Reinterpreting Democracy Through Zizioulas' Ontology of Personhood

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ABSTRACT

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In the landscape of modern theology, John D. Zizioulas is noted for his contribution in retrieving the works of the Cappadocian Fathers in the areas of Trinitarian theology and ontology of personhood. Disenchanted by the predominance of Augustinian "Substantialism", which he claims to place too much emphasis on the unity of God, Zizioulas turns to the ideas of the Cappadocian Fathers in order to offer a "Personalist" approach in Trinitarian theology. Such an approach, in turn, leads to the development of a particular ontology of personhood, in which Person is understood both as hypostasis and ekstasis. This article appropriates Zizioulas' conception of person to provide an ontological justification for the idea of democracy. Zizioulas' conception of "Person" as hypostasis can form the ontological ground for the notion of equality, whereas his idea of "Person" as ekstasis offers the ground for the cultivation of a democratic political culture, in which communion with the "Poor and Suffering Other" is not simply a theological possibility, but a civic duty.

With the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War in the twilight of the twentieth century, liberal democracy was widely perceived as the model of governance *par excellence*. Calls for democratization echoed in many countries. The dream for global peace under the blanket of democracy, however, was quickly shattered by the surging wave of identity politics. As this frequently manifests in lethal acts of violence which beset the process of democratization, proponents of democracy cannot but engage in the common endeavor to tackle these challenges and provide a stronger ground for democracy. Due to its faith in the Incarnate God whose salvific work takes place in the flow of history, Christianity and the Catholic Church cannot but be involved in this collective act of revitalizing democracy. Such an involvement can materialize either into a movement to support pluralism and democracy or in the form of a theological reflection. As it seeks to offer a theological justification for democracy, the aim of this article is clearly the latter.

To achieve this aim, this article seeks to unearth the riches of early Christian theology and demonstrate its significance in helping democracy counter the challenges posed by identity politics. As a starting point, it will look into the work of John D. Zizioulas' on the Cappadocian Fathers' Trinitarian theology. According to Zizioulas', the Trinitarian theology of the Cappadocian Fathers generates an ontology which defines personhood as both *hypostasis* and *ekstasis*. These twin concepts will be appropriated in this article to present an ontological justification for the idea of democracy. Firstly, it will demonstrate that Zizioulas' conception of "Person" as *hypostasis* can form the ontological ground for the notion of equality. Secondly, it will show that the idea of "Person" as *ekstasis* is equally important for it calls for the cultivation of a democratic political culture, in which communion with the "Poor and Suffering Other" is not simply a theological possibility, but a civic duty.

FROM A "SUBSTANTIALIST" TO A "PERSONALIST" THEOLOGY

Zizioulas' attempt to retrieve the Cappadocian Fathers' ontology of personhood stems from his initiative to offer an alternative to the "Substantialist" approach in Trinitarian theology. According to Zizioulas', Trinitarian theology in the Western Church has for far too long been predetermined by Augustinian "Substantialism".[1] The term refers to a specific approach in Trinitarian theology that is influenced by Greek ontology in such a way that it describes the being of God by giving ontological priority to substance (*ousia*) over personal relations.[2] Consequently, as Zizioulas' contends, Western Trinitarian theology displays a tendency to overemphasize the unity or oneness of God at the expense of

forming a sufficiently deep understanding of the relations amongst the persons of the Trinity. For Zizioulas', the focus on the oneness of God has unwittingly made otherness secondary to oneness.

The tendency to subordinate otherness, in Zizioulas' view, has serious ramifications for the vitality of the Church. Given the prevalence of "Substantialism" in the Western Church, Zizioulas' observes that "the West always started with the one God and then moved to the Trinity, whereas the East followed the opposite course … [Quite often, this] has amounted to the West's beginning and ending up with the one God and never actually arriving at the Trinity".[3] Zizioulas' claims that such a failure makes the Church bland and dour, for it exaggerated the importance of unity and underrated the worth and richness of otherness. Ecclesiologically, this manifests in a penchant for bestowing ontological priority to the universal church over the local church.[4] Not infrequently, this means the imposition of the view of the universal Church on the local Church.[5] As the emergence of local initiatives is curbed, the local Church gradually loses its otherness, and with that, the vibrancy of its heritage.

Against this backdrop, Zizioulas' calls for the retrieval of a "Personalist" approach to the doctrine of God. To achieve this aim, he turns mainly to the ideas of the Cappadocian Fathers, namely St. Basil the Great, bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (c.330-379), St. Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 330-89/90), who became bishop for a brief a time in Sassima, Cappadocia and then Archbishop at Constantinople, and St. Gregory of Nyssa (c. 335-394), the younger brother of St. Basil.[6] In the history of Christianity, these three Church Fathers are revered mainly for

their decisive contribution in giving the final shape of the doctrine of the Trinity.[7] The importance of their idea was such that Zizioulas' regards their influence as a "theological and philosophical originality" that "sealed the entire history of Christian thought" and "ignited 'a radical reorientation of classical Greek thought'".[8]

The Cappadocians left their indelible mark in the history of Christian doctrine primarily through their redefinition of the term *hypostasis*. Prior to their intervention, in Greek speaking Christianity the terms '*ousia*' and '*hypostasis*' essentially meant the same thing.[9] Both referred to a general metaphysical category which described the unchanging being or what is underlying and fundamental within each individual thing.[10] As a result, the Church could not find a proper formulation to express its faith in the Trinitarian God. When the Cappadocians burst on the theological landscape, however, they provided a breakthrough by distinguishing the terms '*hypostasis*' and '*ousia*', so that the two would no longer be regarded as synonyms. From then on, the Latin word '*substantia*' was translated into Greek as *ousia* (in English, it would either be 'substance' or 'nature'), whereas the term '*hypostasis*' would mean 'person'.[11] By doing so, they disassociated the term '*hypostasis*' from '*ousia*' and identified it with '*prosopon*' – a term which is per definition relational. "This meant that from now on a relational term entered into ontology and, conversely, that an ontological category such as *hypostasis* entered the relational categories of *existence*. *To be* and *to be in relation* becomes identical."[12] Henceforth, the term person acquired an ontological significance, and this is why Zizioulas' defines his theological approach as "Personalism".

