, Title XVI, “Of Stipulations in Which There are Two Creditors or Two Debtors” states: “The usual form to constitute two or more joint promisors is as follows - Maevius, do you promise to give five *aurei*? Seius, do you promise to give the same five *aurei*? and in answer they reply separately, ‘I promise.’ 1. In obligations of this kind each joint promisee is owed the whole sum, and the whole sum can be claimed from each joint promisor; and yet in both cases but one payment is due, so that if one joint promisee receives the debt, or one joint promisor pays it, the obligation is thereby extinguished for all, and all are thereby released from it.” *Imperatoris Iustiniani Institutionum – Libri Quattuor*, with Introductions, Commentary, and Excursus by J. B. Moyle, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883), 137.

⁵² Hauke Brunkhorst, *Solidarity: From Civic Friendship to a Global Legal Community*, translated by Jeffrey Flynn (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 2.

solidarité. In the context of the Workers Movement from 1848, solidarity was used to support the struggle against injustice. In Roman Catholic circles since Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, the concept of solidarity often appeared in papal letters (encyclicals) as Catholic social teaching to affirm the rights of workers in the modern industrial era. The concept has been widely used since the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) when the Roman Catholic Church began to discover a new sense of solidarity with other religious communities and with the whole of the human family.⁵³ The Vatican Council called for "universal solidarity" to affirm that God is graciously present in the whole world. Later the concept was applied by liberationist perspectives in the context of the Latin American church to stand in solidarity with the poor and the powerless against oppression. In the recent history of the labour, peace and justice movements including those of the Polish trade unions and the Korean movements for democracy in the 1980s to 1990s, solidarity became a social force in the general sense of social cohesion.

Around the 1980s and 1990s, progressive theologians in liberation and *minjung* theology circles and feminist theologians began to discuss solidarity as a response to the call for justice from the marginalized, such as the poor, the *minjung* and the *mujeristas* (Latina women).⁵⁴ Realizing that they were in fact subjects of history, oppressed peoples

⁵³ Gregory Baum, *Compassion and Solidarity: The Church for Others*, CBC Massey Lecture (Toronto: CBC Enterprises, 1987), 11-30.

⁵⁴ Jon Sobrino and Juan Hernández Pico, *Theology of Christian Solidarity* (Maryknoll, NY.: Orbis, 1985), 1-42; Young-bock Kim, *Messiah and Minjung: Christ's Solidarity with the People for New Life* (Hong Kong: Christian Conference of Asia, 1992), 351-378; Ada María Isasi-Díaz, *Mujerista Theology: A Theology for the Twenty First Century* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1996), 30-39.

began to demand justice and their rights.⁵⁵ Theologians and the marginalized alike discerned the causes of their oppression and sought to respond faithfully. Although the contexts in Latin America and Korea differed, as did their corresponding theological responses, they all sought to overcome injustice through acts of solidarity. A powerful example of the concept of solidarity in this sense can be found in the writings of Jon Sobrino.

In *Theology of Christian Solidarity*, co-authored with Juan Hernández Pico, liberation theologian Jon Sobrino situated the concept of solidarity in the lives of the poor and martyrs who advocated for the rights of the poor, particularly the advocacy of Archbishop Romero.⁵⁶ Exposure to the reality of the poor shaped Sobrino's impression that the origin of solidarity is based on the fact that "each of us is socially a part of all humankind [which] brings with it a demand for change and conversion, for persons to recover their true identity underlying a falsified identity."⁵⁷ Sobrino argued that oppressed humanity is a reflection of God's threatened, debased and repudiated order of creation and that the response to the suffering of the poor is not only an ethical demand but also a salvific practice for those who enter into solidarity with the poor.⁵⁸

Sobrino rooted solidarity in human co-responsibility for the neighbour who is in danger. He found a biblical source of solidarity in Luke 10: 27-37 (the Parable of the

⁵⁵ See Gustavo Gutiérrez, "Renewing the Option for the Poor," in *Liberation Theologies, Postmodernity, and The Americas*, edited by David Batstone, Eduardo Mendieta, Lois Ann Lorentzen, and Dwight N. Hopkins (New York: Routledge, 1997), 70 and *Minjung Theology: People as the Subject of History*, edited by Young-bock Kim (Singapore: Christian Conference of Asia, 1983).

⁵⁶ Jon Sobrino, "Bearing with One Another in Faith," in *Theology of Christian Solidarity*, 1-42.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 10-11.

Good Samaritan): “Many individuals and institutions ... [in] the church of El Salvador ... have not taken a detour in order to avoid seeing the wounded victim on the road, but instead have come closer to examine the situation and to help.”⁵⁹ He emphasized that when acting in solidarity with the poor, the moment of giving is also the moment of receiving, since the poor are a “mediation of God’s gratuitousness.”⁶⁰ The meaning of solidarity is “giving and receiving, bearing with one another.”⁶¹ From a liberation theological perspective, the mission of the church is to give voice to the cry of the poor majority; the church itself becomes a church of the poor. In a relation of solidarity, the church takes on co-responsibility with the poor, dissolving any isolation among churches as well as any isolation between the world of the poor and the world of those who live in affluence.⁶² Sobrino’s approach to solidarity invites churches to become neighbours, as if to answer Jesus’ question of who was neighbour with the answer, “We are” (Luke 10:30). Sobrino’s solidarity builds a universal faith community with Others in which various local churches are agents of solidarity with the poor.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 2.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 11.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Feminist theologian Kwok Pui-lan makes a similar argument in her book, *Globalization, Gender and Peacebuilding*. Formerly colonized people and marginalized others have been historically isolated and separated from one another because of lack of resources and the use of divide and rule tactics. Kwok argues, “The biggest challenge for interreligious solidarity in our postcolonial condition is how to enable the subalterns to mutually recognize one another and create a political solidarity to galvanize support.” Kwok, Pui-lan, *Globalization, Gender and Peacebuilding* (New York: Paulist, 2012), 80.

