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Introduction

The Vision

Charismatic City (population 8.3 billion, altitude 2,490 feet/759 meters), situated on a medium rise overlooking the southern branch of the Half Yellow Sea, is a financial, cultural, technological, and religious center served by desire and innovation. It was a scene of concentrated divine presence symbolized by a sacred golden stool, which caused bloody encounters between nations. It was where radicals smashed the stool and scattered its pieces all over the city to create a new city, and also used some of the pieces to make plowshares. It is a site of globalized connections, digital factories, a milk processing plant, and an overall energy factory. Its green space, forests, and parks are devoted to enable its residents to experience awe. A silk road now passes through its core—one devoted to well-orbed human well-being—sensing the broken stool scattered among seven hills. Barring a sudden run of bad luck this century, its intellectuals and pop culture experts think the song “Can we all get along?” will dominate the billboards.

This is how the city guide, Max, a part-time tourist guide from New York City, would dispose of the Charismatic City and hasten on to a more spirited topic if the Charismatic City as such existed. The Charismatic City, however, is not one city, it is a thousand or more cities, all very much alike and scattered across the world from London to Buenos Aires, from New York to New Delhi, and Rome to Lagos. 1

It is a merging of fields: social and religious. Social fields that mesh individuals, their activities, life patterns, and networks of social relations across territories, encompassing, transcending, and linking countries into deterritorialized, transnational communities. Religious force fields that span borders, connecting nations, transcommunities, and home and abroad. The imbrication of these varied fields situates people or human agency contemporaneously in concrete, face-to-face communities and in sprawling virtual communities. The dispersed and yet concatenated transnational social fields, with their webs, nodes, time commitments, and technological synapses, form the Charismatic City. The world is filled with them (charismatic cities) as the waters cover the sea. The city is set in
the midst of cities, with cities all around it. Max, the tour guide, is different from the usual guides who work in the open-roof tour buses that ply the streets of Manhattan in the summer. He is a professor of architecture and urban design at Columbia University, New York. Instead of pointing out great buildings and historic sites, he paints word pictures of lives that traverse various social and religious networks. He talks about how individuals and communities are always crafting local–global networks to further their self-insertion into worldwide chains of human flourishing. As he speaks, the assorted crowd in the cramped bus—individuals from many nations, ethnicities, tongues, peoples—are simultaneously seeing Beijing, Berlin, Accra, Brasilia, Paris, and Canberra. Max declares that “these cities and many more are daily in New York and the Big Apple is in them.”

Among those in the bus listening to Max are two scholars studying modern religions and the city. Mercedes is from Rome, and the other woman is from Birmingham, United Kingdom. Mercedes steps off the bus at Times Square to visit an African Pentecostal church in Brooklyn. The other woman gets off later to catch a flight to Buenos Aires. Mercedes makes this note for the book she is working on about African Christianities in New York City:

It is a moving sight to behold. Thousands of people simultaneously praying in unison, spitting out words as bullets in rapid-fire mode, heads shaking violently, muscles and nerves taut in deployment, and all are enveloped in air thick with dust and humidity. The ground quakes as they enthusiastically stamp their feet on the floor. Young men and women are rapidly punching the air with clenched fists and angrily wagging their fingers at the devil. And flesh, aided by rivulets of hot sweat, holds on tightly to fabric. Bodies—broken bodies, hungry bodies, rich bodies, old bodies, young bodies—sway toward one another. Worship is a running splash of bodies and words—flung and scattered among four corners like a broken mask in the square. This na prayer; this is the aesthetics of talking to God in an African Pentecostal gathering. Prayer is a dynamo of excess energy leaping like flames in a dry-season burning bush and heading straight from earth to the throne room of God.

Her witness of the prayer scene throws her into deep reflection. She sees that the Pentecostal aesthetics of prayer is an irruption of sensibilities, sensory-motor skills, practical wisdom, and deep emotions for conveying everyday felt needs to the heavens and bridging the gap between the visible and invisible realms. Prayer is oral theology, biblical texts, ritual practices, and spontaneous and heady spirituality carried by and articulated through the body. Prayer—the embodiment, display, and articulation of ideas, hopes, fears, habits, and tradition—is a veritable portal to enter into an understanding of the preaching experience of African Pentecostalism.
To fully appreciate this point we need to put ourselves in a large prayer gathering. Now imagine you are in the center of a Pentecostal-charismatic worship space with loud music in the background. Bodies are slain and strewn on the floor; bodies trembling, some falling backward, and others being caught in midair by ushers. Women rushing to cover the exposed thighs of other women already fallen to the ground. Men and women are weeping audibly. And a charismatic person is moving in the aisles, touching heads of people, and saying: “Receive the fire of the Holy Ghost.” This is the worship site, where the anointing of the Holy Spirit is powerfully moving through the sprawling congregation. Look again, and a different cinematic scene swirls around you.

