The Challenge of Interdisciplinarity to Catholic Social Teaching

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In his programmatic encyclical the late Pope John Paul II called on "theologians and all men and women of learning in the church to unite faith with learning and wisdom." He said "this task has grown enormously today because of the advancement of human learning, its methodology, and the achievements in knowledge of the world and of the human person." He argued for the close collaboration of the exact sciences, human sciences, philosophy and theology, and noted that a "certain pluralism in methodology" is "permissible and even desirable" even as this task "cannot depart from the fundamental unity in the teaching of faith and morals" (RH 19).[1]

This paper attempts to examine how the social teaching tradition has conducted this task of uniting faith with learning and wisdom through its use of the various disciplines. We shall first state the problem (1), then examine models of scientific collaboration (2), explore the model of interdisciplinarity (3), and offer a system of coordinates for it to happen (4). We shall end up with a set of critical implications for the church's social teaching (5).

1. John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis* (1979). See http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis_en.html (accessed 07.16.2006); henceforth RH.

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Stating the Problem

It would be untruthful to claim that the social teaching tradition has never appropriated the insights and contributions of non-theological and even non-philosophical disciplines. Their appropriation has always been an integral part in the evolution of its principles, criteria and norms on politics, economics, culture, society and even ecology. What is rather problematic is to ask about the manner and to what extent these diverse forms and sources of knowledge have been taken into consideration in the formulation of social teaching.

Without doubt the historical distance between each social document of more than a hundred year old tradition is a factor. These documents, in the first place, have diverse authorship. They were also formulated to address the Church's social concerns of the different eras. No wonder, moral principles and criteria of some documents, especially the earlier ones, were mainly drawn from "right reason" and were evaluated in terms of their consistency with "revealed data." The not so recent ones have departed from the narrow collaboration between theology and philosophy and show a more open and purposive use of the positive sciences, albeit only to reinforce those claims already derived from its philosophical-theological framework.

More recent documents however do not only make use of these sciences. Their authors, that is to say, the *magisterium*, also explain how and for what purpose these sciences are useful. Paul VI, for instance, recognizes their positive functions. The human sciences, he says, "assist Christian social morality" in "its function of making a critical judgment and taking an over-all view of society." More importantly, they are an indispensable condition, albeit inadequate, "for a better discovery of what is human" (OA 40).[2] The Guidelines for Teaching the Church's Social Doctrine in the Formation of Priests issued in 1988 speaks of a "fruitful dialogue between Christian social

2. Paul VI, *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971). See http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/apost_letters/documents/hf_pvi_apl_19710514_octogesima-adveniens_en.html (accessed 07.16.2006); henceforth OA.

ethics (theological and philosophical) and the human sciences" as "not only possible but necessary for understanding social reality." "It is in line with the social doctrine of the Church," the Guidelines say, "to accept and harmonize appropriately the data" from the social sciences, always mindful of the required careful discernment (Guidelines, 10).[3]

While these sciences are valid and useful for understanding social reality, they are all the more crucial in understanding the human person in a more accurate manner as John Paul II would argue. The human sciences, like philosophy, "are helpful for interpreting the human person's central place within society and for enabling him/her to understand himself/herself better as a social being" (CA 54).[4] It is therefore necessary that the social teaching "enters into dialogue with the various disciplines concerned with the human person. As the social teaching assimilates what these disciplines have to contribute, it also helps these disciplines to open themselves to a broader horizon." In this way, the "one truth about the human person," for which the Church is a sign and a safeguard, becomes incarnate "in different and constantly changing social, economic and political contexts" (CA 59).

While the preceding explanations are also repeated in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004), an important admission is made about the desire of the *magisterium* to gain a more precise understanding of social reality and the human person through dialogue with the social and human sciences. It shows an increasing awareness of the fact "that a profound understanding of the human person does not come from theology alone, without the many branches of knowledge to which theology itself refers."[5]

At this juncture, it is needless to say that the *magisterium* has only given broad strokes as to how the different sources of knowledge are to be appropriated. It is the modest task of this paper to respond

3. Congregation for Catholic Education, *Guidelines for Teaching the Church's Social Doctrine in Forming Priests* (1988); henceforth 'Guidelines'.

4. John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus* (1991). See http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_01051991_centesimus-annus_en.html (accessed 07.16.2006); henceforth CA.

5. Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004). See paragraph no. 78.

to the problem, that is, to search for the various ways the collaboration of the various sciences will be most fruitful for the church's social teaching tradition.

Models of Scientific Collaboration

Let us start with two models of scientific collaboration, namely: the multidisciplinary and the instrumental, and examine their strengths and limitations.

Multidisciplinary Collaboration

In the multidisciplinary scheme, the collaborating sciences have one and the same object under investigation. Each science would conduct the inquiry according to their respective formal object, that is to say, from their own points of view, within their proper theoretical frameworks, activating their specific methodologies, and making their particular hypotheses. They also proceed in the investigation without giving due consideration how their diverse and partial aspects are related at all. In short, "the unity of scientific collaboration is determined solely by the material object under consideration."[6]

Logically the final results of the inquiry are heterogeneous inasmuch as these are gained to validate or invalidate diverse hypotheses and are articulated by way of different languages and categories. Both the tentative and final results of the inquiry are most difficult to integrate during or after the investigation. It is also hard to locate the points of agreement or disagreement of one with the other even as it is also not easy to see their mutual dependence.

Perhaps one example of this fundamental weakness is Pius XI's prophetic assertion of social justice (QA 57-58),[7] on the one hand, and its corporatist model of society (QA 91-95), on the other.

6. Our discussion relies on J. C. Scannone, "Teologia e interdisciplinaridad: Presencia del saber teologico en el ambito de las Ciencias," *Theologica Xaveriana* 40 (1990): 63-79.

7. Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931). See http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xi/ encyclicals/ documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadragesimo-anno_en.html (accessed 07.16.2006); henceforth QA.

Pius XI in *Quadragesimo Anno* strongly denounced "the vast differences between the few who hold excessive wealth and the many who live in destitution a grave evil in modern society." "Each class," he said, "must receive its due share" and "the distribution of created goods must be brought in conformity with the demands of…social justice." Here the diagnosis is arrived at by way of a modest analysis while the moral judgment and ethical demand are drawn from "right reason" or Christian philosophy.

