
Baptism à la Chilaquil: Celebrating Equality and Diversity Here and Now

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When you wash your face,
Remember your baptism.
—*Martin Luther*

For a world where we are
socially equal,
humanly different and
totally free.
—*Rosa Luxemburg*

for in Christ Jesus you are all
children of God through faith.
As many of you as were baptized into Christ
have clothed yourselves with Christ.
There is no longer Jew or Greek;
there is no longer slave or free;
there is no longer male or female,
for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.
—*Galatians 3:26-28 (NRSVUE)*

Loci enuntiationis

I thank *Currents* for inviting me to share my word today as one perspective from the southern currents of Abya Yala, namely, the Kuna language words for “land of vital blood,” the original name of the current Caribbean and Latin America.

It is an honor to dedicate this essay to José David Rodríguez, our wise brother who has generously accompanied dozens of us in our studies and ministries for decades. I also offer this article to Jay Alanis with thanksgiving for inviting me to teach at the Lutheran Seminary Program of the Southwest and for re-hiring me after the 2008 Wall Street fall. I would be remiss if I did not pay homage to Rafael Malpica for sending me as faculty to Puerto Rico, St. Croix and Jamaica. This trinity inspires me to piggyback to the original ternary baptismal formula written above.

The Trinity created us all different (objectivity), but “the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age” (Eph 6:12) continue to make us unequal (social construction). ... The gospel denounces all kinds of oppressions and announces or communicates a “world where many worlds fit.” —*Maya Zapatists*

From the Great Commission to the Great Omission

“The Slave Bible”¹ knew so much about great omissions by banning 90% of the First Testament and 50% of the Second Testament in a curtailed edition to “convert” the enslaved. The British published only 232 chapters out of 1,189 of Protestant Bibles. Those editors favored submissive texts such as Eph 6:5 “Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as in Christ” while they circumcised transcripts such as Gal 3:28 for fear of inflaming revolution.

Paul’s attentive ear seized the original Christian baptismal formula transmitted orally and put it in writing around the year 50 CE in his letter to the Galatians.

To speak quite frankly, the Trinity created us all different (objectivity), but “the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world,

1. *Parts of the Holy Bible selected for the use of the Negro Slaves in the British West-India Islands*, (London: Law and Gilbert of London, for the Society for the Conversion of Negro Slaves, 1807). Quoted by Eddie T. Graham, <https://www.facebook.com/BCUMCwoodinville/posts/pastor-brook-saw-this-post-today-and-thought-to-share-it-with-this-question-what/913611227472489/>

the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age” (Eph 6:12) continue to make us unequal (social construction). However, the gospel denounces all kinds of oppressions and announces or communicates (from Latin *comunicare*, namely, to share something) of a “world where many worlds fit” (Maya Zapatists).

“Baptism” in Greek means “immersed or flooded in the water.” Now, *chilaquiles* from Nahuatl: *chilaquilli*, namely, *chil(-li)* “chile”, and *aquilli* means “submerged”.² In short, the word *chilaquilli* spanishized as *chilaquil* means stale fried corn tortilla strips “immersed in chili broth” with green tomatoes, garlic, epazote herb, and of course, dressed with onion rings, cheese, and sour cream.

If, on the one hand, empires preach *divide et vince*, on the other hand Martin Luther teaches us that theologians of the cross name things for what they are.³ Therefore, in our Christian baptism all of us are called to transform our “borderfull” world by tearing down all social evils named below.

There is no longer Jew or Greek

Jesus founded the First International of Equality

—Ernst Bloch

The fundamental baptismal blueprint abolishes all tributary discriminatory “isms,” but today I am going to limit myself to only some of them.

Imperialism

Triageism, ciber-feudalism, and technocraticism

Triageism, ciber-feudalism, and technocraticism are but fancy names that hide the fact of the historical *continuum* plundering of our Pachamama or mother earth and father sky and all the other living beings as well.

It is not innocent the fact that the first baptisms of Abya Yalans took place in Extremadura, Spain on July 29, 1496. Both brothers were ripped of their names by being re-baptized as Cristóbal and Pedro. In fact, it wasn't until September 21 of the same year that the first baptism was performed in Quisqueya (Dominican Republic). In *La Vega* sixteen people received the sacrament, all of them relatives of the Taino leader Guaticaba who became Mateo.