For this redefinition to be successful, however, the Cappadocians had to be able to provide a satisfying answer to the problem of reconciling the idea of three persons and the oneness of God. To solve this riddle, the Cappadocians suggested that *ousia* (substance) or *physis* (nature) is a general category, whereas hypostases refer to concrete individuals.[13] This allows them to speak of God as one substance and three hypostases through the analogy of three men. Such an analogy, however, could have been easily misunderstood as tritheism.

To avoid it, the Cappadocians carefully delineated the being of man and the being of God. God and man are differentiated by the eternality of God's existence and the temporality of human existence.[14] As created being are bound by time and space, humans share the human nature, which pre-exists before each particular individual. The divine nature, in contrast, does not precede the three divine persons, because God is beyond the confines of time and space.[15] Since God did not have a beginning, the three divine persons do not exist prior to their divine nature, but coincide with it.[16] As Zizioulas' affirms, "God is not first one and then three, but simultaneously One and Three".[17] Unlike humans who are divided into individuals, the three persons of the Trinity are united in an unbreakable communion. None of the divine persons can be conceived without the others. More importantly, this shows that communion is itself ontological.

Zizioulas' regards the solution provided by the Cappadocians as an "ontological revolution". By redefining the term "hypostasis", the Cappadocians presented a definitive solution to the puzzle of reconciling the oneness of God and the faith in the Trini-

tarian God. More importantly, however, they revealed that to be relational is inherent in the personhood of God.[18] This was possible because the Cappadocians identified God's being not with substance (*ousia*), but with person (*hypostasis*), and that is the person of the Father. Zizioulas' would utilise this breakthrough as the foundation of his "personalist" approach to the Trinity and his ontology of personhood, which encompasses both divine and human personhood.

DIVINE PERSONHOOD

Zizioulas' concept of personhood begins with his conceptualisation of God the Father as Divine Person. He asserts that by redefining the meaning of *hypostasis*, the Cappadocians rescued Christianity from being hijacked by Hellenistic monistic philosophy which attributed God's being to one substance and salvaged the Biblical conception of God as a Person.[19] For the Cappadocians, as Zizioulas' contends, it is God as person that forms the divine substance of the one God, and that person is the *hypostasis* of the Father.[20] In short, divine substance is constituted of the personal existence of God the Father. For Zizioulas', this point is of absolute importance. "If we allow for anything beyond the Father as ultimate reality," he asserts, "we must bear in mind that biblical monotheism is at stake … in the Bible, God is the Father."[21]

For Zizioulas', this paradigm shift entails understanding God's being in terms of 'how God is', instead of '*what* God is'. To ask '*what* God is' means inquiring the nature of God's being in general. It cannot be otherwise because in Greek philosophical parlance, the question of *what* refers to the substance, or *ousia* of a being.[22] Citing Gregory Nazianzus, Zizioulas' argues that humans cannot possibly know 'what' God is since that would entail a mastery of God.[23] It is possible, however, for humans to comprehend '*how* God is'. "God is God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit – these persons indicate *how* God is," writes Zizioulas'.[24] In other words, '*how* God is' can be grasped from seeing the relations between the persons in the Trinity.[25]

What becomes clear by asking the question of '*how* God is', for Zizioulas', is that causality in God's being belongs not to substance (*ousia*), but to the *hypostasis* of God the Father. To say that causality belongs to a divine substance means that creation exists because it participates in the true being of God.[26] This Hellenistic account of creation, in Zizioulas' observation, is problematic since that would mean God and creation are somehow joined with an "ontological affinity". "This would make God a Creator by necessity and the world not ultimately other than God".[27] To safeguard the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*, the Cappadocians attributed causality not to a divine substance, but to the person of the Father, who creates out of love and freedom.[28] God the Father as a person, therefore, is the "*personal ontological origination*" who caused the other two persons – the Son and the Holy Spirit – to be distinct hypostases.[29] This is an act of personal freedom by God the Father as the *arche* (source) in the Trinity. It is with this personal freedom as well that God the Father created the world.

The last point is of particular significance. As the foregoing discussion reveals, Zizioulas' account of the Trinity emphasises the unbreakable relations between the persons. The point about the *monarchia* of the Father, however, reveals something foundational about the meaning of "Person". The person of the God the Father reveals that

personhood by definition entails generating otherness, while simultaneously being in communion. Communion with otherness, however, does not entail the disintegration of the Person. Personhood, therefore, consists of two interlocking notions, namely an existential individuation of being or particularity and self-transcendence towards the other. The first refers to the idea of *hypostasis*, whereas the second to *ekstasis*. It is these two concepts that form the heart of Zizioulas' understanding of human personhood.

HUMAN PERSONHOOD

The foregoing discussion Zizioulas' notion of divine personhood forms the backdrop of his concept of human personhood. For Zizioulas', human personhood is ontologically derived from divine personhood, since humans are made in the image of God (Gen 1:28). "Because man is made in the image of God," he asserts, "we can find analogies between God and man, that are based in the relationships of the persons of God. The doctrine of the Trinity gives us the truth of our own existence."[30] For this reason, Zizioulas' argues that human personhood should not be understood in terms of being a personality, which denotes a complex set of natural, psychological, or moral qualities. Conversely, as it is the case with the persons of the Trinity, a human person is – and can only be – conceived insofar as it "*relates to*".[31] To be in relation, therefore, is just as ontologically constitutive of human personhood as it is of divine personhood.

As human personhood is relational, it cannot be understood without two interlocking characteristics: *ekstasis* and *hypostasis*. For Zizioulas', personhood implies not merely 'openness of being' to other beings, but '*ek-stasis*' or "a movement towards communion".[32] This is possible because human personhood implies the freedom and love to transcend beyond the boundaries of the 'self'. A human person is simultaneously a gift of love and freedom *from* other persons and a gift of love and freedom *for* other persons. Human personhood, therefore, exists insofar as the person is in communion with others. This communion, however, does not necessarily imply that the human person will disappear, because he/she is also a *hypostasis*. "Personhood," he writes, "is about hypostasis, that is, the claim to *uniqueness* in the absolute sense of the term".[33]

Ekstasis and *hypostasis* as two interlocking aspects of human personhood, therefore, are not contradictory. On the contrary, "[S]tasis' (being 'as it stands', as it is 'in itself') is realised in personhood both as *ek-stasis* (communion, relatedness) and as *hypo-stasis* (particularity, uniqueness)".[34] In this light, particularity or uniqueness and communion with the "Other" do not threaten each other, but point to the fullness of human personhood. In Zizioulas' framework, this appears when a person successfully performs the leap from 'the hypostasis of biological existence' to 'the hypostasis of ecclesial existence'.