5.2.3. *The Solidarity of Others*

Adding nuance to the concept of solidarity found in Sobrino's work, Anselm K. Min approaches the question of the identification of the neighbour in a different way. He changes the question to ask how to become an Other, a neighbour, switching the subject of solidarity from the church to the Other. In his monograph, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World*, Min employs the concept of solidarity as the foundation for his theology of overcoming globalization.⁶³ He says that when the globalization of the world brings different groups together in a common space, it produces a two-fold dialectic: the dialectic of *differentiation* enunciates differences and the dialectic of *interdependence* compels us to find a way of living together beyond our differences.⁶⁴ According to Min, when different cultures meet together, the most productive display of Christian mission is found in the practice of "solidarity *of* others," not solidarity *with* others.⁶⁵ He admits that the phrase, solidarity *of* others, is not colloquial, but grammatically perfectly correct. The unfamiliarity of the phrase may invoke the reason for using it.

Min puts his reasons for using the phrase, solidarity *of* others, in the following way: "Solidarity with others implies a privileged vantage point from which I or we look at others as other and choose which others to enter into solidarity with. Furthermore, we tend to look at these others as victims needing our assistance; we tend to be

⁶³ Anselm Min, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World: A Postmodern Theology after Postmodernism* (New York: T & T Clark International, 2004).

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 1. For Min's use of "dialectic," see Thomas E. Reynolds, *The Broken Whole: Philosophical Steps of Global Solidarity* (Albany: State University of New York, 2006), 101-105.

⁶⁵ Min, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World*, 82.

paternalistic.”⁶⁶ Min’s contention is that the concept of solidarity *with* others evokes an imperial relationship between the I/we and others. In such a relationship, the privileged group tends to be located at the centre of a community, providing the ideology for working together and suggesting that others follow it. Here the privileged group, in putting forward ways of working together in solidarity with others, reflects its own interests much more than the common interest or the interest of others. For Min, this perspective of solidarity suggests an imperialistic notion similar to that of integration, a notion critiqued in Chapter 1.⁶⁷

As a way to overcome the imperialistic concept of solidarity, Min proposes that mission practice should be based on the missiological concept of solidarity *of* others. There is no imperialistic notion or binary division here, for all are subjects. In solidarity of others, “there is no privileged perspective ... all are others to one another ... we as others to one another are equally responsible, and ... all are subjects, not objects.”⁶⁸ In a similar way, the integrative or imperialistic notion of solidarity is also challenged by the Levinasian sense of the transcendental Other, which cannot be totalized or reduced to the same. The ethical relationship with the Other demands responsibility for the Other who is hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick or in prison (Matthew 25: 31-46); and this takes place within the public realm, since the relationship occurs among more than two people. The self’s ethical responsibility is widened to include justice for other Others, the third

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ *Collins Dictionary of Sociology* defines the meaning of social solidarity as the “integration, and degree and type of integration, manifested by a society or group with people and their neighbours.” *Collins Dictionary of Sociology*, 3rd ed. (HarperCollins, 2000), s.v. “Solidarity.”

⁶⁸ Min, *The Solidarity of Others in a Divided World*, 82.

party. It is the Other who relates the other Others so that together with the third party, a *we* community is constructed through solidarity. In recognizing differences and being open to work with Others, the concept of the solidarity of “Others” binds people together beyond different interests for justice for all.⁶⁹ This makes a significant difference when conceptualizing what “shared concern for justice” looks like as we envision a model of becoming an intercultural church.

Akwe Nia 'Tetewá:neren.

5.3. Shared Concern for Justice

So far we have redefined the notion of solidarity to suggest a theological foundation for becoming an intercultural church. Now the question is how the Church is to practise the solidarity of Others in its mission. To ponder the question we will revisit the UCC Report on *World Mission* as discussed in Chapter 3 to draw out the concept of mutuality and apply it to the church’s mission practice. The Report suggested a ‘mutuality model’ to offer insight for the vision of becoming an intercultural church.⁷⁰ To develop the model, we have revisited the metaphor “all my relations” to connect it with Levinas’ third party and Min’s solidarity of others. Now it is time to present the mutuality model in mission called “all my relations.”

⁶⁹ To recognize that the term “Others” with its upper case “O” originated with Levinas, I use “Others,” rather than Min’s lower case “others.”

⁷⁰ The “mutuality model” (lower case) is similar to but not the same as Paul Knitter’s “Mutuality Model”; the difference is that this mutuality model includes people of no faith while Knitter’s model does not. See Chapter 3.

5.3.1. “All My Relations”: Mutuality in Mission

About five decades ago, in the Report of *World Mission* (1966), the General Council of the UCC recognized and affirmed that “Christian mission must operate for a long time in a world of religious pluralism.”⁷¹ The Report conceded, however, that there were tensions between Christianity and other faiths, though it hoped that these creative tensions would enhance an understanding of the nature of the Church’s mission and mission practice. As discussed in Chapter 3, such tensions resulted in the production of various reports on ecumenism, Christology and interfaith dialogues during the late 1990s and early 2000s.⁷² These reports and documents, particularly *Mending the World* (1997), discussed how, in this increasingly pluralistic society, the UCC might live out the missiology of *World Mission* in its mission practice with other faiths and with those with no religious faith. *World Mission* suggested two conditions necessary for the carrying out of the Church’s mission: 1) “Christians must make special efforts to encounter other faiths and enter into interfaith dialogue in order to build mutual trust”; 2) Christians must make strenuous efforts to dissociate their own “presentation of Christ from western cultural interpretations.”⁷³ Included in the Report’s recommendations was the caution that

⁷¹ UCC, *World Mission* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1966), 56.

⁷² Committee on Inter-Church and Inter-Faith Committee Relations (hereafter ICIF), *Mending the World: An Ecumenical Vision for Healing and Reconciliation* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1997); ICIF, *RC (Roman Catholic) / UC (United Church) Report on Baptismal Formula: The Baptismal Formula in Contemporary Culture* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 2000); Committee on Theology and Faith, *Reconciling and Making New: Who is Jesus for the World Today?* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 2000); ICIF, *Bearing Faithful Witness: United Church – Jewish Relations Today* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 2003); ICIF, *That We May Know Each Other: United Church – Muslim Relations Today* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 2004).

⁷³ UCC, *World Mission*, 56-57.

the Church would need to evaluate critically whether these two conditions were being met in the practice of mission and make adjustments, minor or major as necessary.