To add insult to injury, let us remember that the birth certificate of our continental Christendom was signed on May 8, 1512, also in Spain, through the “Capitulations of Burgos.”

Protectionism vs. Globalism

European imperialism began in 1455 when Pope Nicholas V granted license to Portugal to enslave the African Coast. The expansionism continued in 1493 when Pope Alexander VI issued his

Inter Caetera (among other things) Bull, where he gave away our land to Spain. The following year the Tordesillas Treaty conceded Brazil to Portugal. Exchanging land for spreading Christendom proved to be very profitable.

Turtle Island (North America) was given to the British by King Henry VII on March 5, 1496, by renaming it “the New Found Land,” namely *terra nullius*, or “land of nobody.” Little wonder then that when the Pilgrims arrived, they baptized their inhabitants as *Indians*, *red skin*, *Native Americans* corralling them into “reservations,” i.e., concentration camps.

The “Doctrine of Discovery” cooked by Europeans erased our geographical being. The “Monroe Doctrine” of 1823 was an updated imperialistic version in retaliation to the first ever free republic in the world: Haiti, 1804. U.S. recognized Texas’ “independence” of 1835 in twenty-four hours, while it took them thirty-eight years to acknowledge Haiti’s emancipation (1862).

Caesaropapism

Constantine profited by adding prophets to his subalterns with his Edict of Milan Edict of 313 where he married the Roman Empire with Christendom. In addition, he procrastinated his baptism until his death bed in 325, as a *carte blanche*, to wash away all his countless crimes for the same price.

The good news is that we have our first anti-imperialist theologian in the Hatian Hatuey. On February 2, 1512, before his fire baptism at the stake in Cuba he called things for what they are:

Priest: If you accept to be baptized, your destiny will change
... there in heaven.

Hatuey: ¿Are there Spaniards in heaven?

Priest: But of course

Hatuey: Send me to hell (namely: your god is my devil).

Colonialism

Among the myriad forms of colonialism, the internal colonialism was coined in 1969 by Mexican Pablo González Casanova. Conceded, what was new was the naming—epistemology—but the fact—ontology—already existed in that fatal attraction subaltern people feel for their masters.

For instance, “vernacular” comes from “verna,” i.e., the enslaved person born in the household. By extension “vernacular” means “folk language,” in contradistinction to the literary one of the elite. But still there’s more. The domestic enslaved persons internalized a sense of supremacy in relation to the field workers who survived in the barracks. In any event, first and second class enslaved human beings shared the same dehumanization in states such as Virginia: “An act declaring that baptism of slaves doth not exempt them from bondage” (September 1667).

Culturalism

In our Christian baptism “there is no longer Jew or Greek” has

2. Ángel María Garibay Kintana, ed. *En torno al español hablado en México* (1st edition). (Mexico City: UNAM, 1997).

3. Theodore G. Tappert and Martin Luther, eds., “Heidelberg Disputation # 21,” in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1992).

cultural repercussions to begin with the fact that Global South cultures “norm-ally” are reduced to folklorism, picturesquism, exotism. Several examples are in order:

Dietism

The Rider of the Black horse of Rev (6:5) represents hunger while denouncing the speculation of wheat and barley prices to keep inequality untouchable. The sacrament of initiation welcomes the baptized into the community of a shared table, where it is unthinkable to perform private baptism. For instance, the baptism’s hospitality detaches from Paul’s hostility of the kidnaping of the Holy Supper (1 Cor 11:34). To prevent that, I propose the *chilaquiles* experience of emerging to a life of social justice where no one goes hungry.

By dietism we are talking about “food sovereignty” or the right to each culture to plant and eat their own eatables and drinkables, or in the case of Abya Yala to claim our milpa. This polyculture of more than 200 varieties was the first victim of European monoculture imposition or terracide and watercide.⁴

Religionism, proselytism, denominationalism

When the Scribes declared Jesus’ possession by Beelzebub (Mark 3:22-30) they satanized him and also the main Palestinian God.