For Zizioulas', humans are born as the hypostasis of biological existence. He explains that the birth of a man is always the product of a communion between two people.[35] A human, however, is not born as a person, but rather as an individual.[36] This is because a human is tied to two passions, which destroy the finality towards which the human hypostasis is oriented. Firstly, a man is tied by a passion, which Zizioulas' defines as "ontological necessity". As the human hypostasis is tied to "the natural instinct,

to an impulse which is necessary, a man subsists not as freedom, but as necessity.[37] Secondly, a man is entrapped by a passion, which Zizioulas' calls "individualism". Here, Zizioulas' own explanation deserves to be quoted at length:

> The biological constitution of the human hypostasis, fundamentally tied as it is to the necessity of its 'nature', ends in the perpetuation of this 'nature' through the creation of bodies, that is, of hypostatic unities which affirm their identity as *separation* from unities or 'hypostases'. The body, which is born as a biological hypostasis, behaves like the fortress of an ego, like a new 'mask' which hinders the hypostasis from becoming a person, that is, from affirming itself as love and freedom.[38]

It is the biological constitution of the body as an individual, therefore, which hampers human beings from actualising their personhood.[39] Ultimately, this materialises in death, which Zizioulas' considers as the ultimate barrier for human beings from actualising their personhood. Death is thus not merely biological.[40] It is ontological, for death deforms personhood and turns it into nothingness.

The main cause behind the tragedy of human as the hypostasis of biological existence is sin. For Zizioulas', sin needs to be construed primarily as the perversion of human personhood.[41] It entered as idolatry, which is "an *ekstasis* of communion with the created world alone".[42] Consequently, sin ruptures communion between human and God and between the created world and God, for humans are the mediator between creation and God. The presence of sin in the fallen state of existence turns the human capacity for *ekstasis* into *apostasis* (distance) and difference (*diaphora*) into division (*diaire-*

sis).[43] This is why in the postlapsarian world otherness is feared and the human community is divided. Sin begets division.

As sin is construed as the rupture of communion, salvation consists in the restoration of human personhood. Salvation, for Zizioulas', takes place when the 'hypostasis of biological existence' is transformed and regenerated into a new 'mode of existence', namely the 'hypostasis of ecclesial existence'. This new mode of existence is the salvation of mankind because it enables the restoration of human communion with God and with other humans.

The birth of this new mode of existence comes through baptism.[44] In Zizioulas' view, baptism is of absolute importance because it is "a new birth, not from below or from 'blood from the will of the flesh nor from the will of man' (John 1:13), that is, from nature, but 'from above' (John 3:3), that is, from the Spirit (John 3:5-6)".[45] What this means is that through baptism, man is incorporated in Christ. As Zizioulas' asserts, the essence of baptism is the "adoption of man by God, the identification of his hypostasis with the hypostasis of the Son of God".[46] He can thenceforth "subsist", since his hypostasis is no longer based on his biological-ontological necessity, but on a personal relationship with God through the hypostasis of Christ. It is this personal relationship that affirms man as a person and allows him to escape the perils of individualism and death and enter into communion with God.[47] Baptism, for Zizioulas', is therefore the constitutive sine qua non of salvation, as it breaks open the condition of possibility for man to participate in the life of God (*theosis*).[48]

Given the centrality of baptism in Zizioulas' schema, it goes without saying that this

new hypostasis is realised in history only in the Church. For Zizioulas', the Church is first and foremost a "mode of existence", which brings man into a relationship with the created world in a way that is not determined by ontological necessity.[49] It is the Church that makes it possible for men and women to be persons. The constitutive role of the Church in the attainment of human personhood stems from the function of the Church, i.e. incorporating humans into the corporate body of Christ. For Zizioulas', this does not mean the dissolution of human personhood, but rather its fulfilment. In fact, it is its salvation because unity with Christ means the participation of the human person in the Son's relation with the Father.[50] The fullness of this communion and otherness materialises in the Eucharist, because the particularity or new being that Baptism gives is given its fulfilment by communion in the Eucharist. "What baptism initiates, therefore, the Eucharist fulfils".[51]

For Zizioulas', therefore, there is no personhood outside the Church (*extra ecclesia nulla personas*). He describes the new 'mode of existence' as the hypostasis of ecclesial being for this very reason. In his schema, it is only as a member of the Church can a human transcend the exclusivism of his/her ontological necessity which leads to individualism and death. The Church, as the corporate body of Christ in the Eucharistic communion, therefore, is for Zizioulas' the "exclusion of exclusion itself, that is, of those things that involve rejection and division".[52]

COMMUNION WITH THE "OTHER": A THEOLOGICAL POSSIBILITY AND A POLITICAL DUTY

Zizioulas' Trinitarian theology reveals that the Christian conception of personhood is composed of two intertwining dimensions, namely *hypostasis* and *ekstasis*. These two concepts, I now contend, can be used to provide the foundation for envisaging a Christian politico-theological vision. To convey this point, in the following reflection I will seek to demonstrate that the notion of "Person" as *hypostasis* can be extrapolated to serve as an ontological justification for the creation of a democratic political structure which safeguards the idea of equality and that the idea of "Person" as *ekstasis* can be employed to call for a political culture, in which communion with the "Poor and Suffering Other" is understood as a civic duty.

Person as Hypostasis and a Democratic Political Order

Throughout his theological corpus, Zizioulas' incessantly insists that ontologically a human individual should be understood not as an *ousia* (substance), but rather as a *hypostasis* (person). The rationale for endowing ontological priority to *hypostasis* over *ousia* stems from his noble wish to safeguard the sacredness of human being as the *imago Dei*. According to Zizioulas', if a human being is ontologically defined as an *ousia*, he/she will be perceived merely as a constitutive element of the general human nature, instead of a distinct person. *Prima facie*, this appears as a benign philosophical discourse. Nonetheless, since ontological definition cannot but determine ethical conduct, what initially appears as nonthreatening can easily become lethal. The idea that a human being is merely a manifestation of the general human nature can easily lead to the erroneous thinking that he/she is replaceable, and thus, can be treated as an instrument to achieve a particular purpose. As Zizioulas' warns sternly, "Whosoever treats a person in such ways automatically turns him into a thing".[53] Surely, no human be-

ing desires and deserved to be treated as a means to an end.