World Mission introduced a new approach of mission practice for working with others. It proposed that as the Church participates in God's mission, it needs to be aware that while "[partners] do not both have to have the same faith ... they do both have to be people of some faith."⁷⁴ The term faith is not necessarily related to a religion, but to a commitment to the well-being of humanity and the Earth. The Report indicated that "mission implies involvement with, and participation in, the life of particular human communities whether religious or secular."⁷⁵ But if the mission partners do not share the same faith, how they do continue their dialogue and mission practice with their partners?

The Report states:

The Christian mission must now work in a world where mutual acceptance between Christian and non-Christian has become the norm of civilized behaviour and a necessity for human betterment. Half a century ago, unusual disasters like famine, flood and earth-quake provided the chief occasions on which Christian and non-Christian would work together in a common task of equal importance to both. Today it is normal for Christian and non-Christian to work side by side, on basis of equality, struggling with common problems of far-reaching importance.⁷⁶

The "common problems" of humanity and creation provide a common ground for the common task, which Thomas Thangaraj, echoing the Report, calls "the mission of humanity (*missio humanitatis*)" for moving beyond cultural, political, social and religious

⁷⁴ Ibid., 54. *World Mission* indicated "the Christian and the non-Christian" as dialogue partners. In relation to becoming an intercultural church, we may include dialogue partners among Christians in addition to the Christians and the non-Christians.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 126-127.

⁷⁶ UCC, *World Mission*, 124.

boundaries to work with Others.⁷⁷ He suggests that interfaith dialogue cannot begin with the Bible or biblical references only relevant to particular religions; rather, it must start from the perspective of the mission of humanity, from aspirations together toward a common good potentially shared by each.

Humanity brings people together in conversation and action across religious and cultural boundaries about concerns that affect all participants. This understanding reflects the essence of the “ecumenical” concept of *missio Dei* in which God’s concern is celebrated in the world. The concept “mission” is not the sole property of Christian thought; it is a public notion. Mission is a word commonly used today to represent the purpose of a person, company or institution, and is generally expressed in a mission statement. The mission of humanity is an inclusive and relational term that refers to the carrying out of a communal mandate in response to the Other’s concern. The church’s mission, which seeks to participate in the mission of God, is to respond to the Other’s concern in the solidarity of Others. Beyond faith and culture, when the church shares the common concerns of humanity and the Earth, it participates mutually with Others in the mission of humanity.

The term mutuality can be understood in many ways, but here it reflects Dawn Nothwehr’s definition gleaned from various scholars, such as Rosemary R. Ruether, Carter Heyward, Beverly W. Harrison and Elizabeth A. Johnson. Nothwehr states: “Mutuality is the sharing of ‘power-with’ by and among all parties in a relationship in a way that recognizes the wholeness and particular experience of each participant toward

⁷⁷ M. Thomas Thangaraj, *The Common Task: A Theology of Christian Mission* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 47-60.

the end of optimum flourishing of all.”⁷⁸ The two concepts of power and boundary are considered essential to the definition of mutuality. First, while participants are seeking to meet the human needs and desires of Others, power is the ability to be attentive to the question of justice evoked by Levinas’ third party and to engage in participating in Min’s solidarity of others.⁷⁹ Power is evoked by seeking justice for the concerns of Others.⁸⁰ Second, mutuality, a reflection of Levinas’ and Derrida’s ‘relation without relation’ as discussed in Chapter 2, requires that the boundaries between and among Others are both distinct and flexible. Levinas says that the self and the Other maintain themselves in relationship, and at the same time, absolve themselves from this relationship, remaining distinctly separated.⁸¹ Boundaries serve both to connect with and to separate from Others.⁸²

The concept of mutuality is named here “all my relations” since the word mutuality may be confused with that same term used in the UCC organizational structure.⁸³ The metaphor “all my relations” is preferred for the proposed model for becoming an intercultural church because it is an inclusive approach which extends the

⁷⁸ Dawn M. Northwehr, “Mutuality and Mission: A No ‘Other’ Way,” *Mission Studies* 21, no 2 (2004): 254 and Northwehr, *Mutuality: A Formal Norm for Christian Social Ethics* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1988), 233.

⁷⁹ Northwehr’s mutuality does not contain a concept of asymmetry, but adding Levinas’ concept of the Other to Min’s solidarity of others creates a concept of mutuality.

⁸⁰ Levinas, *Otherwise than Being*, 159.

⁸¹ Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, 102.

⁸² See Chapter 2 for the discussion.

⁸³ The term was used in the UCC from 1973 when the Division of Mission in Canada (DMC) and the Division of World Outreach (DWO) set up an inter-divisional committee called “Mutuality in Mission” to receive Global Partner missionaries to benefit from their contribution to the mutual discernment of God’s mission.

relationship with the web of kinship to all human beings and to all creation. Further, it underlines a communal effort for the responsibilities that arise from living together in mutual respect. “All my relations” embraces *World Mission*’s “shared concern for justice” in respecting difference and sharing a common concern and it honours all Indigenous Peoples’ teaching and practice of just relations as they share this land and common concerns with newcomers.

5.3.2. “To Share in God’s Concern for All”

In South Korea from in 2009 to 2011, many people from various groups were involved in protesting against the ‘Four Major Rivers Restoration Project’ promoted by the government of President Lee Myung-bak.⁸⁴ The protestors comprised environmental groups, local citizens associations and religious communities including the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Korea (CBCCK), the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCCK) along with Won Buddhist officials and the Jogye Order of Korean Buddhism. Many religious communities and non-profit organizations (NGOs) stood up against the Government project.