Cecilia Galcerán, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Peru, Brazil, Venezuela and Mexico have fought “demonism” since 2009 through the movement “Not in our Name.” Feminists, Queer, and Atheists self-excommunicated themselves when they realized that “they were feeding a devastating and nefarious political power that was shaping family and the exercise of sexuality.”⁵

Little wonder we Christians should revisit our current baptism’s liturgy that still includes an act of exorcism.

Shapeism, disabilitism, sacrificialism, ageism

There is a historical continuum between Augustin of Hippo who denied baptism to the deaf since “*faith comes from hearing*” (Rom 10:17) to the current tyranny of cosmetology that preaches the hegemonic Western image of “the other”. Bulimia and anorexia as daughters of Christianity now join hands with the Jewish women’s shrinking of their noses to look like Aryans, Asians widening of eyelids, reducing their feet to look like lotus flowers, the lucrative business of doing surgery in all parts of their bodies...

I witnessed the dismissal of a sharp seminarian who pursued the ordination to word and sacrament. Naturally, that person was brown, fat, impoverished, aged and other niceties that did not align to the Christian baptism.

Monolinguisism

“There is no longer Jew or Greek” points toward the Pentecost experience of celebrating the rainbow of languages precisely from the exile (Rev 7:9). For half a millennium our surviving seven thousand world ancient languages and one thousand native languages from Turtle Island (North America) and Abya Yala were not considered worthy of Christian liturgical performances. It wasn’t until 1970 that Pope Paul VI de-exorcised them. It was in 2016 that Pope Francis allowed Nahuatl, one out of eighty-six Mexican languages, to be eligible for Christian ritual purposes.

What is at stake is to impose one *Weltanschauung* or vision of the world, i.e., the one of the cream of the crop. In addition, the book of Revelation never talks about the end of the world; it declares the end of the Roman empire’s world.

Militarism

History has two privileged sacraments:
war and race.

—Achille Mbembe⁶

Armamentism

Augustine of Hippo fathered the doctrine of the “just war” and, not surprisingly, also related it to the Christian baptism. In preaching about Luke 14:23 “Then the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled,’” this bishop did violence to the sacrament. Augustine used this text to force Africans to become Christians coerced by the army.

Conspiracyism, denialism, interventionism, territorialism

Dwight D. Eisenhower experienced his baptism of fire in Mexico just after his graduation from West Point in 1916. He persecuted Pancho Villa for eleven months with zero results. Such nicety did not prevent him from climbing into the U.S. presidential chair in 1953. Once he was invested, the system caught a terrible omission: this soldier had to be baptized immediately to stay the course.

Spain’s government now goes beyond having military chaplains. It wants a militia bishop to strengthen the baptism of war and its tributaries: “... what really matters to me is that many people from our lands (almost 50%), by the way, very good people, have stopped baptizing their children, as if this is not important, as if the church has nothing to offer.”⁷

4. Eliseo Pérez Álvarez “La Milpa from Abya Yala: An Epistemological Rupture in the Context of Oikos,” 191-208, in *Life-Enhancing Learning Together*, Korea: Beauty Press, 2016.

5. Mariana Carbajal, “Otra apostasía colectiva”, in *Página 12*, (dic-10, 2010.). You can always check the forms that were filled by the ones who “have departed” or have apostatized.

6. *Necro-Politics*, (Durkham and London: Duke University, 2019), 6.

7. *Religión Digital*, “El Blog de X. Pikaza” 09.01.2022.”Domingo del Bautismo. Nacer de Dios, ser en Dios. Crisis de bautismo en la iglesia”.

There is no longer slave or free

Galatians: A Magna Carta of Humanity

Let me hasten to declare that race-class-sex-gender dominations do not stand on their own; they are painfully imbricated, therefore, we are called, as born again baptized people, to name them in order to dismantle them while questioning the following capitalistic evils:

Classism

The first fathers of the Christian church were fervent defenders of the common bag of sharing all goods and adversaries of private property.

—Ernest Mandel⁸

Let us never lose sight that *sacramenta sunt propter homines* (the sacraments are for human beings and not human beings for the sacraments).

Meritocracyism, just-do-itism, entrepreneurism, titlecracism, influencism, cronyism, nepotism, heivism, self-help.