Thousands of people have gathered, necks straining forward, ears perking up, hands outstretched, and eyes trained on the altar. At the center of the altar is a man (woman) with a commanding presence, microphone in hand, praying loudly, hyperactive, pacing the platform, shouting “Hallelujah,” and teaching in a narrative style with much creative imagination and great oratorical skills. All segments of this spellbinding performance are interlaced with scriptural verses springing up from deep inside of him (her), and the thick crowd quickly absorbs them. The man (woman) who is the center of attraction is not delivering a “sermon,” but sharing the Word, giving the message, or doing ministration.

The message involves stories of characters and events operating at a high symbolic level. The natural and supernatural forces in the stories are commingled to enable human beings to perform unimaginable feats. Usually such a message carries a high emotive charge, which overflows to the audience. The preacher bears the burden of generating, sustaining, and appropriately controlling the emotional reaction to his narrative, of controlling other disruptions so as not to be diverted from his logic or the development path of his (her) story.

This logic is not always temporal, not that of a sequentially unfolding narrative. It is often a spatial one; the oral narrative is a map in which relations and meanings are tied together by their placement both in the performance and the virtual landscape that he “talks” into being. In this mixing of logics, time and history, and space and lateral connections are made to flow together, without any one of them occupying a privileged position. This kind of oral literature resists attempts to classify it along any schema such as space-time logic, stylistic criteria, or character of speech act as the performance refuses easy conformity to a single type. What anthropologist Karin Barber says about the Yoruba oral literature is aptly relevant here:

Yoruba oral literature in general appears like a vast stock of verbal materials—themes, formulas, stories, poetic idioms—which can float through the permeable boundaries of all the genres and be incorporated into them to fulfill different functions. Genres freely incorporate parts of other genres, with much sharing and borrowing of material.
The performance that is called “sharing the Word” demands an enormous amount of mental, physical, and emotional energy. The performer needs help before and along the way to reach the “high” needed to rise to the occasion. Music, song, responses from the audience in the form of shouts of hallelujah, moans, tongue-speaking, trembling, prayers, and so on are some of the uplifting impetuses. These constitute the infrastructure of the message and are part of its essential dynamism. They all work into the aesthetic achievement of the ministration and as such an interpretation of the Pentecostal message, as using only words, misses an essential part of its narrative performance. In Pentecostal ministration, words, music, song, prayer, and audience participation constitute the intimate interaction between the minister, the audience, and the Holy Spirit that keeps the message moving.

The ministration involves the delicate skill of simultaneously distancing and domesticating the spiritual powers (anointing) that the man with the microphone exudes. Since God’s invisible powers are distanced, omnipotent, and omniscient, those who have privileged access to them insist on obedience without question. So in their ministrations they demand absolute obedience to their commands and directions. But as you have observed, the powerful minister also mingles with the crowd. Pentecostal ministers simultaneously create and erase distance between them and the people, the worshipers. This double act derives, partly, from the character of the invisible or the belief in spiritual forces and spiritual beings. The invisible is distanced but in its omnipresence it is also near. There is no notion of the supernatural without a sense of contiguity. The supernatural is also near because both the minister and the audience share its notion of phantasm.

More importantly, the distancing of power between the minister and the audience is erased or reduced because of the necessity of having tactile perception of the congregants if power is to be effectively displayed or the glory of power is to be used to awe the audience. Pastors touch bodies with anointed hands, sweating bodies falling on one another under the power of his anointing, and hands of their followers are locked in prayer chains with him so that the much needed anointing can flow into the bodies of the people. Pentecostal leaders, more than other religious leaders, cannot repudiate the tactile element of power.5

What you are witnessing is the powerful art form of Pentecostal preaching, which challenges the leading paradigms of homiletics in historic mission Christianity. The African Pentecostal preacher is of a different breed, set apart from the stately and subdued preacher in the mainline churches. Pentecostal preaching is not linear and always logical in sequence, but it is always becoming, pressing into places of surprise, and modeling the unpredictability of the Spirit. The preacher has enough skills to take in as much contingency as possible without dissipating or impairing the logic of his message.
Preaching involves prayers, singing, ecstatic dancing, reading of scriptures, actual proclamation, speaking in tongues, prophesying, telling stories and witnessing, responding to irruptions of the Spirit and interruptions from the general goings on, quoting biblical verses from memory, and tactile feeling of the people. Preaching is a drama set within worship as a play. The preacher encourages the active participation of every member in the play. The preacher bears the weight of the free, spontaneous, and organic liturgy and is capable of keeping the audience spellbound for over an hour. Preaching is a world of becoming, always conveying something about the actualization of potentiality that does not yet exist. African Pentecostal preaching is an exemplar of kinetic Pentecostal preaching anywhere in the world.  