In North America in 2011, many people from different backgrounds along with religious groups and their leaders supported the Occupy movement. In Ontario, for example, the group called ISARC (Interfaith Social Assistance Reform Coalition) strongly supported the movement, stating: “The Occupy movements are trying to awaken

⁸⁴ Theresa Hwa-young Kim, “Religions united for the environment against [the] Four Major Rivers Restoration Project,” (July 20, 2010), accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.asianews.it/news-en/Religions-united-for-the-environment-against-Four-Major-Rivers-Restoration-Project-18987.html>. The protestors believed that the project was massively destroying Korea’s most important environment resulting in unprecedented ecological calamity not only for humanity but also for the Earth. They claimed the project would contaminate drinking water sources for the majority of the Korean people, destroy the habitat of endangered species and wetlands important to migratory birds.

the call for a sustaining life for all. People of faith are invited to respond to the call.”⁸⁵ In the United States many people from various backgrounds participated in the movement.⁸⁶ When theologian and social activist Cornel West was asked in an interview what the main issue of the movement was, he said:

It’s impossible to translate the issue of the greed of Wall Street into one demand or two demands. We’re talking about a democratic awakening. You’re talking about raising political consciousness so it spills over all parts of the country, so people can begin to see what’s going on through a different set of lenses. And then you begin to highlight what the more detailed demands would be.⁸⁷

As the people came together in the process of the movement, in what may be called the ‘solidarity of Others’, they identified common concerns from their different life experiences and found common ground for action. West continues, “When you bring folk together of all colors and all cultures and all genders and all sexual orientations, the elites will tremble in their boots.”⁸⁸

The above are examples of various movements that have received support from different faith communities and humanists or secularists of no faith tradition; ecological, social and economical concerns bring people together for the common task. “All my relations” calls for the members of the Church to go beyond its boundary to take action

⁸⁵ ISARC, “Occupy Movements: An Interfaith Response,” ISARC is a provincial network of faith groups working together for social justice. It was supported by Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Unitarian communities. Accessed October 5, 2014, <http://www.isarc.ca/news.php?id=837>

⁸⁶ See Joerg Rieger and Kwok, Pui-lan, *Occupy Religion: Theology of the Multitude* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2012); Craig Nesson, “The Occupy [Wall Street] Movement: Theological Impulses and Liberation Praxis,” *Currents in Theology and Mission* 40, no 1 (February 2013): 40-57.

⁸⁷ Cornel West, “Cornel West on Occupy Wall Street: It’s the Makings of a U.S. Autumn Responding to the Arab Spring,” *Democracy Now: A Daily Independent Global News Hour*, accessed October 5, 2014, http://www.democracynow.org/blog/2011/9/29/cornel_west_on_occupy_wall_street_its_the_makings_of_a_us_autumn_responding_to_the_arab_spring

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

for local and global responsibilities. In crossing boundaries to work with Others in the Third Space, “all my relations” includes all people, regardless of whether they are people of faith or of no faith; all who are concerned for the community and the Earth are summoned to dialogue for a common good.

Such a mission practice requires a new method of dialogue to delve into a common concern together. The new method may not be found in a traditional dialectical approach which is based on an either-or dynamic and argues for truth over error. When cultural boundaries are being crossed, dialectical dialogue is problematic if it is based on a particular worldview with its own interests.⁸⁹ The example of Indian theologian Raimon Panikkar⁹⁰ is worth mentioning in this regard; he argues that, “to cross the boundaries of one’s culture without realizing that another culture may have a radically different approach to reality is today no longer admissible. If still consciously done, it would be philosophically naive, politically outrageous and religiously sinful.”⁹¹ To share a common good, “something more is required,” something other than one’s own culture

⁸⁹ Dialectic dialogue is a form of reasoning using the pattern of questions and answers in Plato’s dialogues. Over the history of philosophy the notion has evolved to contribute to modern thought, especially by W. G. Hegel. Hegel developed the dialectic formula, thesis-antithesis-synthesis and applied it to the development of history. For Hegel, in any stage of development there is a dialectic process of *aufhebung*. In order to reach the reality/synthesis the previous form or situation must overcome. See G. W. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit*, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 111-119.

⁹⁰ Raimon Panikkar (1918-2010) was born in Spain of an Indian Hindu father and a Spanish Catholic mother and experienced life in a Western-Asian in-between culture. He embodied extraordinary cross-cultural, intercultural and multireligious understanding: “I have spontaneously identified myself with both sides – Hindu and Christian – without preconceived strategies.” Panikkar, “Foreword: The Ongoing Dialogue,” in *Hindu-Christian Dialogue: Perspectives and Encounters*, edited by Harold Coward (Maryknoll: Orbis Books 1989), x. Panikkar summarized his pilgrimage: “I ‘left’ [Europe] as a christian, I ‘found’ myself a hindu, and I ‘return’ a buddhist, without having ceased to be a Christian.” Panikkar, *The Intrareligious Dialogue*, red. ed. (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 42. The use of the lower case for the religions is Panikkar’s. His biography as a traveller on a multireligious, intercultural journey suggests that the pilgrimage is not only one of cross-cultural/religious understanding, but also of deepening self-understanding.

⁹¹ Raimon Panikkar, *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics: Cross-cultural Studies* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), 9.

and understanding.⁹² The question arises: “How can we understand something that does not belong to our circle?”⁹³ Classical hermeneutics being unable to answer this question, Panikkar proposes a concept of “dialogical dialogue” where two different subjects enter into a dialogue from which intersubjective communion arises.

In order to participate in dialogical dialogue one needs to move beyond or outside oneself, transcending oneself. Genuine dialogue, according to Panikkar, is opening oneself to another so that the other might speak and reveal their truth which cannot be known to the self because it is too familiar, that is, it is self-evident.⁹⁴ Since one is so attached to one’s own truth, one needs the other to articulate one’s own story. An understanding of the other is closely related to the nature of reality which is not wholly objectifiable. Like Levinas’ Other, Panikkar’s dialogue partner is allowed to inspect, interpret and interrogate the self in order to reveal their understanding of reality.⁹⁵ This role of Panikkar’s dialogue partner resonates with Bernard Lonergan’s concept, “mutual self-mediation.” In a 1963 lecture, Lonergan said that, in mutual self-mediation, “We are open to the influence of others, and others are open to influence from us.”⁹⁶ John

⁹² Raimon Panikkar, *The Intrareligious Dialogue*, red. ed. (New York: Paulist Press, 1999), 29.

⁹³ Raimon Panikkar, “What is Comparative Philosophy Comparing?” in *Interpreting Across Boundaries*, edited by G. J. Larson and E. Deutsch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 130.

⁹⁴ Panikkar, *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics* Ibid, 242. Panikkar’s concept of myth is close to Carl Jung’s “collective consciousness” in which people in the group or culture take for granted.

⁹⁵ Panikkar’s “other” challenges one’s understanding and freedom: “It is the cross-cultural challenge of our times that unless the barbarian, the mleccha, goy, infidel, nigger, kaffir, foreigner, and stranger are invited to be my thou, beyond those of my clan, tribe, race, church, or ideology, there is not much hope left for the planet.” Panikkar, *The Intrareligious Dialogue*, 39.