To avoid this danger, Zizioulas' emphatically states that every human being is first and foremost a *hypostasis*. As a *hypostasis*, every human is unique, unrepeatable, and thus irreplaceable. Moreover, since the ontological origination of every human personhood is the Person of God the Father through the Person of Christ, every human being is also sacred.[54] Such an ontology, in turn, generates an ethical imperative not only to protect, but also to foster the flourishing of every human person, even if he/she appears as the "Other".[55] This ontology of personhood, I contend, forms the ontological justification for the notion of equality, which is at the heart of a democratic political order.

Nevertheless, before I proceed with my theoretical reflection, it is pertinent to raise a critical note towards Zizioulas' ontology of personhood. In his schema, Zizioulas' classifies humans into two categories, namely the 'hypostasis of biological existence' and the 'hypostasis of ecclesial existence'. As several commentators have argued, this rigid classification is problematic.[56] Without a doubt, Zizioulas' asserts that all humans can perform the leap from being an individual (the 'hypostasis of biological existence') to a person (the 'hypostasis of ecclesial existence').[57] Nonetheless, it is crucial to emphasise that for Zizioulas' human personhood can only be achieved through baptism. Human personhood exists only "*in ecclesia*".[58] Outside the Church there is no personhood (*extra ecclesia nulla personas*). Since Zizioulas' equates salvation with the attainment of human personhood, the claim *extra ecclesia nulla personas* inevitably suggests a literal interpretation of *extra ecclesia nulla salus* (outside the Church there is no salvation). A modification is therefore required.

To move away from Zizioulas' questionable theological anthropology, it is of paramount importance to acknowledge that every human is already a person prior to his/her baptism and formal entrance into the Church. As Zizioulas' correctly insists, human personhood is the result of a personal relationship with Christ. His oversight, however, is to claim that humans can only relate to Christ within the confines of the Church. To assert this claim is to give too much emphasis on the signifier, i.e. the Church as the sacrament of salvation, and too little credit to the signified, i.e. Christ as the saviour of all mankind.[59] Christ, after all, is greater than his Church. His Spirit transcends the formal boundaries of the institutional Church and touches upon the innermost sanctum of every human person. To modify Zizioulas' ontology of personhood, therefore, requires swaying the emphasis from ecclesiology to pneumatology.

To allow every human individual to be perceived as "Person" by virtue of his/her relation with Christ, it is necessary to underscore the universal presence of the Holy Spirit. The argument goes as follows: If God desires the salvation of all people through Christ (cf. 1Tim 2:4), and if the Holy Spirit is no other than the Spirit of Christ (John 7:37-39; 19:30, 34; 20:22), and if the Holy Spirit dwells in every man and woman by virtue of his/her created existence[60], then any acceptance of the Holy Spirit, whether explicit or implicit, is always an acceptance of Christ.[61] Such a point is affirmed in one of the foundational documents promulgated by the Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes*: "the Holy Spirit offers to all the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery" of Christ (art. 22). The grace of the Holy Spirit is always and everywhere invisibly active in

all men and women of goodwill, and because of this, they are all related to Christ. It is this relationship with Christ, whether explicit or implicit, that makes every man and woman a person.

As this matter is clarified, a question can now be raised: What is the political implication of affirming the personhood of every man and woman?

To affirm every man and woman is a person, who is in one way or another related to Christ, is to make the theological claim that every man and woman is equal before God. As the saviour of mankind, Christ, through his life, death and resurrection, has brought forth a new "mode of being", which allows all humans to participate in the divine life of the Triune God.[62] The bestowal of this new "mode of being" to all men and women is politically significant because it abolishes any human justification for stratification. That is why Paul insists, "Here there cannot be Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scyth'ian, slave, free man, but Christ is all and in all" (Col 3:11). As Pokorný explains, the word "here" refers to Pauline idea that the salvific work of Christ brings about a "new nature", in which men and women are in communion with Christ.[63] It is this very communion with Christ that forms the innermost core of human's new mode of being. Since this touches upon every man and woman, it follows that before God all men and women are equal.

This theological vision that all men and women as persons are equal before God provides the ontological foundation for the creation of a democratic political order in which everyone is equal before the law. Without a doubt, it is clear that in the history of political thought, the notion of equality before the law and the idea of democracy had already

emerged prior to the event of Jesus Christ. As formal historical record shows, democracy first came into being in ancient Athens. In this city-state, as politicians sought to mediate the bitter conflicts between wealthier landowners and poorer families, a new way of governing was invented.[64] Instead of allowing the nobility to decide on and enact the laws of the *polis* solely based on their interests, they proposed the idea of direct participation, whereby citizens met to debate, decide and enact the law.[65] As a result, lawmaking was no longer in the hands of the few elites who could justify any law that favoured them on the grounds of custom or brute force, but rather in the hands of those who could put forward a better argument for the sake of the common good.[66] Eventually, this mode of governance acquired a name of its own: *demokratia* or literally power in the hands of the *demos* – the people as a whole – and not simply in the hands of the nobility.[67] Their initiative brought about a revolution, because they championed the idea that everyone's judgment deserves equal weight in the shaping of a community and in the exercise of power.[68] Nevertheless, in spite of its novelty, it is crucial to remember that participation in political life in ancient Athens was limited to male citizens. Women, slaves and aliens were excluded. In other words, democracy in ancient Athens still treated certain people as the "Other".

By insisting upon the ontological equality of all men and women as persons, however, the justification for such an exclusion is immediately shattered. Paul's idea – which corresponds to Zizioulas' notion of "Person" as *hypostasis* – that every person is equal before God by virtue of his relationship with Christ means that in a political polity everyone should be treated equally before the law.

But, what does equality before the law means? It means that every person as a citizen is endowed with the same right and duty to participate in political processes. No person, insofar as he/she meets the requirements stipulated in the Constitution of the state can be excluded from its political processes. If a democratic political order commits such an act of exclusion, it effectively derails its legitimacy. In fact, it threatens its *raison d'être* because a democratic political order is only legitimate insofar as it is conducted in consultation with every person equally.