Scenes like this occur everyday in New York City. The public resurgence of religion in New York is easily noticeable, especially in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Bronx. After observing and studying such scenes for over ten years, Mark Gornik remarks:

While we live in a secular age…[on the contrary] the city is a complex space full of spiritual vitality…New York as global city is a place where charismatic joy and witness have come to flourish…It turns out that the city is not just as disenchanted as is its popular image…New York is not just [an]…urban space, but has a unique energy, a charisma where religion is embodied.

The day after the city tour, the woman from Birmingham arrives in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and visits the church of a Pentecostal pastor, Claudio Friedzon. This is the record she makes for her dissertation:

It was just about to start. My hope for a seat evaporated instantly; the oldest cinema was completely full and people already standing at the back. A smartly suited young man took centre stage and suddenly the hall erupted into applause. A deep drum rolled into the bouncy beat of “La única razón para vivir…” The rock music electrified the air, raising excitement and expectation…The song finished to instant applause…Friedzon arrived to more applause. He took the microphone…the auditorium was filled with music and the hum of human voices praising God…[and] in a loud voice he declared, “You reign over all the earth.” The people cheered and clapped…

We watched a video on how the tragic nation of Uganda [in East Africa] is being changed by God. The video emphasized how the Ugandan people had turned to God in prayer, even publicly dedicating their nation to God…Five hundred people, having been moved by what they have seen and heard turn to kneel at the chairs they had been sitting on…Those without chairs kneel
heads to the floor. Some pray quietly, some loudly... People prayed for their families, for the nation, for the government. Surely if God can change Uganda he can change Argentina.

In these stories we see the worldwide connections of people made possible by modern technology, commerce, and religion. People in Argentina are connected to people in Uganda. Individuals in one city connected to people and events in another and sometimes vicariously living the experiences of others in far-flung places. There are those in New York City with links and connections to Africa, Europe, Asia, Latin America, and Australia that are nonephemeral enough to convey economic, cultural, symbolic, social, and religious capitals. In these flows the world and its places have crystallized into a single city. The flows and spaces have swarmed into a single deterritorialized urban civilization. Any group of persons spurred on by energy—economic, religious, cultural, social, whatever—are producing new patterns of activities and collective behavior. They are continuously building and rebuilding an emergent city. This city exhibits a character, a “personality,” or let us call it “charisma,” that applies to any one person, group of persons, or city, but only at the level of group of cities. Charisma? Max Weber, if he were alive today, might define it as “a certain quality of a city’s character by virtue of which it is considered global, concrete, virtual, cosmopolitan, and emergent, and treated as endowed with awe, ultra-place, or at least specifically exceptional powers of connection, exquisite qualities of placelessness, or extraordinary force of transnational swarm.”

The exploding energy of Pentecostals captures something of the time we live in or the nature of the emergent Charismatic City. It is an exploding world of energy and energy expenditure for the “creation” of new authentic worlds or a catastrophic indistinct capitalist totality. If work (expenditure of energy), the eros of work, and the suspension of its sacredness are the primary tensions of the emerging civilization, then the exploding energeia (energy) of Pentecostals may hold a key to deciphering the nature of the emerging worldwide civilization we have named the Charismatic City. Pentecostalism disposes energy toward a new use, without abolishing the old use. And in this way—in the sense of Giorgio Agamben—it renders work or energy expenditure inoperative, that is, deactivating the primary purpose for which the exercise of energy has been inscribed and separated in the secular city. Pentecostalism’s exploding energia (which always reminds us of ergon and orgia, work and overflow, work and inoperativity, the “orgasmic quality of work”) in its e-motion and com-motion unbounds the world (or global cities). The exploding energy is the work (ergon) of weaving a network. The Charismatic City or
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Civilization is about energy—economic, religious, cultural, social, whatever. Energy is at once