While diagnosis is accurate and the judgment is prophetic, the prescription is too weak to be able to reconstruct a social order on the bedrock of social justice. Pius XI envisioned a society composed of corporations, each of which is composed of representatives of labor and capital, employee and employer, of the same trade and profession. These corporations would have a special ministry to the public inasmuch as they serve as the exclusive instruments of the State in directing and coordinating the activities of labor unions in all matters of common interest. "Strikes and lockouts are forbidden. If the contending parties cannot come to an agreement, public authority intervenes" (QA 94). The overall net result according to Pius XI will be "peaceful collaboration of the social classes, repression of socialist organizations and efforts, and the moderating authority of a special ministry" (QA 95).

To buttress his theory of society Pius XI offers the evidence of history. "At one period," he says, "there existed a social order which, though by no means perfect in every respect, corresponded nevertheless in a certain measure to right reason according to the needs and conditions of the times" (QA 97). He was of course nostalgic about the guilds that had provided adequate stability in work and trade during the medieval period. The guilds had long perished, he says, not because they were incapable of development and adaptation, but rather because of mistakes. For him these guilds should have been propagated as trades and crafts increased, and guild workers should not have thrown away the authority of their employers. Here he was referring to the shift from guilds to unions, that is to say, from trade associations composed of employer (owners) and employee (workers) to associations exclusively composed of workers, an arrangement that he obviously disliked.

The prescription is therefore: reconstruct the social order on the basis of a theory of society derived from an established order perceived in the "nature of things" and an order in accordance with "right reason." In this prescription, there is a preference for stability over change, authority over freedom, continuity over historicity. The nostalgic prescription has not recognized that what it analyzed in "the nature of things" of the medieval era was in fact conditioned by a culture and socio-economic context that had long since disappeared during the turn of the 20th century.

From the viewpoint of scientific collaboration, there is no question that the encyclical has made use of the social sciences available at the time side by side with the church's preferred philosophy and theology. But it did so in a framework that did not allow the particular points of view and methods of these disciplines to critically question and enrich each other's hypothesis and findings. The net result is a mere juxtaposition of a correct, albeit superficial, diagnosis (i.e., disparity between rich and poor due to unjust structures), a radical moral imperative (i.e., social justice instead of mere charity), and a very defective prescription (i.e., corporatist theory of society).

While the multidisciplinary model facilitates various sciences to collaborate because of the sameness of the object of investigation, it does not facilitate their critical and honest interaction in the process of investigation, and does not make possible the critical and honest integration of the final results of the inquiry. The greatest risk attendant to a multidisciplinary model of this kind is not only juxtaposition but also incoherence if not unresolved conflict of paradigms and claims.[8]

Instrumental Collaboration

Like the previous model, the various sciences collaborate in view of a common object under investigation. But there is a "dominant science," so to speak, that "formulates the hypothesis of work and designs the plan and goals of the investigation." The various dimensions of the one and same material object are studied by the

8. For an extensive study of the conflicting if not incoherent paradigms in church social teaching, see M. Hobgood, *Catholic Social Teaching and Economic Theory* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991).

various disciplines from their respective points of view, using their specific methods, and with all the proper autonomy necessary. Each of the findings derived from the various sources would then be partial, and these are then assumed under the point of view (or formal object) of the science that posits the investigation. How the various yet partial findings relate to each other and how these are to be assimilated to form a coherent and comprehensive result fall on the shoulders of the dominant science. The other sciences only assume an "instrumental, subordinate and subsidiary function."[9]

Recent documents of church social teaching show the preference for this model. The human and social sciences provide "abundant material for the analysis, evaluation and judgment of social situations and structure." They "make up an important instrument…for understanding reality," the "empirical context in which moral principles can and must be applied," and give "orientation in the concrete choices to be made" (Guidelines 10 and 68). The social teaching accepts the data provided by them and harmonizes it with its philosophical-theological point of view.

Structures of sin as a theological and moral category is a good example (SRS 36-37).[10] The social teaching's theology and philosophy do not have the tools to secure the data about concrete situations of poverty and the structures or systems that breed them; only the human and social sciences have. The data derived from these sciences are assumed by the social teaching. They are given a theological reading and moral interpretation "in order to point out," according to John Paul II, " the true nature of the evil that faces us with respect to the development of peoples." From being a social problem of underdevelopment, the structures that breed poverty become "a question of moral evil, the fruit of many sins which lead to structures of sin" (SRS 37). Thanks to the instrumentality of the sciences, we "easily gain a profound understanding of the reality that confronts us" and we are able to "give a name to the root of the evils that afflict us."

9. J. C. Scannone, "Teologia e interdisciplinaridad: Presencia del saber theologico en el ambito de las Ciencias," 65.

10. John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987). See http:/www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii / encyclicals / documents / hf_jp- ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis_en.html (accessed 07.16.2006); henceforth SRS.

But the social and human sciences have another and, in the mind of John Paul II, more important function. They do not only help us describe social reality but also enable us to understand the human person as a social being and interpret his/her central place in society. Yet the true identity of the human person "is only fully revealed to him through faith" (CA 54), hence the insights of these sciences are to be assimilated and harmonized with Christian anthropology or "the meaning of man" which the church has received from divine revelation (CA 55). The usefulness of their contributions is thus evaluated in terms of their capacity to affirm the anthropological constants of Christian anthropology and to strengthen principles, criteria and norms already set up by such philosophical-theological framework. It is clear that points of convergence among the findings of the sciences, theology, and philosophy are desired but the capacity of these sciences to critique and perhaps enrich social teaching's philosophy and theology of the human person seems not welcome. In other words, while harmonization is aimed at, the collaboration stops short of recognizing that insights from non-theological/philosophical sciences can be deeply constitutive of social teaching.[11]

This deficiency in instrumental collaboration becomes more problematic if one considers *Veritatis Splendor*.[12] The encyclical recognizes the indispensability of the use of the human, natural, and social sciences. But these sciences, says John Paul II, are only "concerned with the phenomenon of morality as a historical and social fact." Thus the results of their "empirical observation or phenomenological understanding" only would add up to "an empirical and statistical

11. See G. Kruip, "Gesellschaftsethik im interdisziplinären Dialog. Wilhelm Dreiers Beitrag zur Erneuerung der Gesellschaftsethik nach dem Konzil," in F. Hengsbach, B. Emunds, M. Möhring-Hesse, eds., *Jenseits Katholischer Soziallehre. Neue Entwürfe christlicher Gesellschaftsethik* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1993), 91-105; here, 92.