The notion of "Person" as *hypostasis*, therefore, is indispensable for the creation of a political structure that fosters democracy. To emphasise the importance of this point, a brief recapitulation can be helpful. If every human is a person by virtue of his/her explicit or implicit relationship with Christ, then every human is equal before God. If every human person is equal before God, then every human person should also be treated equally before the law. In concrete terms, this means that every person is endowed with the right and duty to participate in the shaping of the community and in the exercise of political power. This is the essence of the political structure which people now call "democracy". This is also why I contend that the Christian theological vision that every human is a person can provide the ontological justification for the creation of a democratic political order.

At this point, it is perhaps useful, however, to raise a critical question to test whether this proposal is sufficient to solve the riddle of otherness which becomes particularly enigmatic with the rise of religious puritanism and identity politics in the twenty-first century. Is safeguarding the participation of every person in a democratic political order sufficient? To provide an adequate answer to this question, it is necessary to briefly consider the state of democracy as it is present today.

In the modern world, with the expansion of political polities under the Westphalian model of nation-state, democracy gradually materialised into a representative form. Representative democracy, as it exists today, hinges upon a procedure known as voting. The rationale behind the use of voting is that this mechanism sustains the notion of equality by allowing citizens to exercise their political right through casting ballots to elect representatives, who will subsequently deliberate legislations for them.[69] In other words, voting ensures that the democratic government derives its authority from citizen electors, and that electors have effective control over the laws to which they are subject, and the persons who make, interpret and enforce those laws upon them.[70] Representative democracy, therefore, ensures the creation of a political structure, which minimises the possibility of exclusion.

In recent decades, however, it has become increasingly apparent that representative democracy alone as a political structure is insufficient. In the early years of the twenty-first century, the re-emergence of dualism materialises in the rise of identity politics in many nation-states across the globe. As Wiarda explains, identity politics are "political arguments emanating from the self-interested perspectives of self-identified societal interest groups … in ways that people's politics are shaped by these narrower (non-national) aspects of their identity.[71] With the rise of identity politics, the common good of the nation-state is threatened by the emergence of groups who call for the imple-

mentation of policies and laws, which only represent their narrow interests.[72] Hence, a democratic political structure alone, even if it has ensured the participation of all persons in political processes, in and of itself is apparently not enough to prevent exclusion. To be able to function optimally, it needs to be complemented by a political culture that is based on the idea that "Person" is also *ekstasis*.

Person as Ekstasis and a "Communing" Political Culture

The threat posed by the surging wave of identity politics in the early hours of the twenty-first century suggests that structure in and of itself is inadequate to sustain a democratic political order. For a democratic polity to function well, a democratic political culture also has to be cultivated amongst its inhabitants. In other words, democracy is not merely a *modus operandi*, but also a *modus vivendi* which requires constant nurturing. To aid this cultivation process, the notion of "Person" as *ekstasis* can offer a distinctively Christian contribution vis-à-vis the communing process of a political polity. As the term "communing" instead of "communion" suggests, insofar as this endeavour takes place in the fallen world, it remains a never-ending process marred by setbacks.

As Zizioulas' asserts, the concept of *ekstasis* essentially indicates a person's movement towards communion. As a *hypostasis*, a person is indeed ontologically a unique being. Nonetheless, since a person is also an *ekstasis*, he/she is also ontologically oriented towards communion with the "Other". "*To be and to be in relation* is identical," as Zizioulas' claims.[73] A person is thus is a *hypostasis* in search of communion with the "Other". This longing for communion, however, can only be fulfilled if a person is able

to transcend the boundaries of his/her individual existence. Without the act of transcending one's own cocoon, no communion is possible. Movement towards communion and transcending one's boundaries are two sides of the same coin called *ekstasis*.

To grasp the Christian meaning of *ekstasis*, it is helpful to turn to the teachings of Jesus as articulated in the Gospel. In the Gospel according to Luke, Jesus tells a parable widely known as the "Parable of the Good Samaritan" (Luke 10:25:31). It comes as a response to a question posed by a lawyer: "Who is my neighbour?" (Luke 10:29). The parable then tells the story of a man (presumably Jewish) assaulted on his way to Jericho and left for dead on the roadside. The parable states that a priest and a Levite walk down the same road but decide to pass him by. Afterwards, a Samaritan appears to help the wounded man. Up to this point, the parable seems to indicate that one's neighbour is the man in need. Jesus, however, had something else in mind. Much to the surprise of the lawyer, Jesus asks him, "Which of these three, do you think, proved neighbour to the man who fell among the robbers?" (Luke 10:36). By doing so, Jesus shifts the attention to the lawyer himself. Stunned by Jesus' question, the lawyer hesitantly answers, "The one who showed mercy on him?" (Luke 10:37).

Through this parable, Jesus challenges the prevailing mindset of the lawyer. One's neighbour is indeed a category that can be applied to anyone who is in need. But, the genius of the parable is to reveal that, first and foremost, the definition of one's neighbour needs to be applied not to others, but to oneself as a moral agent, who is capable either of being or of failing to be a neighbour to a suffering other.[74] With it comes a

clear moral imperative: One is called to be a neighbour to a suffering "Other".

Furthermore, this parable is particularly apt to challenge the worldview of puritanical religious believers because it juxtaposes the issue of religious purity with the commandment to love a suffering neighbour. The parable offers a detailed description of how the man "fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead" (Luke 10:30). Such a detailed narrative cannot but invoke the audience's imaginative empathy with the wounded man. It is against this backdrop that the priest and the Levite decides to walk on the other side of the road and pass by the wounded man. By doing so, they make a practical decision to ignore the suffering of the wounded man for the sake of keeping purity laws.[75] The audience was then given an unpleasant surprise when they heard that the third person was a Samaritan. After the mention of a priest and a Levite, they expected the third person to be an Israelite.[76] Instead, it was a Samaritan, whom the Jews hostilely viewed as the "Other". Here it is pertinent to note that the lawyer could only say, "The one who showed mercy on him?" The contempt of the Jews towards the Samaritans was such that he could not even bring himself to mention the name of the group.[77] But, in the present parable, he, the one usually portrayed as the "Evil Other" by the Jewish people, appears to be the one who obey the commandment to love the neighbour (cf. Lev 19) by helping the wounded man. As his actions are described in detail, the audience are undoubtedly invited to identify themselves with him.