*orgion* and *ergon*, unbordering and border, the border unbordering itself in order to be the border it is. As *orgion*, the *ergon* is toward-*: it is toward-the-world, it “makes up” a world, the whole of an exploding world. As *ergon*, the *orgion* is also toward-*: it unbounds in a measure, cadence, and rhythm that in turn make up a world, the very same exploding world.¹⁰

**Theological Geographies and the Charismatic City**

The Charismatic City has a “history” or a trajectory of development, and to this we now turn. The Charismatic City as space of collective human activities and interactions or metonymy of contemporary civilization as a paradigmatic form of the city is an evolution of earlier paradigmatic forms: the Sacred City and the Secular City. That there are three forms of the city derives from the notion of the Church or from taking the Church as a point of departure for historical and geographical analyses of urban civilization. The key idea of the organization of the Church is that persons are called out of their family, tribe, ethnicity, caste, blood and soil, and class to form the body of the Christ. Membership is thus essentially voluntary. Besides, such an organization is not geared to take over the state or the governing institutions of the land. It stands as a civil society, in the space between the family and the state. The Church is a space between spaces. Let us call this notion of the Church the voluntary principle.

This principle is complemented by another principle that points to the concentration-dispersion of divine presence in society. The second idea of the Church is that it is a special place of divine presence or it has historically claimed to have special access as a body of Christ to God’s presence. After all, where two or three are gathered in the name of Jesus Christ, he is there in their midst. And the institutional church as a gathering of thousands, millions, or billions over the centuries has come to see itself as the site of the concentrated presence of God. And this is contrary to the belief or founding idea of the Church as Lamin Sanneh bears witness and is worth quoting at length:

Christianity was not a belief in an axis mundi, and so could flourish anywhere as experience-based personal faith. The idea of holy place was not an immutable, timeless place of dwelling; it was wherever believers found God...As such Bethlehem [the birth place of Jesus Christ] was emptied of cultural content and elided to a universal incarnation and Jerusalem to a figurative heavenly city...The idea of promised land survived in the
church but only in a radically transformed sense, as a concept of open multiple locations rather than a fixed axis mundi. Jerusalem was a prototype of a Christian particularity without borders...There are many birthplaces of the religion as there had come to be new communities of faithful people, and as many visitations of Pentecost as there had been hearts and minds set aflame and occasions of bold witness. Christianity was a religion for all seasons, fit for all humanity. Whatever its core was, it was not in one time, in one place, or in any one language.\textsuperscript{11}

Let us take the two principles and examine their interactions and dynamics over the centuries to give us a clue on how to typologize the paradigmatic forms of cities. We will score the paradigmatic forms based on how high or low they are on the voluntary principle scale and whether or not a particular form is marked by belief (ideology) of concentrated or dispersed presence of the divine. (By the way, I will only provide a thumbnail sketch of the typology or the sociohistorical evolution of the city in this introduction. I reserve a more detailed discussion in chapter 1.) The Church comes out with high points on the voluntary principle scale and the historical institutional church operates with an ideology of concentrated presence of God in it.

What we call the Sacred City scores high also on ideology of concentrated divine presence, but low on the voluntary principle. Sacred cities define themselves as special sites of highly concentrated presence of God and incomparable sites of value and meaning, but membership in its overarching religion or residence in the city is not based on the voluntary principle or equal access.\textsuperscript{12} Certainly access to the source of a sacred city’s legitimacy or distribution of the special divine presence that authorizes and elevates it is not democratically distributed. The Sacred City is a special place of glory.

The Secular City on the other hand is based on ideology of dispersed divine presence, decentered locatedness of God. The presence of the divine in any human society is not tied to any one institution or site. God is everywhere and equally so. Every site of God’s presence—which is pretty much everywhere—is morally equal. The Secular City is the horizontal or spatial expansion or dispersion of divine presence or God’s sacred \textit{koinonia}. The sacred presence is received outside any special place. The Secular City signifies the dimension of capacity for growth or numerical increase of the receivers and sites of divine presence.