12. See A. Lienkamp, "Quellen der Ethik? Zur erkenntnistheoretische Bedeutung der Sozialwissenschaften für die Soziallehre der Kirche," in M. Heimbach-Steins, A. Lienkamp, und J. Wiemeyer, eds., *Brennpunkt Sozialethik. Theorien, Aufgaben, Methoden,* (Freiburg/Basel/Wien: Herder, 1995), 45-68. Also see P. Müssen, "Der Beitrag der Human- und Gesellschaftswissenschaften zur christlichen Sozialethik gezeight am Beispiel (sozial) psychologischer Fragen," in Ibid., 213-230.

concept of 'normality'." Regarding the primordial questions about good and evil or about good works and eternal life, it is "the Gospel which reveals the full truth" (VS 111-112).[13] This full truth is in "close and vital connection with biblical and dogmatic theology," on the one hand, and with the "laws of spiritual development described by Christian ascetical and mystical theology," on the other.

Indeed there are biblical truths about the moral life which have been handed down in the church's dogmatic, ascetical and mystical traditions. But the ambiguity of biblical texts and stories as well as the ideological use and distortion, possibly hidden in the traditions which appropriate them, need to be rigorously discerned if we are to validate their importance to shape our moral selves and guide our moral lives. One cannot ignore this fact "for it remains a pointed challenge to all who think about what 'revelation' would or could mean."[14]

The other problem is the claim that revelation contains the "full truth" about moral acting and living. If it were so, revealed truths are sufficient for the formulation of moral criteria and norms and, consequently, their appropriation in Christian moral, ascetical and mystical traditions would by itself be a sufficient source of ethics and morality as well as spirituality. It is difficult to avoid such conclusion because the document seems to suggest that aside from an "empirical and statistical concept of normality" the sciences do not possess any moral or ethical dimension at all in the nucleus of its rationality. In fact, unlike the "laws of spiritual development described by Christian ascetical and mystical theology," the sciences, as the document would assume, bear "the traces of the fall from man's original situation – in other words, it is affected by sin" (VS 112).

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13. John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* (1993). See http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor_en.html (accessed 09.16.2006); henceforth VS.

14. Peter Schmidt, "A Past History for Today," a paper delivered in a conference entitled "Reading the Bible" organized by the Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium), 27-29 October 2005. Also see Reimund Bieringer, "Biblical Revelation and Exegetical Interpretation According to *Dei Verbum* 12," in *Vatican II and Its Legacy*, eds. Mathijs Lamberigts and Leo Kenis, (Leuven: Peeters, 2002).

In instrumental collaboration the point of view of the science doing the investigation is readily assumed to be free from human imperfection and thus exempt from critique. The (non-theological and non-philosophical) sciences are not seriously taken in as dialogue partners but simply tools or instruments. And the aim is simply assimilation of the findings following the criteria of harmonization instead of their critical and mutual appropriation.

The Way of Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Both multidisciplinary and instrumental forms of collaboration are not, from our point of view, the ideal ways to proceed. That is, if the social teaching tradition would wish to live up to its claim of having "an important interdisciplinary dimension" and of "entering into dialogue with the various disciplines" (CA 59). The task is now to search for elements constitutive of interdisciplinary collaboration and determine the specificity designated by the term "inter".

The Constitutive Elements of Interdisciplinary Collaboration

Our study, following B. Fraling, has led us to at least four elements that complement each other to constitute interdisciplinary collaboration. They are dialogue, combination, convergence and separation of functions.[15]

The Matrix of Dialogue

The first element takes its cue from the church's program of dialogue with the world. It is based on what the church believes as the common search for a better discovery and understanding of

15. We are appropriating the discussion of B. Fraling, "Auf der Suche nach konkretisierter Verantwortung. Methodische Reflexion eines Moraltheologen über das Verhältnis von Humanwissenschaftsten und Theologischer Ethik," in *Lateinamerika und die Katholische Soziallehre. Ein lateinamerikanisch-deutsches Dialogsprogram,* eds. P. Hünnerman und J. C. Scannone (Teil I Mainz: Grünewald, 1993), 181-202.

what is human (cf. OA 40). This anthropological impulse serves as the minimum basis of agreement necessary for conversation. The primary aim of the dialogue is not to enrich the claims of the social teaching's Christian anthropology and the moral principles derived therefrom, but rather to determine the concrete moral responsibility of individuals and groups vis-à-vis social situations and systems. It is important to discover and understand the capacities of moral agents, the social conditionings that may make action possible or impossible, if not limited, and the effectiveness of concrete forms of social praxis to respond to the social question.

There is however a requirement that makes the mutual exchange of perspectives and knowledge possible. It is the conviction that knowledge about the good and true is also to be found outside the explicit formulas of faith. Hence the potentials and limits of every form of competence among the dialogue participants need to be appreciated and acknowledged. As points of contact are made through discourse and critique, each one is called to render an account of what it can contribute in the investigation.

The other requirement, no less important, is to acknowledge that no science, including philosophy and theology, has a privileged mode of knowing that is idol-free, to borrow a Baconian language.[16] The notion of competence, for instance, already implies an element of functionality or strategic instrumentality that may hide certain interests; interests that social-scientific and even theological-philosophical knowledge are not free from. Hence these *Erkenntnisinteresse* (or "interests of knowledge") should not be repressed nor suppressed but rather brought into the open in unhindered dialogue. The element of dialogue therefore lays down the matrix for an intellectually honest and thus, already at the outset, ethical collaboration.

16. While Bacon's project wanted to get rid of the four idols of the mind (*idola tribus, idola specus, idola fori*, and *idola theatri*) to gain objectivity, the science of hermeneutics understands them better as "hermeneutical properties that could not be renounced in the processes of knowledge." See P. Müssen, "Der Beitrag der Human- und Gesselschaftswissenschaften zur christlichen Sozialethik gezeight am Beispiel (sozial-) psychologischer Fragen," 217, footnote 20.

The Element of Combination

Dialogue is not, however, enough for it sets into motion a process of investigation employing a diversity of methods and whose results or findings may either be contradictory and/or different. The element of combination, or better yet, integration, looks for fundamental and similar intuitions about human existence derived from scientific collaboration in order to seriously consider these in the process of ethical reflection. The sciences secure and offer objective or empirical data; ethical reflection assumes and gives it new meaning. The data that do not contradict but rather belong to the basic conditions necessary for the realization of the fullness of the *humanum* are integrated.