⁹⁶ Bernard Lonergan, “The Mediation of Christ in Prayer,” in *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1958-64*, v. 6, edited by Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 175.

Dadosky affirms the concept as “mutual enrichment, mutual challenge, and the potential genetic emergence of something new.”⁹⁷ Mutual self-mediation enriches each other by enhancing self-understanding in relation to the other.

Dialogical dialogue is a process of learning from the other, an act of searching together for a common good from different vantage points and sharing each other’s concerns together. Panikkar says that “*dialogical dialogue* ... leads to a mutual opening up to the concern of the other, to a sharing in a common charisma, difficulty, suspicion, guidance, inspiration, light, ideal, or whatever higher value both parties acknowledge and neither party controls.”⁹⁸ Dialogical dialogue is similar to *World Mission* in which dialogue partners get together in sharing the concerns that affect them the most rather than their opinions or doctrines.

The approach and practice of mission proposed in *World Mission* in 1966 is not limited to the work of overseas ministry personnel but includes what was then called Home Mission. The Report asserted the need for the interpretation of the mission of the church both in Canada and the world, since the work of mission is carried out both domestically and internationally. The Report stated that “the church’s inescapable obligation [is] to share in God’s concern for all men everywhere, whether African or Canadian.”⁹⁹ Every aspect of the church’s work from the congregational to General Council is involved in God’s mission. The church’s mission is to listen to the concerns of

⁹⁷ John Dadosky, “The Church and the Other: Mediation and Friendship in Post-Vatican II Roman Catholic Ecclesiology,” *Pacific*, 18 (2005), 316.

⁹⁸ Raimon Panikkar, “The Myth of Pluralism: The Tower of Babel – A Meditation on Non-Violence,” *Cross Currents* 29, no. 2 (Summer 1979), 219; Panikkar’s italics.

⁹⁹ UCC, *World Mission*, 133.

Others locally and globally as a way of discerning what the church understands as God's concern, then moving towards collaboration in the solidarity of Others.

Chapter 4 included a discussion of *missio Dei* in which God's concern is mainly not for the church but for the world. The church's mission is to give her life for the Other. God's primary relationship through the "ecumenical" concept of *missio Dei* extends in the following direction: God – world – church. In this order and in the context of the pluralistic world, *missio Dei* may be understood as *missio humanitatis* since God's "loving concern is for [the well-being of] the world."¹⁰⁰ In both *missio Dei* and *missio humanitatis*, the mission is for humanity and the Earth: God's offer of liberation is not limited to one nation or one religion but extend to all humanity and creation in every part of the world.¹⁰¹ When Christians work with people of other religions and with people of no religious affiliation, the purpose of the mission as *missio Dei* becomes *missio humanitatis*.

Why, then, is "God" language, *missio Dei*, necessary in mission practice? It may seem that the phrase, *missio Dei*, and the word God might be stumbling blocks for the church's mission practice: the phrase hints of a theocentric rather than a mutuality model of mission, "*all my relations*."¹⁰² Christian mission, Letty Russell asserts, has been understood as a part of the colonial practice of destroying another people's culture and

¹⁰⁰ Kristeen Kim, "Missiology as Global Conversation of (Contextual) Theologies," *Mission Studies* 21, no. 1 (2004): 48. God's concern can be expressed as the mission of humanity, but God does not require that everyone has to conform to a belief in God.

¹⁰¹ Thangaraj, *The Common Task*, 137.

¹⁰² See Thomas Reynolds' discussion on how to speak of God in a pluralistic world. Reynolds, *The Broken Whole: Philosophical Steps of Global Solidarity* (2006).

self-esteem, and associating God with gold, glory, sexism and racism.¹⁰³ However, “all my relations” expressed in God’s concern for all is meant to overcome a colonial approach to mission.¹⁰⁴ By emphasizing ‘concern’ rather than ‘God’, *World Mission* suggests a new starting point of mission out of common human experience. Putting the emphasis on concern rather than faith honours both secular and religious traditions but does not cause the assimilation of other’s views.¹⁰⁵

What does ‘God’s concern’ mean? As people of faith, Christians are guided by the Judeo-Christian heritage in which God’s concern is expressed for the oppressed, the poor and the marginalized (Exodus 22:21–23; Leviticus 23:22, 25:39–43; Deuteronomy 15:7–11; Malachi 3:5; Isaiah 58:6–7; Matthew 5:1–16; Matthew 25:34–40). The prophets witnessed to God’s concern in their contexts so that justice and peace would embrace the *minjung* for their well-being. In his life, Jesus embodied God’s concern to bring good news to the poor, release to the captives, restore hope to the hopeless and proclaim the Year of the Jubilee (Luke 4:18–19). Jesus called co-workers to carry on this mission together. This is reflected in the oft-repeated saying of St. Augustine, “Without God we cannot, without us God will not.”¹⁰⁶

In “*all my relations*,” Nam-dong Suh’s convergence of faith, the Christian *minjung* tradition and culture, the Korean *minjung* tradition, is a guiding principle for

¹⁰³ Letty M. Russell, “Cultural Hermeneutics: A Postcolonial Look at Mission,” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 20, no 1 (Spring 2004): 29.

¹⁰⁴ UCC, *World Mission*, 28.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹⁰⁶ Augustine of Hippo, quoted by Desmond Tutu, “The Prodigal God” in *God at 2000*, ed. Marcus Borg and Ross Mackenzie (Harrisburg: Morehouse, 2000), 131.

doing mission together. Sharing *minjung* traditions in faith and culture offers direction to a common ground for the common task. When Christians share their concerns together in the solidarity of Others, they may be referring to God's concern in their mission practice, but this sharing in God's concern is not a necessary condition for working with Others, since the word "God" in the English language tradition is much attached to a Christian concept of God.¹⁰⁷ Other faith traditions may not use the word God; they may use their own unique terms such as Allah, Brahman, Great Spirit or, like most Buddhists, they may not speak of God. While God's concern may be a point of reference for Christians in their practice of mission, when they share a common concern with Others in the solidarity of Others, what brings them together is their mutual concern to work for the common task.