While the notion of the Secular City in history as put forward by Harvard’s Harvey Cox (in his 1965 book \textit{The Secular City}) tilts highly to dispersion on the concentration-dispersed index of divine presence, it is low on voluntary principle. Not that it sets out to be deliberately so, but the era of the Secular City is marked by nationalism and denominationalism,
and compared to today’s globalization (\textit{mondialisation}), its notion of cosmopolitanism is restrictive. Though the secular-city argument, unlike the straight dead-of-God thesis, acknowledges divine presence in the cities, it presumes the dispersed presence or mana to be condoned in protected preserves.\textsuperscript{13} It could not really work out as a non-national, rhizomatic, or networked \textit{cizi-zation} of the divine presence. The Secular City as it is tied to and located in nation-state is somewhat marked by territorial allegiance and cultural identity. While divine power/presence, as Cox argues in his book, is dispersed (rather than absent) in the Secular City, “disciplinary power proceeds primarily through the organization, enclosure, and control of individuals in [national] space.”\textsuperscript{14} Furthermore, though the secular-city argument acknowledges that most residents of the modern city cannot strive without some sense of religious feeling, it enjoined the residents to leave it in the closet when they enter the public square, just as the secularists would advise. For this reason, in the 1960s and 1970s, they made common cause with the death-of-God theology and philosophy.

Most of the proponents of the secular-city argument, like the secularists, saw and felt afraid of the visceral register of intersubjectivity that religion can generate, and they worked to shove it out of the public square. They were blind to the multiple ways of encountering God’s presence and the politics of becoming that have not been raised to the register of ethos and organization of public life. They ignored the protean cultivations of the divine presence at the dense points of pneumatological imagination below the threshold at which formal lines of demarcation between public and private life kicks in. Thus, the new (such as the Charismatic City) came into being below their sightline. The new is, among others, a visceral intersubjectivity that acts and reacts with intense energy.

If the Secular City is the horizontal or spatial expansion of God’s presence, the Charismatic City is the vertical, intensive, and growth pattern of the same presence in human society. The Charismatic City points to the more longing reception and an increase in the exercise of the spiritual gifts by recipients. It is the intensive and extensive growth in the immanent divine-quickening presence or the immanent power of life.\textsuperscript{15} So, in a sense, the Charismatic City is the charismatization of the Secular City. Charisma comes to the Secular City. Though the Charismatic City awakens the Secular City toward God’s power or renewed fellowship with the divine, it never becomes fused, controlled, or possessed by the Secular City awakened by it. The copresence of the Secular City and the Charismatic City in our contemporary civilization is not like the \textit{being} of state (\textit{substance}), but that of an event. Among the reasons it is an event is that it is not the daily work that sustains a civilization that necessarily makes it as it is. It becomes so when the city or the work of civilization
becomes a site for the manifestation of the Spirit’s liberatory power. The Charismatic City is never a finished project, as it must always start at the beginning in following after the Spirit; it must start “in a fresh divine work.”  

This is the nature of genuine spatiality, the copresence with one another and with God’s Spirit. The spatiality of the Charismatic City is realized and made visible in the mutuality that is open to the Spirit’s active presence, transformative action, and surprises. Theologian Elizabeth Jarrell Callender of New Zealand in her dissertation, which is based on Karl Barth’s doctrine of the divine perfection of omnipresence, interprets spatiality in a way that is very insightful for interpreting the ethics of the Charismatic City:

Barth claims that God is spatial, thereby rejecting the common belief that God is a-spatial. Spatiality, defined as “proximity at a distance,” describes the way in which one is present to another in the most intimate and personal fellowship possible yet without becoming the other. Individual distinction (“distance”) is not merely upheld but is real only in the union of a rightly ordered fellowship (“proximity”). Barth also asserts that God has His own space and even is His own space. Furthermore, God makes space for others to have their own place.

But I am getting ahead of the story. We launched into a discussion of the Charismatic City without laying out how the two principles of voluntarism and concentration-dispersion of divine presence apply to it. We will now lay them out and then proceed to flesh them out by locating them in the intercalating contexts of the emerging global civil society (empire), resurgence of religion, and the explosions and whirling dervishness of energy. To this task we now turn. The Charismatic City is as high as the Church on the voluntary principle, and as far-flung as the Secular City on the index of concentration-dispersion of divine presence. Membership (citizenship) is not based on blood and soil. It is completely free from fascinations about gene pool, caste, or class. It is for universal membership on the basis of equality and dignity of all human beings created in the image of God. The divine presence is in the midst of God’s children, and no one institution, site, or city can lay claim to an exclusive, privileged, or superior right to it. The Spirit of God is like the wind that goes wherever it pleases. God’s Spirit pops up in Buenos Aires, Brooklyn, or Berlin, in magnificent cathedrals and temples and in chicken coops where people are gathered for God. Besides, God’s Spirit cannot be captured to legitimize political institutions, state governance, sacralized nations, or personal opinion.