This is where the evocative power of the parable lies. It begins by invoking the audience's imaginative empathy with the suffering man and concludes by creating within the audience's mind an imaginative identification with the Samaritan. Once the audience is engaged with this two-layered imagination, they will find it hard to fathom the decision of the priest and the Levite to ignore the suffering of the wounded man. Moreover, even though they resent the Samaritan's ethnicity and religious affiliations, they cannot but agree with his actions, which corresponds to Moses' commandment: "If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it, you shall help him to lift it up" (Exodus 23:5). When a person is in need of help, the covenant solidarity binds every other person to help him/her. What this parable also reveals is also the capacity of every person to transcend the narrow boundaries of one's religious affiliation for the sake of helping a suffering "Other". In the light of this parable, therefore, *ekstasis* means a call to love and to move towards communion with the "Poor and Suffering Other".

Ekstasis as movement towards communion with the "Poor and Suffering Other" injects democracy with the Christian vision of preferential option for the poor. As a political structure, democracy, particularly representative democracy, is by design doomed to be haunted by the possibility of being hijacked by the majority and transformed into a mere political procedure to legitimately impose their wish on the minority, be it in the area of politics, socio-economics, cultures and religion.[78] Left to its own devices, democracy can end up severely hurting the dignity of the human person. To alleviate this structural problem, democracy needs to be conceived as a *modus vivendi* (way of life) which seeks to safeguard the voice of the minority, and especially the suffering people. Here,

the notion of *ekstasis* as movement towards communion with the "Poor and Suffering Other" inculcates a democratic political order with a particularly significant idea that ultimately the criterion of good governance is the extent to which a democratic regime can improve the wellbeing of the poor.[79] A democratic political order that is supported by the Church, therefore, is one that gives preferential option for the poor.

But how does preferential option for the poor solves the impasse created by identity politics? It does so by generating a powerful reminder that prior to his/her other layers of identity, a poor and suffering person is first and foremost a neighbour to be helped. In short, it engenders a culture of solidarity. As John Paul II explains in *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, the virtue of solidarity is "a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good".[80] In other words, solidarity is the visceral desire to pursue the good for others even at the expense of forsaking convenience and narrow self-interest.[81] Seen in this light, it is clear that solidarity is not simply the call to make sacrifices, but an ongoing commitment to building communities wherein people of all backgrounds can attain authentic development. Such a politico-theological vision does not see the world as divided into the "Good Us" and the "Evil Other". Rather, it sees the world as place where humans are called to share life with the "Poor and Suffering Other".

The inextricable link between preferential option for the poor and solidarity, therefore, shows that imagining "Person" as *ekstasis* can be a foundation for the cultivation of a communing political culture. Within this politico-theological vision, humanity is seen as one, united by a shared commitment to lift the lives of "the least of [the Lord's] brethren" (Matthew 25:40). Such a vision generates a political culture in which communion with the "Other", especially the "Poor and Suffering Other", is understood and embraced as a civic duty. A civic duty, by nature, binds all members of a political polity to fulfil it. As such, communion with the "Poor and Suffering Other" is no longer a mere theological possibility. It is also a political duty.

CONCLUSION

As this article has suggested, Trinitarian theology is not and cannot be understood merely as a speculative theological enterprise. Trinitarian theology has serious implications for the vitality of the Church and the vibrancy of shared life in the political sphere. Zizioulas' understood this point, and that is precisely why he seeks to offer an alternative to the predominant Substantialist approach in Trinitarian theology. His effort prompts him to retrieve the heritage of the Cappadocian Fathers. According to the Cappadocian Fathers, God's being is not a substance, but the Person of the Father, whose *ekstasis* causes the other two divine Persons to be distinct hypostases. Since humans are made in the image of God, human personhood for Zizioulas' is also composed of *hypostasis* and *ekstasis*.

These two constitutive elements were then employed to offer an ontological justification for the concept of democracy. Firstly, this article contends that the concept of "Person" as *hypostasis* can be utilised to provide an ontological justification for the notion of equality, which forms the heart of every democratic political order. Secondly, it suggests that the notion of "Person" as *ekstasis* is necessary for the cultivation of a

political culture, which seeks communion with the "Other" by emphasising the idea that lifting the lives of the "Poor and Suffering Other" is not merely a theological possibility, but also a civic duty.

Certainly, this is a long and arduous journey for cultivating communion has always been one of the greatest tasks bestowed upon mankind. Nonetheless, as Pope Francis reminds us, "time is greater than space".[82] This principle presents a vivid reminder on the importance of avoiding short term solutions to fill up the space that lies before us. Instead, one is called to concentrate his/her effort on initiating

long-term processes that will bear fruit in time. This article, therefore, does not pretend to be a solution, for it is merely a meek effort to participate in the ongoing politico-theological conversation by suggesting that communion with the "Other" is both a theological possibility and a civic duty. Precisely because of that, it is fitting to end this article by proffering a firm and definitive answer to the question raised by Cain after murdering his brother: "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen 4:9). To him, and to all who doubt our shared humanity, this article offers a direct riposte: "Yes, you are your brother's keeper."

ENDNOTES

[1] Zizioulas' writes, "… theology in the West, with the help of St. Augustine's decisive influence, has developed a substantialist rather than a personalist approach to Trinitarian theology". This has led to many divergences between the West and the East, including the dispute over the issue of the *Filioque* and the West's tendency to prefer the theology of Athanasius than the Cappadocian Fathers. See John D. Zizioulas', *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church* (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), 124.

[2] Christians of all ages always have to deal with the issue of reconciling monotheism with the Trinitarian faith without ending up in polytheism. The Augustinian solution to this riddle, according to Zizioulas', is to safeguard the one *substance* of God, the *divinitas*, by arguing that it precedes the three persons. For Zizioulas', this makes "monotheism survives at the expense of Trinitarianism". See ibid., 150.

[3] To strengthen his argument, Zizioulas' offers a number of examples which illustrate the failure of Western theology to arrive at an understanding of Trinity. These include the case of Deism and the ontological assumptions underlying modern atheism. For him, the question raised by modern form of atheism is the existence of God. This "*to be or not be*" question is fundamentally a substantialist problem, because it does not consider *how* God is. See ibid., 34; footnote no. 62.

[4] Based on his appraisal of Karl Rahner and Joseph Ratzinger's ecclesiology, Zizioulas' contends that the philosophical justification for giving ontological priority to the universal Church over the local Church stems from the argument that the 'one' precedes the 'many'. See ibid., 38.