The Element of Convergence

What about inevitable contradictory results? The element of convergence, or better yet, consensus, supplies what the previous element lacks. It develops a form of argumentation whereby a form of agreement about the different findings is aimed at. What may appear as contradictory is adjudicated by thematizing the different validity claims and by vindicating or criticizing them through the communicative power of arguments.[17] The collaboration is not therefore coordinated by "ego-centric calculations of success" but by acts of reaching a common understanding and consent.

The element of convergence then implies the openness to expose oneself to criticism and the readiness to abandon the contingent and/or partial features of one's viewpoint in lieu of "something deeper and more universal." The logic is that a convergence founded on communicative argumentation has in itself a moral quality insofar as the participants discover and deal with their respective assumptions, claims and interests before giving their assent in freedom. This is a crucial ethical moment for only by achieving

17. See, for instance, J. Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action,* Vol. I: *Reason and the Rationalization of Society* (Boston: Beacon 1984), and; P. Lakeland, "Ethics and Communicative Action: The Need for a Critical Theory in Catholic Social Teaching," *Thought* 62 (March 1987): 59-73.

agreement through the consent of those involved in the interdisciplinary conversation would the convergence of the scientific findings and ethical insight be secure.

The Element of Functional Separation

But dialogue, combination, and convergence cannot make a fruitful interdisciplinary collaboration if the autonomy of the various disciplines is avoided. The proper separation of their functions is most necessary for the proper coordination of their diverse and autonomous competencies. This necessity is anchored on the fact that "there are radically different forms of experience." Some are proximate to "the experience of situations with the character of moral exigency," others refer to the "empirical perception of objectively given facticity." Some of these, as Fraling explains, enter into "the formulation of normative ethical propositions," while others simply shed light. This partly explains why many of the norms that guide concrete human life are "mixed norms," that is, they have both empirical and ethical components resulting from "the linkage between a judgment of moral value and a judgment of fact."

The separation of functions is also necessary in social ethical reflection because there are "complex circumstances of the factual type that are neither directly penetrable nor understandable" by daily common sense, practical reason or even by religious faith.[18] The complexity of global poverty and the gravity of ecological crisis are but few examples. In this regard, extensive and competent knowledge is necessary, and such cannot be acquired if the autonomy of the competence and the division of functions of the collaborating sciences are not guaranteed.

Hence, "the Church can make use of all the help the sciences can offer when she makes a judgment, for example, of critically measurable empirical data." But she must also always be aware that "it is not her task scientifically to analyze reality and the possible consequences of social change" (*Guidelines*, 50). Yet, on the other hand, "even if she makes use of all the means supplied by the sciences,

18. B. Fraling, "Auf der Suche nach konkretisierter Verantwortung," 187-188.

the fact remains that her principal reference for approach to social reality is always the…fundamental values which provide very precise norms of judgment for Christian discernment" (*Guidelines*, 47).

But the separation of functions is not absolute. Knowledge concerning moral behavior and social reality is more difficult, if not impossible, for each discipline to solely arrive at comprehensively. Although an exact science can autonomously discover facts and contexts through its own methods, it cannot interpret these without a hermeneutical process that transcends its own competence. In the ambit of interdisciplinary collaboration, the separation and autonomy, by being not absolute, serve the purpose of eventual combination and/or convergence of the findings within the discursive and communicative matrix of dialogue.

The Specificity of Interdisciplinarity

What then is the specificity of interdisciplinarity as distinguished from other models of scientific collaboration? Interdisciplinarity, according to J. C. Scannone, involves a dimension that respects and, at the same time, transcends the unique and partial competence of every discipline. That dimension involves the search for a new form of *unidad del saber* (unity of knowledge or unity of understanding). The term "inter," he says, does not only indicate the inter-disciplinary mode of the investigation nor the inter-connection of various hypotheses but more so the "reciprocal interaction, interdependence and mutual enrichment of the distinct disciplines."[19] The term "inter" therefore means that every discipline is also to orient itself towards the "creation of conditions, methodological instruments and theoretical presuppositions" that make possible a "grand synthesis capable of integrating the many partial results derived from the diverse areas of knowledge." By *unidad del saber* is not meant the systematic unification of the distinct sciences demanding them to give up their respective valuable competencies but rather a "unity in diversity."

While the term "inter" means unity, it also implies rupture. "Inter" as a moment indicates the passage from common sense towards scientific sense as source of moral knowledge and ethical

19. J. C. Sacnnone, "Teologia e interdisciplinaridad: Presencia del saber teologico en el ambito de las Ciencias," 66.

judgment. The former refers to the readily available source of knowledge about reality or the life-world, the latter entails a consciousness nurtured by a carefully regulated process of methodical investigation, rigorous reflection, and argumentative articulation. As the church enters into interdisciplinary collaboration, its life-world impregnated by faith, its forms of faith-praxis, and its theological reflections upon both, are not exempt from making the rupture. As John Paul himself has recognized, "in this field of human knowledge, which is continually being broadened and yet differentiated, faith too must be investigated deeply" (RH 19).

The Search for the *Humanum*

Thus far our discussion has identified the constitutive elements of interdisciplinarity and located the specificity of the term "inter." We have yet to account for that into which one can integrate the particular results of the investigation in an ethically responsible way and one that facilitates an *unidad del saber* or a unity of knowledge and understanding about the object of inquiry. Interdisciplinary collaboration thus needs a "system of coordinates"[20] which is, in our view, no other than the search for the human, a fact verifiable in language.

The Fact of Human Language

Appropriating Wittgenstein's category of "language game," Scannone contends that scientific language is a language deeply human. As such it is deeply imbued with communication processes subject to the rules of the language game. There is the fact of communication "among scientists of distinct schools of thought within the same science," on the one hand, and "among scientists of distinct sciences," on the other. But, more importantly, the circle of communication widens to include "between them and the politicians, educators, agents of action and human beings in general."[21]

20. B. Fraling, "Auf der Suche nach konkretisierter Verantwortung," 194. This view is shared by J.C. Scannone, "Mediaciones teoricas y practicas de la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia," *Stromata* XLV, No. 1/2 (Enero-Junio 1989): 75-97.