Take, for instance, the flow of spiritual energy in pentecostal churches that was described earlier. The flow is not wedded to the model of the nation-state, and the participants are not called into it on the basis of
intrinsic biological, ethnic, or racial identity. The God they enthusiastically encounter is not conceived as confined to any given place, sacred location, or time. Their God is not concentrated at one site, but dispersed. For Pentecostals the sacred is dispersed into multiple sites of encounter. Each site is a place of intense encounter, community, and identity. They individually and severally connect as the body of Christ. There is a crucial difference between how the proponents of the secular-city thesis understand the dispersion of divine presence and that of Pentecostals. For the former God’s presence is dispersed into space, but for the Pentecostals it is not enough that it is dispersed into space, it is also dispersed into place.

Callender marks a crucial theological distinction between space and place: “‘Space’ is usually a general term, connoting an infinite, open-ended, unattainable, uncontrollable and dynamic mystery which surprises, terrifies and delights. ‘Place,’ on the other hand, tends to be more specific, normally referring to a particular, limited location or status, one that indicates knowledge and identity, encounter and community.”

In this sense, space or spatiality proper to the immanent divine presence in the midst of human existence is always a network of places. The Charismatic City is the worldwide network of political, economic, cultural, religious, legal, corporate, and technological forces and places without a controlling center. It is the empire that is marked and penetrated by the eros-ticization of charisma, suffused with rapid, exuberant emotional energies, and acknowledged dynamics of the inner moral fabric that drive civilizational shifts. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, who call the empire “a universal, catholic community,” also describe it as a city. “The divine city,” they add, “is a universal city of aliens, coming together, cooperating, communicating.” They deny that this city has any transcendent telos and that it remains absolutely immanent. But does immanence always mean that the city lacks inner moral fabric? Is the multitude or any part of it not marked and penetrated by religion or some kind of faith? With many religions in various stages of resurgence as fueled by the forces of empire and in resistance to empire, it makes little sense to neglect religion in the catholic community. Max Stackhouse argues that

the neglect of religion as an ordering, uniting, and dividing factor in a number of influential interpretations of globalization [or empire] is a major cause of misunderstanding and a studied blindness regarding what is going on in the world. This has direct implication for how we view the possible contributions of a Christian theology and ethics in relation to globalization.

Let us ask the question about immanence and inner moral fabric in another way. When the multitude or uncoordinated scattered persons
and groups generate power by acting (even if temporarily) in concert (as Hannah Arendt argues), is it not conceivable that at such a moment of togetherness there could be collective effervescence, an explosion of abundant energy? The city of empire-multitude is a city of pulsating energies, eros of gifts (charis, charismata), and charisma (mana, emotions of intersubjectivity, sensus divinitatis).

**An Ethical Vision of the Charismatic City**

What does Pentecostal social ethics have to offer to public life in the Charismatic City? What should be the shape of Pentecostals’ ethics today (in the Secular and Sacred Cities), knowing that their ethics will be defined by and is for the Charismatic City as New Jerusalem, “a cosmopolitan and complex urban civilization in which all peoples of the earth can bring their gifts”? Understanding the charismatic and universal public life of the New Jerusalem is the key to Pentecostal cosmopolitan social ethics.

In both the Sacred and Secular Cities ethical disposition is anchored to the command of a god (gods) and to reason. Either city presents itself as the constituency embodying the authoritative source of morality and normality to govern all citizens or spheres of life. The ethics of the Sacred City is disposed to divine commands, and reason reigns in the Secular City. In its intense preference for reason over revelation or faith commitment, the Secular City banished religion, or at least attempted to drive it away, from the public square. The understanding of Secular City as the metonymy for the dispersed divine presence is fundamental to its whole attitude toward guarding the public square from dominance of a single religion. If any site, group, or theological elaboration of God represents an aspect or dimension of God or divinity, then no single place, group, or theology can claim to be one and the same as the totality of divinity.

But in the Charismatic City there is an ethos of critical responsiveness to preexisting moral ideas (initiated by religion or reason) and a creative adaptation to movement of differences in a culture. The ethos of the Charismatic City is paradoxical. The ethos is called into being in the tense relation between the sacred and the secular, but in its continued emergence its identity exceeds the energies and identifications of the Sacred City that provoked the Charismatic City coming into or impregnating the Secular City. In this togetherness or ordered relationship, the Secular City becomes the Charismatic City but the Charismatic may not become secular or sacred but will keep coming to both of them.