Six-year-old Karl Marx, his father, and six siblings received the baptism within the Lutheran Church on August 28, 1824. The Prussian government “volunteered” Karl’s father to do so, if he would intend to continue practicing law in the city of Trier. Presumably Karl made it into confirmation classes... successfully.

The contrast with sinful capitalistic system of “you are poor because you do not want to be rich” is apparent: Aligned with the first baptismal formula, there should not exist such a thing as “private property,” “needy people,” “haves and have-nots.”

Offendism, hummingbirdism⁹

The “politically correct” politics, the banning of ethnic studies and thousands of books, the proliferation of boundaries do not seek to offend but to obliterate worldwide poverty and misery.

For Martin Luther baptism was not a ticket to make it to heaven but a watershed existential episode to be actualized every day in his fight for social justice. That is why he embraced the formula *Baptizatus sum* or I am baptized, every time he was advancing the Reign of God.

Humanitarianism, selfism

Christian baptism is a perennial reminder that we are our cosmos keepers. This is a radical humanist denouncing systemic economic extortion, institutional plundering, global legal corruption. Instead of making the impoverished populations “responsible” for their condition, the humanist judgment makes the State and the international organizations “responsible” for failing to provide affordable food and shelter, free health and educational services,

8. *El lugar del marxismo en la historia*, <https://www.marxists.org/espanol/mandel/2005/el-lugar-del-marxismo-en-la-historia-y-otros-textos.pdf>.

9. The belief that you will change the structure by doing very little deeds.

as Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou reminded us.¹⁰

Ephesians 4:5 is precisely a call to join a new humanity where equality and diversity reign: “One God, one faith, one baptism.”

Economicism

It goes without saying that a liberationist, baptized author paid the price with exile for putting the idol of gold in its place, namely, on the streets to be trampled (Rev 21:21). In a similar way lay theologian Søren Kierkegaard, parodying Acts 3:6 “Then Peter said, Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk”, confronted his Danish church: “We do have silver and gold, but we do not have anything to give you”.¹¹

Social Malthusianism

This doctrine is usually mistaken for social Darwinism, but nothing could be further from reality. The Episcopal pastor Thomas Robert Malthus, in his 1798 *Essay on Human Population*, praised God for “nature’s wisdom” in getting rid of the superfluous poor population through natural disasters such as famines, flooding, and the like.

John D. Rockefeller’s speech “American Beauty” of 1902 confessed his faith: “sacrificing the blossoms of the rose American Beauty is not a sinful act in the world of business. It is simply the execution of natural law and God’s law.” The Sunday school teacher and baptized Baptist also did not have any scruples in getting rid of “expendable” human beings.¹²

Racism

Certainly, as baptized Christians we confess that, biologically speaking, race does not exist, whereas, at the sociological realm, racism does exist.

Biologicism

The Christian church must do better. As early as the fourth century, the Council of Gangra issued an anathema on anyone who should teach a slave to despise his master on account of religion since they were told to be ontologically superior. Two centuries later, the Council of Orleans decreed the perpetuity of servitude of slaves, particularly the slaves owned by the church, and the Council of Epaona prohibited abbots from emancipating the slaves from their monasteries. In the seventh century, the Council of Toledo, dictated damnations to bishops who dared to stand against church slave property.¹³

10. Fabrizio Mejía Madrid, “Humanismo” (*La Jornada*, 03-12-22).

11. JP Søren Kierkegaard’s *Journals and Papers*. Tr. Ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, 7 vols. (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press), 384.

12. Cf. Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought 1860-1915*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1945), 45, 31.

13. Westermarck, Vol I, p. 699, in Chapman Cohen, *Christianity, Slavery and Labor*, (Chicago: Research Associates School Times Publications, 2010), 28.

Mestizajism

Granted, the “mestizo” caste is a social category rather than a biological one. Nonetheless, in this essay we place it under the racial topic for pedagogical reasons.

The name mestizo used to identify Abya Yala population began in the nineteenth century with the agenda of de-indigenizing rural folks by naming us peasants and de-Africanizing us. This ideology fosters one language (Spanish), one race (mestiza), one economic system (capitalism). Nonetheless, instead of the labels of mestizaje, syncretism, eclecticism, mixture or miscegenation, we opt for hybridity, that is, a new creation,¹⁴ something unknown that is already emerging, or to quote hybrid Jesus: “it is a new wine in new wineskins” (Mark 2.22).

While archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero denied a private baptism to a wealthy white skin Salvadorean, people still wonder why he received his fire baptism during the celebration of the Holy Supper on March 24, 1980.

Casteism, colorism, pigmentocracism

Don Quixote could have been written in Guatemala if the Council of the Indies had not denied probably four times, a permit to accomplish his American Dream. Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra in his *The Stage of Wonders*¹⁵ addresses the XV-XVII system of castes built on the purity of blood. In the upper caste are the old-“rotten”-“limpidus” (clean)-Christians and at the lower level are the new-stained-Muslim or Jewish origin-bastards-mixed blood-Christians. Obviously, the vast majority of writers belonged to the Middle Class, and 80% of them were new Christians, namely of Sephardi origin.¹⁶

On January 2, 1492, Isabel the Catholic conquered the Moorish empire and three months later issued a mandatory decree for all Jews and Moors to take the Christian baptism or get out. Baptism and cheap grace were hand and glove prior to raping Abya Yalan women, Whites proceeded to baptize them, since the Bible states very clearly, “Do not yoke together with the infidels” (2 Cor 6:14).

Taxonomism

Following father Adam as the first baptizer and taxonomist (Gen 2:20), Abya Yalenses were exquisite classifiers. So far so good until the eighteenth century when Europeans did violence to our taxonomies. To quote just one example, Carolus von Linneaus provided the “scientific” paradigm for nineteenth century political constitutions to inferiorize and keep us in bondage. According to this baptized Swedish botanist there are four types of people:

Homo Americanus (read: White), as tenacious,
contented, free, and ruled by custom;

Homo Eurpoeus as light, lively, inventive,
and ruled by rites;

Homo Asiaticus as stern, haughty, stingy,
and ruled by opinion; and

Homo Afer as cunning, slow, negligent,
and ruled by caprice.¹⁷

Immigrantphobiaism, aporophobiaism

Aporophobia (Adela Cortina) ideology preaches that impoverished people are to be isolated and dismissed, simply because by not buying or selling anything they don’t exist.

On the one hand, in the past Abya Yala saved Europe from her overpopulation and prevented her from starvation and feeding humans with potatoes and animals with corn. On the other hand, today the Global North shuts down its borders responding to our hospitality with hostility. Symptomatically, the center of Christianity has made its home in the Global South with 2/3 of baptized members.

Ecologism

The baptismal fonts at church entrances and its correspondent gesture of touching their water with the fingers is another physical support that reminds of the sacredness of the vital liquid that embraces two thirds of our blue planet as well as two thirds of our bodies, beginning inside our mother’s womb surrounded by the vital liquid.

Originally the Epiphany feast celebrated Jesus’ baptism by grabbing the old Oriental tradition of the blessing of rivers and fountains. Nonetheless, Christendom suffocated such rituals. The Council of Arles Council II of 452, unequivocally stated that if in a bishop’s dioceses the infidels burn torches, worship trees, fountains of stones, and the bishop is reluctant in abolishing such customs and habits, he has to know that he is guilty of sacrilege.¹⁸ And still more, Saxon king Edgard in the year 960 commanded that all priests should be diligent in the promotion of Christianity, while extinguishing paganism, and prohibiting the worship of fountains.¹⁹

Epistemicism

Ancient Abya Yalan cultures such as the Guaraní are aligned with our earliest baptismal formula of Gal 3:26-28 in fostering a non-either-or; non-neither-nor; non- both-and; but rather a holistic cosmovision where word-sacrament is a monolithic entity.

In contradistinction to Global North Christianity that comprehends a mainly written-wordy-word and corners sacraments into seven, two or none expressions, Guaraní’s *ñeñé*, is the same root for “word” and “spirit” that points toward the ritualized-

14. Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2012).

15. *Entremés El retablo de las maravillas*, 1615, Alicante: Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes, 2001.

16. A. D. Kossoff, Fuentes de “El perro del hortelano” y una teoría de la España del Siglo de Oro, Estudios sobre literatura y arte dedicados al profesor Emilio Orozco Díaz, Granada, 1979, pp. 209-213.