21. J. C. Scannone, "Teologia e interdisciplinaridad: Presencia del saber teologico en el ambito de las Ciencias," 68.

Every language, therefore, even that of the empirical, has the rational capacity for inter-communication. Without this capacity the communication of knowledge within and outside the confines of every science would have been impossible. In every language game the same human rationality is present, albeit in specific and diverse forms, and in every life-world, including the scientific, the human is present according to the diverse dimensions of culture and cultures. In short, the *humanum* appears in the signification, subject and articulation of language, that is to say, in its semantic, pragmatic and syntactic dimensions.

The *Humanum* in the Semantic Dimension of Language

A better discovery of the human being can be attained in reference to the "meaning of that which is spoken." Why? Every science investigates reality from a specific point of view. Its investigation moves in a horizon of comprehension supplied by its own presuppositions, theoretical frameworks, categories, methods, and working hypothesis. Because of this, it can be said that every science has already a kind of "pre-understanding" of the object under investigation. From this pre-understanding or specific point of view, science conducts the investigation of the object and seeks to arrive at its specific meaning and truth. The result is a partial horizon of meaning or truth about the object. Thus, from the "particular points of view" of the sciences, "distinct partial horizons of meaning" of reality are achieved.

What is all the more important is to recognize the fact that these partial horizons, particularly those of the human and social sciences, carry with them an "implicit anthropology" or, better yet, a pre-understanding of the *humanum*, that is to say, the human person, society, history, culture and life. These partial horizons of meaning about the human implicit in every science ought to be rigorously examined in order to achieve a more comprehensive and profound horizon of meaning and truth about the *humanum*. It is therefore necessary in interdisciplinary collaboration that one or the other aspects of meaning about the human moves against the background of an ultimate horizon of meaning. This is so because the distinct and partial horizons of meaning of every science is permeated and influenced by an ultimate and comprehensive sense of being and life.

The science to which the competence of thematizing a comprehensive sense of life and ultimate horizon of the human being belongs to philosophy. By dialoguing with the various philosophical currents and approaches, the empirical sciences are enabled to understand all the more the partiality of the meaning of that which it has discovered, and appreciate its specificity. In the case of an interdisciplinary collaboration that wishes to appropriate faith or religious belief, the competence of theology becomes opportune and necessary. Theology, in the variety of its methods and approaches, reads and interprets the philosophical thematization of the scientific-empirical findings in the light of revealed data. In this manner, the philosophical thematization of the scientific-empirical findings is illuminated by the horizon of comprehension shaped by faith. Against the background of a theological meaning, the philosophical meaning may be deepened if not enriched. What is signified by the implicit and partial anthropological intuitions of the sciences will also receive ultimate moorings as they refer to a more comprehensive signification.

Here we have the first coordinate that would allow interdisciplinary collaboration to better appropriate the partial and distinct horizons of meaning about the human, and move towards achieving a more adequate and integrated view.

The *Humanum* in the Pragmatic Dimension of Language

The second coordinate has something to do with "the subject who makes use of the language to communicate with others and with himself."[22] In the praxis of communication, the subject finds himself/herself at a crossroad of two options, namely, the existential and the theoretical. The first refers to a tension; the second concerns a choice or decision.

Existential option highlights the fact that in interdisciplinary collaboration every participant carries in him/her the tension between his/her communicative or non-communicative interests in the process of scientific investigation vis-à-vis his/her capacity or incapacity for a

22. See Ibid., pp. 70-71 appropriating B. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* (London/New York: Philosophical Library, 1957), 746. A succinct presentation of Lonergan's views on interdisciplinary collaboration by Jesus Garcia, Jr., "Lonergan on Interdisciplinarity in Theology" is found in this volume.

detached, unrestricted and disinterested interest to know. Howbeit theoretical option emphasizes the fact that every participant, as an epistemological subject, has his/her own theoretical preferences and choices. Hence, it is not surprising that in the dialogue, participants encounter one another as having a preference for "one or the other paradigm of interpretation, method of analysis or theoretical framework of investigation" and even a preference for one or the other direction that the inquiry should go.

Because of this fact, interdisciplinary collaboration does not only depend on the interaction of the theoretical options of the participating sciences but more so on how free or not free from ideological interests and hidden claims is every participant's capacity for knowledge, communication and consensus. Interdisciplinarity therefore presupposes a "liberation for the truth" that is to be mediated by what Lonergan calls an "intellectual and ethical conversion" of the subject. Without this integral conversion or, better yet, to borrow Levinas, without this "ethical opening towards the other,"[23] the free assent, which we have alluded to earlier, would not be possible. It is the "epistemological presupposition par excellence" which liberates science or the subject from ideologization.

The ethical and intellectual conversion of the subject as the second coordinate is relevant to every scientific community. Through this, coordinate scientific investigation need not be conducted any longer in a merely "subject – object" framework, that is, between the solitary subject and the particular object of study. It has to be done within what someone calls a *Wissenschaftethos* or "scientific ethos," that is, within a "subject subject" relations of a scientific community where hermeneutical and argumentative communication is the ethos.[24]

The necessity of intellectual and ethical conversion does not exempt the scientific community whose theoretical option is the "option of faith" (theology). Neither does it exempt those who have

23. The category of *disintessement* or "dis-interestedness" is from E. Levinas, "Ideology and Idealism," in *The Levinas Reader,* ed. S. Hand (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), 235-248.

24. H. Schelkshorn, "Diskursethik und lateinamerikanische Befreiungsethik. Zwei Varianten universalistischer Ethik," in W. Lesch und A. Bondolfi, eds., *Theologische Ethik im Diskurs. Eine Einführung* (Tübingen/Basel: UTB Franke, 1995), 237-258.

the competence in the thematization of ultimate sense and meaning (philosophy). It is true that the theoretical option of faith can facilitate the intellectual and ethical conversion of the subject, but only to the extent that its own discourse and its own community of subjects do not excuse themselves from such epistemological necessity. In interdisciplinary collaboration, the meaning about the human is to be discovered in the subject's capacity and willingness for intellectual and ethical conversion.

The *Humanum* in the Syntactic Dimension of Language

The *humanum* is also accessible in the "structural articulation of language."[25] While the syntax of everyday language follows general rules, the collaboration among disciplines concerns the "articulation of scientific language in the manner of its method." The sciences do not only have existential and theoretical options. They also have special methods and structures of articulation guided by norms derived from the accumulated experience of the scientific community that has devoted itself to a specific field of study.