Part of the task of the critical responsiveness and creative adaptation will be to develop an ethics that can truly reflect the character of the
Charismatic City. I believe that the task before Pentecostal ethicists and for that matter Christian ethics is to figure out how the city can form people with virtues sufficient to witness to the truth of equality of human beings who are created in the image of God, and have the right to be all that they can be, given their God-given gifts. The Charismatic City will be known and judged by how it enables the diversity of gifts (charisms) and virtues to flourish. The ablest charismatic social ethics, therefore, is concerned with forming virtuous people and with developing a diversity of gifts. In a word, it is concerned with the development of “freedoms” and the destruction of “unfreedoms.”

Since I have accented the virtues in the ethics of the Charismatic City, I need to be clear how I am using the term. I am not using the term to neuter the impulse for freedom, liberation, and emancipation, nor to accent conforming to the deadening totality of the market or the logic of domination. In my 2009 book on excellence (virtue) titled The Principle of Excellence I argue that virtue cannot be interpreted as supporting a stable social system, but as transformative and liberatory.  

It is about an ardor, energy, force, or drive to move society forward toward justice and not as an affirmation of a system. In that 2009 study I attempted to liberate the concept of virtue from being tied to excessive concern with order and good citizenry in order for it to serve as a liberatory principle for interrogating all present social organizations in the name of a better future.

Recently Jean-Luc Nancy has also come to a similar interpretation of virtue. He arrives at it through the Latin “virtus, virile quality.” I arrived at it through the Greek aretē, proposing it as the endless process of actualization of potentialities and possibilities toward human flourishing and justice. His interpretation, like mine, rejects the MacIntyrean version that dominates thinking about virtue in the academy. Nancy argues that understanding virtue as drive that is in and works through human beings is

the only thing that can, beyond justice, or rather, as the very excellence (the hyperbolic value) of justice, displace the regime of power and money as we know it. Which is to say: it is the only thing that can displace what we designate by capital and technology, or what designates itself more and more visibly as the indefinite accumulation of ends in the generalized devastation of dignity.  

All this has implications for the way we approach the management of our institutions, community and their common good in the Charismatic City. At the minimum, a good governance (administration, management)
practice will involve the creation of possibilities for community (institution) and participation by all its members so that their potentialities can be drawn out for the common good. A community or institution should be adjudged good because it allows its people to develop their potentialities in the pursuit of ever-greater common good. How well a community does this will depend on how it allows individuals to develop their unique traits, capabilities, and potentialities and on how well these individual endowments are related to each other in the pursuit of the common good. A well-governed community or institution is the one that is adept at combining these two opposite tendencies or processes: a movement toward uniqueness counterbalanced by a movement toward union.

And no one class or group is allowed to impose its view of the common good on the rest of the society. The common good of any society is truly common only when it is in immanent relation with all goods in that society. The existence of a common good in a society means that for each and every one in that community the cause and effect of all goods belong to the same plane. The distinction between goods (such as relations of cause and effect, prior and consequent) is precluded insofar as the common good at the collective level refuses two or multiple categories of goods, two uncommon planes of goods or priority. No groups, classes, or persons stand in relation of transcendence to another even as their positions or preferences are distinguishable. All positions, preferences, and distinctions therefore are preserved in immanent relation. The common good is that good the realization of which demands that every good (of a class, group, race, person) affects others as much as others are affected by it.

**Space and Pentecostal Theology**

It is time to situate this book in the space-time fabric of Pentecostal theology. This book opens up Pentecostal theology to an interpretative geography. It emphasizes the centrality of space in understanding the contemporary moment of the evolution of the Pentecostal-charismatic movement and its anxiety. The fundamental anxiety of the movement has somewhat shifted from time (eschatology and apocalypse) to space and space of sites, and relations within and between them. The concern of the moment is not so much about the accumulated past racing toward an end, but the epoch of living side by side, in juxtaposition with other faiths, secularism, and avidly pluralistic sentiments. It is an epoch in which the themes of accumulated presence of the divine, the Holy Spirit in one building or one type of chosen, peculiar royal people have shifted to that
of dispersion of divine presence, simultaneity of life worlds. But the critical understanding of the contemporary movement is still dominated by the temporal-master narrative of believers located in the making of history and not by the geographical imagination.

In this book, I want to examine various aspects of Pentecostal ethics in the processual formation and reformation of cities as contextualization of interreligious or divine encounters. Now this is not about a sociological investigation of Pentecostal life in cities, but to use the grand nature of cities as the privileged framework to understand the changeability of the social world, and how this should inform the discourse of Pentecostal social ethics. By “grand nature” of cities I mean that if certain geographies or sites of residence are considered sacred, secular, and global, then how do these “natures” intrude upon the discourse of ethics, from the detailed empirical lifeworlds of Pentecostals located in secular and sacred cities to the abstract socio-ontological concept of global commons or global civil society?