Similarly as discussed in the previous chapter, the Holy Spirit can be understood by Christians as "the Go-Between God," fostering mutual relations.¹⁰⁸ The Go-Between God acts in the in-between space making both separation and conjunction real. The Spirit crosses boundaries, as Colin Gunton suggests, to relate beings and realms that are opposed and separated from each other.¹⁰⁹ The pulse of the Spirit in Gunton's pneumatology functions to open dynamic relations with the Other (Romans 8:15-16). The Spirit's approach far from abolishes otherness or difference; rather she maintains and even strengthens particularities.¹¹⁰ The work of the Spirit is not to merge, assimilate or

¹⁰⁷ Thangaraj, *The Common Task*, 39.

¹⁰⁸ John V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God: The Holy Spirit and Christian Mission* (London: SCM Press, 1972).

¹⁰⁹ Colin E. Gunton, *The One, The Three and The Many: God, Creation and the Culture of Modernity* – the 1992 Bampton Lectures (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 181.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 182.

integrate, but to nurture mutual relations. She fosters *listening* to the concern of the Other (Acts 2:1-21). The Spirit connects each to the other by empowering just relations. It is the Spirit who relates each in order to create “a new – particular – network of relationships.”¹¹¹ The network of people can be expressed as the solidarity of Others, since it connects people together through justice. In the network or the solidarity of Others, the source of “all my relations” for Christians is the Spirit; by her action people come together beyond difference and relate the network of people to seek a common good. This solidarity of “*all my relations*” is symbolized in the *perichoresis* which denotes the “mutual indwelling of the equal divine persons” (fig. 5.1).¹¹²

¹¹¹ Ibid., 183.

¹¹² Jürgen Moltmann, “Perichoresis: A Old Magic Word for a New Trinitarian Theology,” in *Trinity, Community and Power: Mapping Trajectories in Wesleyan Theology*, edited by M. Douglas Meeks (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 2000), 114. There is a fuller description of *perichoresis* as early as the work of John of Damascus (676-747 CE). In his book, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, John of Damascus wrote, “[The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit] are made one not so as to commingle, but so as to cleave to each other, and they have their being in each other without any coalescence or commingling” (Book I, Chapter VIII). In the Greek text περιχώρησις is used to denote the special relations of the Three Divine persons.

Figure 5.1. *Perichoresis* in the nave window of the Týn Church¹¹³
(Prague, Czech Republic)



Photograph taken by the author

The Greek theological term *perichoresis* (to dance around) means to embraces one another in love and respect while celebrating togetherness with one another in dance (*convivence*). *Perichoresis* may be seen as a model of living togetherness without mixing or separating in which all three persons dance together in an exuberant movement of equal relations: “an excellent model for human interaction in freedom.”¹¹⁴

When people come together in a common task, they are creating a “Third Space” where persons of different cultures and faiths meet each other for a common good engaging in “dialogical dialogue.” While sustaining their own cultural identity, participants are invited to create intentionally safe, welcoming in-between spaces,

¹¹³ On my recent trip to Prague, the Czech Republic, in 2014, I noticed a *perichoresis* in a front window element of the nave of the Church of Our Lady Before Týn (Týn Church). The window was crafted in the late 14th century in the Parlěř workshop well known for the construction of the Charles Bridge and the St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague. The *perichoresis* consists of three mouchettes moving in a dance movement.

¹¹⁴ Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1992), 221.

characterized as *convivence*, in which intercultural encounters arise. In that space each party responds to the call of the Other, participating in common tasks and celebrating “all my relations.” The vision of becoming an intercultural church creates such spaces inside and outside the church in order to share in God’s concern for all in the solidarity of Others. The gifts of the Aboriginal concepts, *mitakuye oyasin/Akwe Nia’Tetewá:neren*, the Medicine Wheel and the Two Row Wampum belt (*Gus-Wen-Tah*), are offered to us so that we may live in interrelatedness and in mutual respect for difference as we work together to share concern for justice.

Akwe Nia’Tetewá:neren.

Conclusion

For the fulfillment of the UCC’s vision to become an intercultural church, this discussion has come to the dissertation’s goal to a final proposal about how different faiths and cultures may work mutually together for a common task of carrying out their shared concern for justice while being faithful to their own identities. In this chapter a grounded theological and philosophical foundation has been developed toward this end. An intercultural church opens itself to the Other in order for its vision of humanity and the world to be discovered by its partners and vice versa, building bridges between different world views by acting for a common good. Carrying out this task creates an in-between space where “all my relations” are honoured. The proposed “all my relations” does not seek totality but fosters mutuality and searches for just relations. This creates an in-between space of *convivence*, which entails learning from each other and fostering a

togetherness that acts for the mission of humanity. In turn, a praxis emerges in which participants meet together in a shared concern for justice.

The concept of *obligatio in solidum* (joint obligation) is a corrective to the conventional understanding of solidarity. It critiques an imperialistic concept of solidarity *with*, where the privileged takes on a paternalistic role over the Other. Min's concept of solidarity *of* Others has been proposed to overcome the counterproductive praxis inherent to paternalistic conceptions of solidarity. In the practice of solidarity of Others, a vision of *we* emerges that binds people together beyond their different interests and visions yet without reducing such differences to a new totality.

In this increasingly pluralistic society, a mutuality model of mission practice is required to work with other faiths and those of no religious faith. *World Mission* offers possibilities in this direction suggesting that the practice of mission is more a matter of working together to discern and fulfill 'shared concern' than it is highlighting denominational beliefs or faith traditions. When the church listens to the Other's concern and works to foster shared concern in mutual relationship, it understands such concern to be God's concern, thus participation in God's mission (*missio Dei*). The suffering of humanity and creation provides a shared ground for a common mission. Together with Others, the church takes on the task of solidarity as its mission and participates in the mission of humanity (*missio humanitatis*). Beyond religious and cultural differences, an intercultural church lives with Others through its mission practices while also being faithful to its denominational identity. In carrying out its task, an intercultural church creates an in-between space where "dialogical dialogue" takes place to work mutually

with those of different cultures and faiths. A safe space of welcome and mutuality is thereby created, one that realizes the essence of *World Mission*, “all my relations.”