By referring it to accumulated experience, scientific language, no matter how partial and specialized, is constituted in reference to the ultimate concerns, preoccupations and meaning of the wider scientific community. It is not spontaneous like everyday language but highly methodic, not isolated but integrally part of a rational community. In this sense, the syntax of scientific language has a transcendental nucleus or, better yet, transcendental potential.

This nucleus in the structure of scientific language is also crucial in interdisciplinarity. The methodical articulation of knowledge gained from a variety of theoretical and existential options of the collaborating subjects can lead to a conflict of interpretations and positions. Interests can easily hide behind the conflict and fuel the danger of ideologization. Hence it is necessary that this "conflict of interpretations" be taken into account not only in an unhindered way but also by way of what Scannone would call "dialectical discernment," a form of discernment that every science should engage in as its

25. J. C. Scannone, "Teologia e interdisciplinaridad: Presencia del saber teologico en el ambito de las Ciencias," 71-73.

"functional specialty."

The more a science makes reference to its transcendental potential for discernment, the better it is in a position to adjudicate the conflict of interpretation and articulation, and pave the way for a diverse yet complementary interpretations and articulations. The more the conflict is adjudicated and resolved by way of a dialogical discernment among the collaborating sciences, the more interdisciplinarity will lead to the solution of fundamental problems or the achievement of a more comprehensive understanding of human reality. In the syntax of scientific language we have the third and perhaps the last coordinate for the interdisciplinary discovery and understanding of the *humanum*.

By way of summary, we have identified the search for the human as the "system of coordinates" so that interdisciplinary collaboration becomes not only possible but also fruitful. This system consists of searching for the *humanum* in the semantic, pragmatic and syntactic coordinates of interdisciplinary language. The semantic coordinate facilitates the integration of partial and distinct horizons of truth and meaning about the human into more comprehensive and more ultimate horizons. The pragmatic coordinate pertains to existential interests and theoretical options of every subject and scientific community, and the necessity of intellectual and ethical conversion of all involved. The syntactic coordinate refers to the structure of scientific language as always open to conflict of interpretations and articulations yet can be adjudicated by the dialectical discernment of the collaborating sciences.

Critical Implications to Catholic Social Teaching

What fundamental implications are at hand if church social teaching, and the subjects that derive their praxis from it, would wish to engage in a truly interdisciplinary investigation and collaboration?

1.Interdisciplinary collaboration encourages every discipline to encounter "points of view that are more adequate for the comprehension of concrete reality" even if these do not totally agree with the existing theories of the collaborating disciplines. In the encounter, "hypothesis that has demonstrated fecundity" is allowed

to benefit other ambits of knowledge. More importantly, each of the discipline is invited "to amplify its points of view, redefine its categories in order to open them for the comprehension and integration of other dimensions of reality." Every discipline is then led to the "search for new hypothesis compatible to points of view that are more amplified than those of its own proper specialty."[26] Interdisciplinarity, in effect, places a particular science, be it theological or non-theological, in a position where it can revise its presuppositions and even surpass its own original ingenuity.

The interdisciplinary model we have outlined offers the church's social teaching a critical standpoint from which it can identify and address its limitations, incoherence and poverty of resources in a manner not possible from within its own tradition. Why, for instance, is "a rigorous reflection on financial ethics missing given the fact that the development of the financial sphere has been such an important factor in the emergence of modern economies."[27] In interdisciplinary collaboration the body of teaching can thus enter into relationships of critique, alliance, or synthesis with other equally important accounts of social morality or social ethics. As a type of social ethics of a religious narrative about the reign of God and of a moral community that claims to have a universal vision and mission, the social teaching cannot avoid from a broader exchange of diverse cultural articulations about the universal values of human dignity, peace, justice and integrity of creation.[28]

2. Interdisciplinary collaboration would help bring into sharper focus the theological character of Catholic social teaching.

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26. Ibid., p. 74.

27. Jef van Gerwen, "Global Markets and Global Justice? Catholic Social Teaching and Finance Ethics," in *Catholic Social Thought: Twilight or Renaissance?*, eds. Jonathan Boswell, Frank McHugh and Johan Verstraeten (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 201. While we find in Catholic Social Teaching "a number of relevant references with regard to the functioning of financial markets and institutions," there is "no systematic treatment of money, savings and investment, banking and financial markets." See Ibid., 201-219.

28. See, among other initiatives, the global ethic project building on the rich heritage of world religions in Hans Küng, *Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Ethic* (New York: Crossroad, 1991); Hans Küng and Karl-Josef Kuschel (eds.), *A Global Ethic: The Declaration of the Parliament of the World's Religions* (London: SCM Press, 1993); and the document issued by InterAction Council, "In

As a field of moral theology (CA 55), it focuses its sight on the reciprocal interpellation between the Gospel and real life, particularly on the practical level of evangelization and human development. Such interpellation necessitates the strong bonds that are anthropological, religious, and spiritual in nature and the collaboration of the sciences that deal with them (cf. *Guidelines* 5).

The *humanum* can be more discovered and understood in the reciprocity of the Gospel and real life if revelation is understood as an open and ongoing personal encounter between God and humanity rather than "frozen forms of encounters" or "semantic containers" of God's word.[29] While the power of the Gospel to project an alternative world through the canonical written texts could never be underestimated, the revelatory potential of non-canonical or non-written texts (e.g., forms of social praxis, liberation movements, religious worship and rites, liturgy, music, the arts, etc.) should be equally considered as possible loci of God's ongoing revelation about the *humanum*.

It is true that "biblical narratives allow us to imagine our social reality" and can enrich "the meaning of the classic principles of Catholic social teaching."[30] But solving the social question of today is not just a matter of communicating a normative theory of society or of propagating an effective economic model founded on or inspired by the Gospel vision. More urgently, it "also calls for specific ethical and religious values as well as changes of mentality, behavior and structures" (CA 61). It also likewise involves the moral discernment that leads to appropriate choices, forms of praxis and projects that may eliminate injustices and favor the political, economic

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Search of Global Ethical Standards: Report on the Conclusions and Recommendations by a High-Level Expert Group," (Vienna, March 1996) in http://www. interactioncouncil.org/meetings/report/m961.pdf (accessed 09.15.2006).

29. See Mary Elsbernd and Reimund Bieringer, "Interpreting the Signs of the Times in Light of the Gospel: Vision and Normativity of the Future," Paper delivered during the International Experts Seminar on *Gaudium et Spes* at the Catholic University of Leuven in 2004.