[5] To be fair, it needs to be noted that Rahner himself is critical towards the tendency to merely export the European Church to other parts of the world. He writes, "the actual concrete activity of the Church in its relation to the world outside of Europe was in fact (if you will pardon the expression) the activity of an export firm which exported a European religion as a commodity it did not really want to change but sent throughout the world together with the rest of the culture and civiliza-

tion it considered superior. In this light it does appear meaningful and justified to consider Vatican II as the first major official event in which the Church actualized itself precisely as a *world Church* (emphasis original)". Karl Rahner, "Toward a Fundamental Interpretation of Vatican Ii," *Theological Studies* 40, no. 4 (1979): 717.

[6] Apart from these three, Zizioulas' mentions a relatively unknown figure in the Western Church, namely St. Amphilochius (340/45-?), bishop of Iconium. While the three Cappadocian Fathers left behind a large amount of work, St. Amphilochius' work survives only in the forms of a limited number of homilies and letters. See Zizioulas', 155.

[7] For a brief introduction to the ideas of the "Three Cappadocian Fathers", see Bengt Hägglund, *History of Theology*, trans. Gene J. Lund (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 84-85.

[8] As cited in Stanley J. Grenz, *Rediscovering the Triune God: The Trinity in Contemporary Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004). I am not unaware that Zizioulas' interpretation of the Cappadocian Fathers have come under criticisms. It is not the scope of the present study, however, to discuss the validity of these criticisms. For a discussion of the critiques against Zizioulas' interpretation of the Cappadocian Fathers, see Tingcui Jiang, "A Critical Study on Zizioulas' Ontology of Personhood" (Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Hong Kong Baptist University, 2014), 56-65.

[9] John D. Zizioulas', *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Cretwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1985), 87.

[10] Zizioulas' explains that the difficulty arose when Tertullian's phrase "*una substantia, tres personae*" was translated into Greek by Hippolytus. Tertullian's choice of words presented an immense challenge, because the literal Greek translation for the Latin word '*substantia*' was '*hypostasis*'. Likewise, if the term *personae* were translated directly, it would have to use the Greek word '*prosopon*' (the mask worn by actors in the theatres of ancient Greece). Using this term, however, runs the risk of suggesting that the three divine persons were merely façade of the one God. This is precisely the teachings of

Sabellius, which had already been deemed as heretical. As such, the Greek speaking Christians chose to replace the term 'person' with 'hypostasis'. But, once this is translated into Latin, it would become '*tres substantiae*'. The situation created a deadlock that would ultimately only be broken by the Cappadocian Fathers. See John D. Zizioulas', *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics* (Bloomsbury: T&T Clark, 2009), 49-50.

[11] ibid., 50.

[12] Zizioulas', *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 87-88.

[13] Jiang, 46-47.

[14] Grenz, 137.

[15] Zizioulas', *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*, 51.

[16] Jiang, 47.

[17] Zizioulas', *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 5.

[18] Travis E. Ables, "On the Very Idea of an Ontology of Communion: Being, Relation and Freedom in Zizioulas' and Levinas," *The Heythrop Journal* LII (2011): 674.

[19] 'Monistic' philosophy is a term used interchangeably with 'Substantialism' by Zizioulas'. He explains that in philosophical Hellenism God was understood as a monad or a self-sufficient unit. This originates from ancient Greek religious belief that God was simply one or alone (*monos*). Christian monotheism, however, is not the same, since in the Christian doctrine of God, "the number three represents particular beings in relation with one another". For Zizioulas', therefore, it would be mistake to develop a Christian doctrine of God out of monistic philosophy, because that would imply that the oneness of God is given priority over the personhood of God. See Zizioulas', *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*, 49.

[20] Edward Russell, "Reconsidering Relational Anthropology: A Critical Assessment of John Zizioulas's Theological Anthropology," *International Journal of Systematic Theology* 5, no. 2 (2003): 170.

[21] Here, Zizioulas' agrees with Karl Rahner, who emphasizes a similar point, that in the Bible, God is always God the Father. See Zizioulas', *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 134, footnote no. 62.

[22] Zizioulas', *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*, 54.

[23] This view is different with the tendency in Greek philosophy, which contends that the human mind can understand the essence of beings. The Greek Fathers, however, contended that while the human mind can understand the essence of a table, it cannot possibly comprehend the essence of God. Ibid., 58.

[24] ibid., 57.

[25] Drawing from the insight of Maximus the Confessor, Zizioulas' emphasises the difference between nature (what) and mode of being (how – *tropos*). It is this difference that allows God to relate to the world without losing its otherness ontologically. See Zizioulas', *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 22-29.

[26] Zizioulas' argues that the doctrine of creation was the first instance when Christian theology had to attempt to make a drastic revision to Greek ontology. In the latter, nothing can come out of nothing, whereas Christians believed that creation was *ex nihilo*. Ibid., 17, cf. foot note no. 9.

[27] ibid., 16.

[28] ibid., 34.

[29] It is important to note that what the Father causes is a transmission of personal otherness (hypostasis) and not of *ousia*. This means that the Father causes the emergence of *otherness* in divine being. See ibid., 119, 29-30.

[30] Zizioulas', *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*, 64.

[31] Zizioulas', *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 212 (italics original).

[32] ibid., 213.

[33] ibid., 111.

[34] ibid., 229, footnote no. 35.

[35] Zizioulas', *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 50.

[36] As noted by Brockman, Zizioulas' distinguishes between the terms 'individual' and 'person. He is highly critical of individualism, which for him is "a defective state of being—a kind of prison, the self turned in on itself, not free because not related. "Person", conversely, refers to a conception of human being as derived from his Trinitarian theology. See David R. Brockman, *Dialectical Democracy through Christian Thought: Individualism, Relationalism, and American Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 46-47.

[37] Zizioulas', *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 50.

[38] ibid., 51.

[39] It is pertinent to note that Zizioulas' does not in any way reject the human body in a manner similar to the Gnostics. He contends that the human body is of paramount significance for the ontology of otherness, and that "Christian anthropology could not conceive human identity without the body". Indeed, the role of the human body is such that Zizioulas' contends that "the key to the resolution of the conflict cannot be found outside the body itself." For this to occur, death needs to be conquered, and this is precisely what Christ achieved with his resurrection. See Zizioulas', *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 61-62.