Conclusion: Toward Mutuality in Common Concern for Justice

One of the greatest challenges facing the church today is how the Christian faith builds just relations with different cultures and faith communities while affirming each other's identity. How do Christians respect differences while honouring their own identity in working with Others for common tasks? This study has explored these issues as a contribution to the development of the United Church of Canada's vision to be an intercultural church reflective of postcolonial mission practice. The context for the study includes the vision adopted by the 2006 General Council to become an intercultural church as well as the Canadian government's policy of integrative multiculturalism, promoted from the mid-2000s. In this study it is argued that being intercultural is a mission practice that celebrates difference as an indispensable gift and resource for building just community. A mutuality model "all my relations" for a missiology and mission practice has been presented as a way of understanding and promoting the church's work toward building a solidarity of Others who share a concern for the common good of humanity and the Earth.

Summary of the Thesis

This study first examines and critiques the context of Canada's current multicultural policy – integrative multiculturalism – as a way of living together with Others (Chapter 1). It suggests that integration is hardly an appropriate solution for living together since it promotes further cultural and religious conflict. Integrative multiculturalism was put into policy and practised after occurrences of religious

extremism among youth in the mid–2000s in order to effectively integrate cultural and religious differences into society. However, it is argued here that the policy ends up promoting assimilation by integrating difference into the dominant culture through discarding unwelcomed differences in the public sphere. Consequently the policy creates the “double consciousness characteristic of oppression” (Iris Marion Young) for those who bear different cultures and faiths. This chapter argues that the policy of integrative multiculturalism revives colonial practice in a post-colonial era. A vision of an intercultural church can help counter such practice, both in terms of its public witness and its communal character, built on a conception of difference that is embraced as a gift.

The study next reviews the development of the concept of difference to establish the theoretical foundations for becoming an intercultural church. The gift of difference (Chapter 2) manifests an emancipatory power capable of subverting the “othering process” (Letty M. Russell) by which the Other is forcibly degraded, assimilated and integrated into the dominant culture. Understanding this process more deeply is made possible by an exploration of the work of three scholars, Emmanuel Levinas, Jacques Derrida and Homi Bhabha. Levinas pins down the root problem in the tendency of Western philosophy to seek a totalizing ontology. To counter this, he argues that the Other bears the trace of infinity, making it impossible to reduce the Other to the self. He sees a primal human relationship in the face-to-face encounter, within which the self is summoned by the Other. The face of the Other resists a totalizing ontology and opens the possibility of justice and right relationship. The presence of the Other is a gift opening up the self and liberating it from the tendency to integrate the Other into the same. Derrida understands this encounter with the Other as featuring the lost meanings of temporal

deferring and spacial *differing* in the play of *différance*, through which meaning always arises in relation to other subjects. Derrida, in his later work, takes Levinas' concept of trace and asserts that a living being always entails elements other than the same. By understanding *différance*, it becomes possible to see the identity of the self, not as fixed and autonomous and stable, but as relational, temporal and transformational: it is impossible to contain the Other in the same. Building upon Derrida's notion of *différance*, Bhabha critiques the liberal notion of cultural diversity, which recognizes various cultures but misses power differences among different cultures. He explores the concept of cultural difference by deconstructing the homogenizing tendencies of liberal ideals, in turn highlighting an in-between and interstitial Third Space through which intercultural community can emerge and different cultures meet each other without attempting integration into one's own or the dominant culture.

Moving the theoretical framework into a concrete application, the historical and theological resource of the *Report of Commission on World Mission*, approved in 1966 by the General Council, lays out a foundation for working together with Others regardless of who they are (Chapter 3). *World Mission* critically reviewed the church's traditional approaches to the Other, generally represented by a 'replacement model' claiming exclusive salvation for Christianity, on the one hand, and a 'fulfillment model' which subordinated other faiths to Christianity, on the other. The report also critiqued the use of a theocentric model in a pluralistic world and proposed a *mutuality* model of mission practice based upon sharing a common concern rather than a common belief. Such common concern has been reflected in the desire to build an inclusive, just community expressed by participants from various cultural heritages in the UCC in their first national

gathering since 1975. They brought issues to the life and work of the church, such as inequality, prejudice, difference and racism, to re-envision the church's founding vision. This became salient in "*That All May Be One:*" *The Policy Statement on Anti-Racism* (2000), the church expressing a strong statement of faith: "racism is a sin." With the mutuality model of its mission practice and the anti-racism policy, the UCC set into play a firm momentum for the vision of becoming an intercultural church.

Such momentum is best articulated in a form of a contextual theology - intercultural theology - that practises its missiology in the face of the Other within a particular cultural context without absolutizing one's own culture or subjugating other cultures to one's own (Chapter 4). This theology is practised in an in-between space where interlocutors listen to and learn from Others' concerns and respectfully work together to negotiate the task for the common good. The discussion here explores how gifts from different communities – i.e., from First Nations in Canada and the *minjung* in Korea – enrich the theology and mission practice of an intercultural church. The example of the Aboriginal philosophy "all my relations," wherein all people live in mutual respect for difference, refreshes the church's founding vision "that all may be one" (John 17:21). Another gift is the Two Row Wampum belt from Six Nations of the Grand River wherein different cultures equally coexist and dynamically interact with each other. The in-between space of the Two Row Wampum belt signifies a respectful relational dynamic of learning from each other. The study further explores how, in Korean *Minjung* theology, different cultures and faiths or no faith meet without violating one another's identity. Nam-dong Suh's way of depicting the convergence of faith and culture sets forth principles of the way the church participates in the *minjung* traditions and in the mission

of God (*missio Dei*), so that both are enriched by each other's presence. In the convergence of faith and culture, the Holy Spirit, "the go-between God" (John V. Taylor), freely moves and works. The Holy Spirit can be seen as a feature of the in-between space of peoples from different faiths and cultures joined together. The go-between God empowers those who yearn to work together for "the mission of humanity" (*missio humanitatis*, Thomas Thangaraj).