30. Johan Verstraeten, "Re-thinking Catholic Social Teaching as Tradition," in *Catholic Social Thought: Twilight or Renaissance?,* eds. J. Boswell, F. McHugh and J. Verstraeten, 59-77; 72 and 74.

and cultural transformations demanded of the dignity of human beings (cf. *Guidelines*, 8).

If the social teaching lives up to its interdisciplinary dimension, there is reasonable hope that even "the many people who profess no religion will also contribute to providing the social question with the necessary ethical foundation." In the same vein, the people of the great world religions can offer to the social teaching the witness of their convictions about human dignity and building a society worthy of human beings (CA 60).

3. The interdisciplinary search for the *humanum* would help update the "intellectual quality" of the social teaching tradition.[31] A more international and interdisciplinary co-operation between social scientists and theologians, to include significant Third World countries and interests, would certainly better contribute to a normative examination of the human or anti-human dynamics and features of current social structures, institutions and systems. The classic "Catholic" principles of the common good, the role of the State, social justice, right to private ownership, among others, need serious re-thinking "on the ground of post-metaphysical thinking because society is not an organic unity with one powerful center but a structure of sub-systems and competing interpretations."[32] The *conditio humana* of the 21st century being brought about by globalization seems to suggest that faith communities should prepare themselves to look beyond their immediate surroundings and cast their gaze on the wider inter-connecting moral if not spiritual horizons of people, not to mention the equally important challenge of producing "citizens of the world" in view of the increasing deficiencies of nation-states to address global challenges.[33]

As a tool for such type of Christian formation, the social teaching needs scientifically validated and more comprehensive

31. Staf Hellemans, "Is There a Future for a Catholic Social Teaching After the Waning of Ultramontane Mass Catholicism?" in Ibid., 13-32.

32. Walter Lesch, "Towards an Ethics of Reconstruction and Mediation: Christian Social Ethics in Dialogue with Discourse Ethics," in Ibid., 79-92; here 89.

33. See Dominador Bombongan, Jr., "Globalization, Cosmopolitanism and Theological Education/Formation" found in this volume.

understanding, for instance, of globalization and poverty or of human need and identity.[34] For example, while in the past years the social teaching has powerfully argued against the sin in political structures and economic systems, its ethical theory and method have yet to shed light into the "structures of human choices" vis-à-vis "human needs." Given the economic, financial and ecological consequences of globalization, "attitudes and behaviors are for the most part determined by structures which have become less open to personal choice." For instance, "structures of work and spending compel whole societies into activities that maintain a system dominated by economic interests" thereby producing "corresponding social networks (that) have become constraints of action." The Christian practice of solidarity and compassion, to cite another example, may stand to lose its prophetic power if it continues to be "formatted by the everyday capitalist work, commodity circulation and standardized welfare practices."[35] If the social teaching's ethical reflection is able to cut through these social and cultural determinants of consciousness and behavior, it will gain fresh ethical insights on human identity and provide "some opening towards other conditions of possibility for a better life."[36]

By engaging in interdisciplinary collaboration the social teaching can likewise make a critical appreciation of the humanizing elements in the paradigms and viewpoints of the sciences even as it can make a judgment of the anti-human intuitions which may be found in their presuppositions. Take for instance the relationship between Catholic social teaching and economic discourse. The greatest contribution that the social teaching can make "for a re-

34. From the abundance of scientific studies on current global issues, one can think of, for instance, L. Doyal and I. Gough, *A Theory of Human Need* (New York: Guilford Press, 1991); J. Mander and E. Goldsmith (eds.), *The Case Against the Global Economy* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1997); and J. Coleman and W. Ryan (eds.), *Globalization and Catholic Social Thought: Present Crisis, Future Hope* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2005).

35. See Ferdinand Dagmang, "Systems, Habitus and Ethics" found in this volume.

36. Ferdinand Dagmang, "Identities Amidst Connections and Disconnections," *Hapag* 3 (2006): 53-103; here, 102-103. Also see his paper "Systems, Habitus and Ethics" found in this volume.

conceptualization of economic discourse lies in its capability to answer the question: is it possible to humanize the economy and, if so, how can this be achieved?" In other words, "is it possible to devise a model of market capable of including all human beings and of every aspect of the fulfillment of the integral person?"[37] An interdisciplinary answer to this fundamental question will not only enrich the social teachings' view of the *humanum* as well as its theory of integral human development. It will also have serious implications to the ethos of the scientific community, particularly those investigating upon the economy, in view of its penchant to accept value judgments as well as ends and dispositions as marginal to scientific enquiry.[38]

4. Interdisciplinarity would make possible the transformation of church social teaching into a "valid instrument of evangelization" (CA 54) in the social, political, economic, cultural, and ecological spheres of reality. While the Catholic Social Teaching no longer functions as an ecclesiastical ideology, it should likewise resist the temptation of being simply in the business of repairing the status quo because certain norms and criteria have failed or are not implemented in the face of complex and deeply rooted problems. Neither should it fall into the trap of simply indemnifying the project of human development marked by mistakes and failures nor act as one that monitors the ethical and anthropological errors in the praxis and projects of lay people, of society and of the scientific community.

To be truly a valid instrument, it has to shed off its pretensions of being complete and be a serious partner in discursive and rigorous communication with the other instruments of evangelization given birth by newer forms of faith-praxis or other ways of transforming the world. Here two things appear relevant. Following W. Lesch, the social teaching tradition has, first of all, "to take part in the process of democratic deliberation on the basis of empirical evidence." This is not to say that "religious convictions and anthropological presuppositions do not matter" but they rather have "to be articulated

37. Stefano Zamagni, "Humanising the Economy on the Relationship between Catholic Social Teaching and Economic Discourse," in *Catholic Social Thought: Twilight or Renaissance?,* eds. J. Boswell, F. McHugh and J. Verstraeten, 149-169; here, 151.

38. Ibid., 149-151.

in a language that reaches those who are not convinced by religious faith." Indeed, by also addressing these social documents "to all people of good will," the clear intent of the magisterium is to arouse moral commitments also of non-Christians and non-believers alike. But "the social binding force of moral commitments" can only be had "to the extent to which such commitments can be justified by appeal to universalisably good reasons."[39] There is therefore no privileged access to truth in matters of society, economy and politics. Only by participating in a discursive search for consensus about the validity of prescriptive claims will the social teaching become a communicative instrument of evangelization.