17. Jacques Barzun, *Race: A Study in Superstition*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 45.

18. Janet Bord and Colin Bord, *Sacred Waters: Holy Wells and Water Lore in Britain and Ireland*, (London: New York-Granada Publishing, 1985), 31.

19. Bord and Bord, *Sacred Waters*.

ijyváva (soil, *tierra*)-word, different from the word-ikuatiáva (paper) of main line Christianity. This means that Guaraní word-sacrament spirituality is well rooted in all living bodies, in the Pachamama and in the entire cosmos. The word-sacrament is the feast of the whole creation and of its final redemption. It is not a mere metaphysical, ahistorical, dichotomic proclamation of the bodiless forgiveness of abstract sins.²⁰ The impoverished people will no longer experience any kind of oppression (objectively) nor any kind of social stigma (subjectively).

There is no longer male or female

—Galatians 3:28, *A Communist Manifesto*

Heteronormativism

Patriarchalism

Let it suffice to quote how the lay Phillip dared to baptize the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26-40) as an example of the way this sacrament subverted the imbricatures of gender, race, religion, culture, clericalism and chauvinist patriarchalism's "norms." If Isaiah (56:4-6) welcomed eunuchs within the worshiping community, it meant only one thing: emasculated men were excommunicated at that time.

In patriarchal societies the "norm" is for the power and control to be in the hands of males, well-to-do "straight" as opposed to queer citizens... Pope Francis, on October 21, 2023, authorized that transgender persons could be baptized and be godparents at baptism ceremonies, but not without hurdles. First, they must go through a hormone therapy, sex reassignment surgery and they must be so discrete.

Misogynism

It was during the very first Christian council, held in Jerusalem in the late 40s (Acts 15:22-31), that Jesus' equalizing movement "officially" got universal overtones. The discontinuing of circumcision as the rite of initiation confirmed the practice of baptism as the equal access opportunity to the recently born communality.

Misogyny goes far beyond the fear of women: it is mainly the hate of everything effeminate, for example, healthy and compassionate masculinities. Europeans did not bring homosexuality to Abya Yala; they brought homophobia. Spaniards also landed the Augustinian doctrine of original sin transmitted via semen, whose antidote was Christian baptism.

Binarism

Christopher Columbus brought to Abya Yala in one hand the Bible and in the other Plato's binary logic of either/or; Greek/barbarian; human/animal; essence/appearance; written/spoken word; body/soul; master/slave, men/women.

Providentially, our millennial cultures continue betting for

cordial, social, erotic, emotional, moral, and rational intelligence. In terms of gender justice, we celebrate *Navajo's Nadle* or third sex; Californian *Mohave's* heterosexual suspicious; *Anahuac* (Mesoamerica) naming of at least four genders; *Berdaches* "two spirits" or transsexuals, Oaxaca *Muxe's* no binary sexuality.

Familism

Fundamentalist Christians are Bibliolaters. They do violence to the Bible by interpreting it literally without re-contextualizing it. Nonetheless, they are conveniently trapped in the past because their reading is very selective as well. As a matter of fact, the Bible lists twenty types of families.

Conservative—read: (*conservar*) to keep their privileges—churches definitely will not grant baptism to non-conforming families, or atypical children as the fruit of subrogated wombs,²¹ pluriparental families²², *arrejuntados* (out of wedlock), monoparents and same-sex parents.

Civil Statusism

Jesus being single in his 30s, being tender with children and being pointed as a eunuch, provided him the occasion to make relevant nuances: "For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by others -and there are those who choose to live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 19:3-12).

Still more, his definition of the "church" as "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I with them" (Matt 18:20) categorically affirms that single people are not incomplete as the famous Plato's "half orange" suggests, that parenthood is not mandatory, that it is fine to be childless.

Speciesism

The Dominican Order made an exception in admitting Martin de Porres into the cloister, a *mulato*, a bastard like Jesus (John 8:41) and vegetarian to protect his animal siblings. However, he was a perennial lay person not eligible to the sacrament of Holy Orders. If only he had been ordained priest, undoubtedly, he would've administered the eucharist to the mouse, cat and dog, his stray siblings that he always fed. This Peruvian saw the continuity between the Eucharist and satisfying the material hunger following Jesus' example, when he instituted the Galilean Supper, reported not once, not twice but six times in the gospels (Mc 6:30-44).