Finally, this thesis culminates in an exploration of *how* different cultures may work together mutually for the common tasks of carrying out their shared concern for justice while being faithful to their own identities (Chapter 5). The proposed mutuality model "all my relations" embraces all people, respects difference and affirms the interrelatedness of life. Further, the Levinasian notion of the Other is indispensable to the task not only of listening to the Other's concern, but also of showing how relation with the Other connects "other Others" (*le tiers*, the third party) with the self. The Other is related to the other Others in unique ways of transcendence and relationality both at the same time. The Roman civil law, *obligatio in solidum* (joint obligation), is used to support the building of community in the face of the Other and retrieve the meaning of a collective responsibility from which the concept of solidarity is drawn. This is in contrast to the conventional notion of solidarity, which has a paternalistic approach to Others, wherein a privileged group sets an agenda for working together. To overcome the imperial relationship with Others, this study critically accesses Anselm Min's notion of a solidarity of *Others* (with upper case "O" to stress that the word "Others" reflects the Levinasian concept). In a solidarity of Others, all are the Other to each other; each shares a collective responsibility for the Other. When Others share their concerns together for

the common good through “dialogical dialogue” (Raimon Panikkar), they cross boundaries to work with Others while being faithful to their own identities.

Implications of the Study

This dissertation gives life to the most critical study of mission in the history of the UCC, the 1966 report, *World Mission*. The missiology of *World Mission* provides a solid theological foundation for mission practice as mutuality in the pluralistic, post-colonial context of Canada. As the fulfillment of the UCC’s vision of becoming an intercultural church, mission practice as mutuality moves beyond religious boundaries to work with secularists and humanists in seeking a common ground with Others toward communal liberation.

While the focus of this thesis has been on developing intercultural theology and its missiology, implications for future research include the development of relevant practical processes to guide congregations and mission units in the carrying out of intercultural ministry in their contexts. For this journey, Nam-dong Suh’s convergence of faith and culture and the *minjung* church movement in Korea are useful resources for the vision, especially in a multicultural society such as Canada; each community is invited to discover the *minjung* traditions in its context. This process may involve reading the Bible from the perspective of the *minjung*; the community may find images, symbols, events and/or stories that reflect *minjung* traditions. There may be a discontinuity and/or similarity in socio-economic relations between the *minjung* traditions. Each community is invited to examine its own culture from the perspective of the *minjung*, to look at its history, literature and arts to identify its *minjung* traditions. Then, each community will

be able to look at the other culture from a *minjung* perspective. Once the community discovers and identifies its *minjung* traditions, various communities may meet together for a common good. When *minjung* traditions are shared in community, the community is summoned to transform the current culture into action.

Based on *World Mission's* approach to the Other, this study recommends a mutuality model “all my relations” as an appropriate mission practice for becoming an intercultural church, since it includes all participating in the common task and expresses communal responsibility for the well-being of all life forms. The UCC missiologist Katharine B. Hockin used the term “companion” in her missiology to describe the relationship between the self and the other.¹ This mutuality model, “all my relations,” may lead to the development of practical guidelines for congregations and mission units. The essence of the new model of mission, suggested in this thesis as mutuality, is to be an invitational, inclusive, interactive and interest-based approach to working with Others for the wellbeing of humanity and the Earth.

Further, this thesis suggests the concept of ‘solidarity of *Others*’ as a way for the church to go forward in future work with Others: the church opts to meet the Other’s concern as a collective responsibility. Solidarity of Others is a practice of overcoming the negative perspective of Northrop Fry’s “garrison mentality” where the people within a community are close to each other but beyond it’s boundary and holding back from participating in the work with Others. This study challenges the UCC to overcome the

¹ Katharine B. Hockin, “Some Random Missiological Musings,” *China Note* (Winter 1983-1984): 281. Hockin defines the concept of companion as follows: “This word ‘companion’ holds in its composition the Old Latin root for ‘bread’ – clearer in the French – ‘one with whom bread is shared’, or expanded, ‘one with whom life and delight and the adventure of road is experienced together” (Hockin, *Ibid.*, 280). I am indebted Hockin’s material to JungHee Park.

garrison mentality in the life and work of the church. The vision of becoming an intercultural church embraces difference as a gift and encourages Others to use their gifts to build a just community. Solidarity of Others offers a way to enhance the positive side of a garrison mentality so that people learn from, help and celebrate with one another life's joys and sufferings together in listening to the Other's concern for the common mission of humanity.

Throughout this study, the hopes of people of different cultural heritages for a just community have been voiced. The UCC is listening to these voices in order to develop policies to build an inclusive community. The shared vision of people of different cultural heritages is becoming the vision of the UCC, currently expressed as becoming an intercultural church. Discovering the gifts of all sojourners on the way, the UCC will be mutually transformed through a deepening understanding of the Other. While celebrating our different gifts in the solidarity of Others, we come to discover in concrete ways that "we are not alone." When people gather together not from a common faith but out of a common concern, all participate in the common task, radical inclusion happens and the vision is realized.²

The UCC's current vision of becoming an intercultural church, however, may not be the final "goal to be worked for." Rather, as *World Mission* proposes, it may be "a necessary characteristic of the world in which the next stage of mission strategy is to be worked out, ... a fact to be lived with, not as an ideal to be worked for."³ It may be a

² For example, in the recent Syrian refugee crisis, secular and faith communities may come together to sponsor refugee families. See Affan Chowdhry, "Canadian Interfaith Partnerships Building Bridges in Support of Syrian Asylum Seekers," *Globe and Mail*, September 11, 2015, A1 and A7.

³ UCC, *World Mission* (Toronto: United Church of Canada, 1966), 55.

countercultural mission strategy in the context of the policy of Canada's integrative multiculturalism, a reflection of the church living faithfully in our time and place. *World Mission* recommends that the church needs to dialogue constantly with contemporary theology, the rapidly changing context, and history to develop a missiology for our time and place.⁴ Mission practice as mutuality is an on-going process of dialogue and action together with Others for a common good, and is fuelled by honouring difference as a cherished gift.

An intercultural church creates an in-between, welcoming space where people come together to share their common concern for justice. Such welcoming space is an emblem of the church crossing boundaries to do God's mission (*missio Dei*) with Others; it embodies the meaning of being "intercultural." When people share their concerns together for a common good, each crosses boundaries to work with Others while being faithful to their own identities. It is an exciting journey of learning, acting and celebrating life together (*convivence*). On this journey to become an intercultural church, one of the *World Mission* authors and missiologist, Hockin offers us words of encouragement: "When the goals of justice are gained, the mission will not end."⁵ We are about to make a new beginning!

⁴ Ibid., 136.

⁵ Katharine B. Hockin, "My Pilgrimage in Mission," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 12, no. 1 (January 1988): 30.

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