Second, interdisciplinary collaboration forces the social teaching to give particular attention again to those instruments centered on a "special concern for the poor and victims of oppression," "the biblical themes of liberation and freedom, and the urgency of its practical realization" (LN III: 3-4).[40] Preaching the good news is constituted by "acting" on behalf of justice and "participating" in the transformation of the world (Synod of Bishops, 1971).[41] Hence, interdisciplinary collaboration should not only rely on academic dialogue with economics, social sciences and other relevant disciplines but also count on the "practical expertise and social experience as constitutive elements of social ethics." To discover the *humanum* in these rich and diverse modes of "acting" and "participating" is not simply to refine ethical standards and apply them according to established practices, but for the social teaching tradition "to become a truly life-oriented, and hence, humane social thought."[42]

5. Interdisciplinary collaboration would also challenge the social teaching to engage in a serious interdisciplinary reflection of

39. Walter Lesch, "Towards an Ethics of Reconstruction and Mediation," 90-91.

40. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Libertatis Nuntius* (1984). See http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19840806_theology-liberation_en.html (accessed 09.16.2006); henceforth LN.

41. Synod of Bishops 1971, *Justice in the World* (1971). See http://www.osjspm.org/majordoc_justicia_in_mundo_offical_test.aspx (accessed 09.16.2006).

42. Alois Joh Buch, "Catholic Social Thought in Transition," in Ibid., 141-147; here,143.

Christian praxis in the light of the word of God. Not too recently the magisterium seems to have pointed to this direction when it says that "at the crossroads where Christian life and conscience come into contact with the real world, is to be found the practical and as it were experiential dimension of this teaching" (CA 59). At best, however, this practical dimension seems to simply mean the task of applying the body of principles, criteria and norms to varying and changing situations.

In this scheme of things, particularly as advocated by the Compendium, praxis is a mere application or consequence of theory, and while the hierarchy generates the teaching, the lay faithful and their associations are to implement them. This neat arrangement of duties reflects a magisterial concern, which is to guarantee forms of praxis that are at once integrally human and evangelical. Praxis is integrally human when "political lines and decisions, projects and program adopted by different social agents" conform with "the dignity of the person" because the person has "inviolable ethical requirements" (*Guidelines* 55). It is integrally evangelical when it manifests a "truly Christian sensitivity" coming from a "conscience well formed according to the ethical demands of the Gospel" and "careful study of various magisterial pronouncements" (*Guidelines* 54). In other words, the over-arching concern when it comes to praxis is simply on morality of means (cf. LC 77-78).[43]

While no one can argue about the importance of the morality of means, what leaves much to be desired is its historical efficacy. Means should measure up to the profound and innovative changes demanded by problematic situations, structures, systems and institutions. Given that the social question in our era has become thoroughly global and complex and has also continued to persist for more than a hundred years without any sign of being effectively addressed by all of humanity, the imperative of historical efficacy is without doubt the voice of the Spirit.

The social teaching tradition can arrest this deficiency by way

43. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Libertatis Conscientiae* (1986). See http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19860322_freedom-liberation_en.html (accessed 09.16.2007); henceforth LC.

of interdisciplinary examination. It has to constantly arrive at a scientific knowledge of the efficacy of the forms of praxis and experiences "of those who work directly for evangelization and for the advancement of the poor and the oppressed" (LN XI: 13), particularly those that highlight the ways on how those who have been caricatured as "abused victims" or "grateful beneficiaries" of colonization have "transcended these images and wrested interpretation from the invaders, starting processes of self-discovery, appropriation and subversion."[44] It is incumbent that, as tradition-constituted, the social teaching of the Church should also learn from historical projects of current movements and groups that are engaged in the broad and vast social, economic, political, cultural, technological, ecological and other fields (cf. CA 60). These may or may not be inspired by the Judaeo-Christian narrative nor mandated by ecclesiastical authorities.[45]

Such "scientific knowledge of the possible strategies for the transformation of society is a presupposition for any plan capable of attaining the ends proposed" and a "proof of the seriousness of the commitment" (LN VII: 3). An interdisciplinary reflection on the forms of praxis on the social question, particularly those that make a preferential option for the world of the poor,[46] is most "necessary for the doctrinal and pastoral reflection of the church" (LN XI: 13).

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44. See, for instance, the "hermeneutics of resistance" as proposed by Daniel Franklin Pilario, "Mapping Postcolonial Theory: Appropriations in Contemporary Theology," *Hapag* 3 (2006): 9-51; here, 49. This proposal can be justified by the fact that nowadays the global business community, through its language of corporate social responsibility, "may make use of ethically correct principles" but only to "present an acceptable face and as a way of advancing their private interests," thus gaining competitive edge over the others. See Simona Beretta, "Ordering Global Finance: Back to Basics," in *Catholic Social Thought: Twilight or Renaissance?*, eds. J. Boswell, F. McHugh and J. Verstraeten, 221-238.

45. An example is a theology of resistance based on the narratives of indigenous peoples, says Pilario in "Mapping Postcolonial Theory," *Hapag* 3 (2006): 49-50. For an example of a praxis inspired by Christian faith, see the "economy of communion" of the Focolare Movement as discussed in Luigino Bruni, "Economy of Communion: Between Market and Solidarity," in *Catholic Social Thought: Twilight or Renaissance?*, eds. J. Boswell, F. McHugh and J. Verstraeten, 239-248.

46. In my unpublished doctoral dissertation, "New Wine into New Wineskins? A Reconstruction of the Social Teaching of the Church: Discourse, Foundations, and Method," (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 1996), 454-461, I argued for a

Conclusion

This paper has argued that Catholic social teaching has a future as a valid instrument of evangelization in the new millennium only to the extent to which it courageously responds to the challenge of interdisciplinary collaboration in the search for the *humanum* and is open to all that this would demand and imply.

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critical recovery of the *sensus fidelium* in the liberating praxis of preferential option for the poor being an actually lived faith-conviction. Others have called it "the epistemic privilege of the excluded other." See Roland Tuazon, "Narrating Christian Ethics from the Margins" found in this volume; and Enrique Dussel, *Etica de la liberacion en la edad de la globalizacion y de la exclusión* (Madrid: Editorial Trotta, 1998).