Andean Methodists first shared the communion wine with the Pachamama, and some people still consider themselves superior to the rest of the animal world?

Didn't Jesus' judgement to all nations, "Truly I tell you,

21. Despite the truth that the subrogated wombs are all over the Bible. See Xavier Pikaza "El canto de las cananeas: maternidad subrogada Matriz humana, útero de Dios", in *Religión Digital*, El Blog de X. Pikaza.

22. "Cuando padre no hay solo uno", *Página 12* (23-5-2024). Argentina changed the law for an adopted youngster to bear both last names of the biological and stepparents and the one of his mother.

20. Graciela Chamorro, *Teología guaraní*, Quito: Ediciones Abya Yala, 2004, 296.

whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me” (Matt 25:40) embrace all the species?

Our first baptismal formula is a perennial reminder for us to end the binary of nature/culture. We are not transcendent beings. We are nature, as the hurricanes baptize us when they cover us up with water in alignment with the universal flood baptism (Gen 7).

Clericalism

Jesus’ movement of the Reign of God and its justice turned into a bureaucratic institution soon after his assassination. The church, more interested in its hierarchy (the power of the temple) has been oblivious to the long chain of lay people who have made a difference in Christianity, such as Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Martin of Porres, Phillip Melancthon, John Calvin, Joan of Arc, Peter Waldo, Søren Kierkegaard, Paul, and of course, Jesus.

Priesthoodism

Jesus assaulted the Jerusalem Temple and its “male priests’ resources” not once but twice. While being tortured and slowly assassinated his crying out was accompanied with darkness, an earthquake and most importantly: the tearing of the Temple’s veil from top to bottom (Matt 25:51). To say the same, this is Jesus’ radical call to consider all people and places sacred.

One thing is to be fortunate people (*kleros*, 1 Pet 2:9), and quite a different animal is being fortunate people of the town (Temple’s curtain intact). The author of the *Epistle to the Hebrews* (7: 11 ff) went too far in roasting Jesus to the Melchizedek priesthood order. Jesus was straightforward: “But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi’ for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers” (Matt 23:8 NIV).

While Paul was preaching in Iconium (Turkey), Thecla converted and joined Jesus’ movement. This martyr, theologian, teacher, preacher, and fugitive from marriage asked Paul to be baptized but without success. It had to be during her martyrdom at the public arena when she baptized herself.

Careerism

When the apostles wanted to resume a brilliant career, Jesus rebuked them: “It will be not so among you” (Matt 20:26). Jesus said no to the professionalization of an intellectual elite (Matt 23:8) whereas Pope Innocence III, in the 1215 IV Lateran Council mandated that the sacraments must be administered exclusively by ordained men.

Do Jesus’ followers go by the numbers fever of showing off baptized people as trophies where baptism is an end in itself? An example won’t hurt. In 1718 the Franciscans founded the Alamo mission where the first thing they witnessed was the “mitote” dance. This is a communitarian circle of female and male closely holding each other’s backs and beyond, while swinging their bodies gracefully. When baptism—to go to heaven—was offered to the Alamo folks, the missionaries were well prepared: “Our dear fellows, heaven is a ‘mitote’ that never ends.”²³

To renew our baptism... with *chilaquiles*

Galatians 3:26-28 is a radical baptismal formula that inaugurates a new community of co-equals and diverse beings while taking social distance from mere alms giving, benevolence, reformist, welfare, or philanthropic driven society. Impoverished people will no longer experience any kind of oppression (objectively) nor any kind of social stigma (subjectively).

Being baptized means to not “conform to this world”—read: the powers that be—but to experience personal and communal conversion (*metanoia*), namely, “change of mentality” (Rom 12:2) and systemic conditions.

All the above meditation was inspired by Martin Luther’s confession: *When you wash your face, remember your baptism*. In my case I continue fighting for equality and diversity in the here and now by renewing my baptism every time I eat *chilaquiles*.

Bom apetite, minha gente!

23. Armando Fuentes Aguirre. *Lo mejor de Catón; una capirotada de chistes, Miradores, picardías, historias y reflexiones*, (Mexico City: Diana, 2016), 68-69.