[40] ibid., 226-27.

[41] Russell, 174.

[42] Zizioulas', *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 228.

[43] Russell, 174.

[44] Zizioulas', *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 53-55.

[45] Zizioulas', *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 80.

[46] Zizioulas', *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 56.

[47] As noted by Russell, "For Zizioulas', the 'quintessence' of salvation consists in the eternal survival of the person as a unique, unrepeatable and free hypostasis … Salvation, therefore, can be understood as the realisation of personhood in human being." See Russell, 173.

[48] Zizioulas', *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*, 115.

[49] Zizioulas', *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 56.

[50] Russell, 175.

[51] Zizioulas', *Communion and Otherness: Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 80.

[52] ibid., 7.

[53] ibid., 167.

[54] In a similar tone, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, "*Human life is sacred* because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being". *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2258.

[55] As Lisa Sowle Cahill explains, Matthew's parable of Judgement Day (Matt 25:31-46) carries a powerful

message that ignorance or "the absence of imaginative empathy for others" is just as evil as causing others to suffer. As Matthew vividly illustrates, this is ultimately a rejection of Christ himself. As such, men and women are called not only to refrain from killing other human beings, or simply protecting their decaying existence, but to promote the flourishing of other human beings. See Lisa Sowle Cahill, "A Theology for Peacebuilding", in Robert J. Schreiter, R. Scott Appleby, and Gerard F. Powers, eds., *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis* (New York: Orbis Books, 2010), p. 304.

56 Cf. Russell, 181-85; Brockman, 54.

57 Ables argues that this assertion is actually in itself also problematic because it assumes that every *hypostasis* possesses the potency for becoming a person. But, is this not the classical notion of *substance* that Zizioulas' precisely rejects? If so, then there is an inherent contradiction within Zizioulas' metaphysical schema. See Ables, 675.

58 Russell, 182.

59 ibid., 179.

60 To assert the universal reach of the Holy Spirit, O'Collins mentions the story of Peter's encounter with Cornelius in Acts 10. Their encounter, as O'Collins explains, reveals that "the Spirit of Christ operates of baptized believers to bring others to Christ". To say that the Holy Spirit is the "vital principle or 'soul' of the Church (see 1 Cor 6. 6:19)" does not in any way mean that the presence and activity of the Spirit is confined to the Christian community. See Gerald O'Collins, *Jesus Our Redeemer: A Christian Approach to Salvation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 226, 30.

61 It is pertinent to note that Neo-Scholastic theology distinguishes between *gratia creata and gratia increata*. In the opinion of Karl Rahner, following the teachings of Paul and the Church Fathers, *gratia increata* as the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in every man and woman is prevenient to the experience of justification and *gratia creata* or the fruit of the Spirit (cf. Gal 3:2-5). It is this prevenient grace that turns every human being into what Rahner calls "Supernatural Existential" or a being who actively searches for God as the fulfilment of his existence. See Karl Rahner, "Some Implications of the Scholastic Concept of Uncreated Grace," in *Theological Investigations*, ed. and trans. Cornelius Ernst (Baltimore; London: Helicon Press; Darton, Longman & Todd, 1961), 325. See also Stephen J. Duffy, "Experience of Grace," in *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*, ed. Declan Marmion and Mary E. Hines (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 46-49.

62 In Pauline theology, this new "mode of being" is made possible by the work of justification done by Christ. Justification, for Paul, creates a new bond between man and God, whereby man is not only destined for God, but also oriented towards it. As Rahner insists, this orientation towards God is the result of grace as divine self-communication and is present in every man and woman, in spite of their religious adherences. See John P. Galvin, "The Invitation of Grace", Leo J. O'Donovan, ed. *A World of Grace: An Introduction to the Themes and Foundations of Karl Rahner's Theology* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 72-74.

63 Pokorný explains that by using the work "Greek", "barbarian", "Scyth'ian", Paul emphatically states that the salvific work of Christ goes beyond the "Jews", who in the Old Testament were perceived as the exclusive recipient of God's salvific plan. See Petr Pokorný, *Colossians: A Commentary*, trans. Siegfried S. Schatzmann (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publisher, 1991), 169-70.

64 See John Dunn, *Setting the People Free: A Story of Democracy* (London: Atlantic Books, 2005), 25-35.

65 David Held, *Models of Democracy* (Cambridge & Maiden: Polity Press, 2006), 15.

66 It is perhaps germane to mention that the majority of ancient Greek thinkers, including Pythagoras, Protagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and the sophists, were convinced that the happiness of man is achieved through his active participation in the polis. It was only Epicurus who thought differently by depoliticizing the concept of happiness and disassociating it from its traditional link to active citizenship. See Robert Pogue Harrison, *Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 72-73.

67 Dunn, 34.

68 ibid.

69 Anthony H. Birch, *The Concepts and Theories of Modern Democracy*, London, Routledge, 2007, Part 2: The Democratic State and the Citizen.

70 John Dunn, *Setting the People Free: A Story of Democracy*, pp. 162-164.

71 Howard J. Wiarda, *Political Culture, Political Science, and Identity Politics: An Uneasy Alliance* (Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2014), 148.

72 Wiarda explains that the term "identity politics" first came to the fore in the 1960s and 1970s as a way to raise the consciousness of marginalized groups. It is not clear which group first employed this term, but black people, women, transgender and homosexual groups frequently employ this term to designate their political movements. See ibid., 150-51.

73 Zizioulas', *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church*, 88.

74 Ian A. McFarland, "Who Is My Neighbour?: The Good Samaritan as a Source for Theological Anthropology," *Modern Theology* 17, no. 1 (2001): p. 60.

75 Amy-Jill Levine, "Go and Do Likewise: Lessons from the Parable of the Good Samaritan," *America*, September, 29, 2014.

76 ibid.

77 ibid.

78 Felix Wilfred, "Christianity and Global Democratic Process," *Concilium* 104-120 (2007): 113.

79 Felix Wilfred asserts that transforming democracy into a means of creating justice requires the election of representatives who are willing to stand for the interests of the poor who have always been marginalised. The representatives of the people are thus first and foremost the representatives of the poor people. See ibid., 114.

80 John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987), no. 38.

81 Kenneth R. Himes, "Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching", in Schreiter, Appleby, and Powers, 273.

82 Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013), no. 222-23.

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