The story of the Holy Spirit as the power and freedom to initiate something new is not about events and possibilities that only sequentially unfold in time—from the old in the past and present to the new in the future. The capacity to begin, the power to initiate something new, the pentecostal principle, is also about “simultaneity and extension of events and possibilities.” The new also happens as a Big-Bang of explosion as infinite numbers of events and possibilities converge, swirl, whirl, and disperse at a center. That is to say, instead of looking at the emergence of the new as an arrow that moves in a straight line, we consider the new as the infinite movements that occur from the core to the periphery as networks of lifeworld collide at an infinitely dense space. The emergence of the new involves geographical as well as historical projection. It is space and not time (we have a sense of gathering of God’s children in the ultimate future) that hides the new from us, occludes the consequences of what God is doing among us or the consequences of globalization or the compression of time and space. The famous gap in lived experience—what the Gospels describe as the already/not-yet—is more and more sustained by space. To prophesy about the not-yet in today’s world is to know the difference between the secular (or sacred) city and the Charismatic City (the global civil society, the worldwide commons).

The theology of the new things God is doing can no longer ignore spatiality and simultaneity in preference for historicity and sequence. Pneumatological theology on any subject is incomplete and oversimplified if it does not take into account “the simultaneity and extension of events and possibilities” of inhabitants of space. Theology is too serious to be left in the hands of those Michel Foucault calls “the pious descendants
of time.” As Edward Soja, the distinguished geographer, argues in a different context:

We cannot longer depend on a story-line unfolding sequentially, an ever-accumulating history marching forward in plot and denouement, for too much is happening against the grain of time, too much is continually traversing the story-line laterally. A contemporary portrait no longer directs our eye to an authoritative lineage, to evocations of heritage and tradition alone. Simultaneities intervene, extending our point of view outward in an infinite number of lines connecting subject to a whole world of comparable instances, complicating the temporal flow of meaning, short-circuiting the fabulous string-out of “one damned thing after another.” The new, the novel, now must involve an explicit geographical as well as historical configuration and projection.

The dominance of temporality over spatiality runs deep in Christian theology. Saint Augustine once said human beings were created last, on the sixth day, so they could make a beginning—start a creative life on the eighth day after resting on the Sabbath. He famously wrote: “that a beginning be made man [sic] was created.” Everything in this set of ideas speaks of time, history, sequence, or event. What if creativity is not only about beginning, not only about making a start after a delay, stalling, or inactivity? Creativity is also about space, geography, locality, juxtaposition, or simultaneity. So unlike Augustine, or to complement his thought, we may add that a connection (cut) be made man (woman) was created. Human beings were created as the peripheral edge of the edifice of creation (and of time) so that the margin (periphery) is the source and the cutting edge of expansion, connecting the already to the not-yet or the here to the there. Creativity in a certain sense is making a cut (be-ginnan) in the fabric of being and rethreading or suturing the wound. If the Sabbath was a cut in time, a separation of times of divine and human creativity, then insertion of man (woman) was the last cut into the fabric of space (matrix of possibilities) in the hands of the Creator that prestaged the creaturely restless cut and re-cut (recapitalatio), or separated the divine and human cuts on the terrain of the earth.

To further add to Augustine’s insight let us explore the idea of human beings created at the edge of both time and space. The separation of the sixth day from the eighth day by the Sabbath may also indicate the original spatialization, the distance between the human created on the sixth day and the world, which he (she) objectifies as the beginning of his (her) consciousness. The separation may refer to what Martin Buber calls the “primal setting at a distance.” He argues that existential spatiality
is the first principle of human life or consciousness. “It is the peculiarity of human life that here and here alone a being has arisen from the whole endowed and entitled to detach the whole from himself as a world to make it opposite to himself.” Or as Edward Soja puts it:

Objectification, the primal setting at a distance, relates to what Sartre calls “nothingness,” the physical cleavage between subjective consciousness and the world of objects that is necessary for being to be differentiated in the first place, for being to be conscious of its humanity. In this essential act, this original spatialization, human consciousness is born (although borne may just be appropriate). Nothingness is thus nothing less than primal distance, the first created space, the vital separation which provides the ontological basis for distinguishing subject from object.

So in the combined sense man (woman) was created at the edge of both time and space, humans are the true eschatos (in the original meaning of a spatial or a temporal end/edge). Human lives do take place at this edgy and porous boundary; and in the words of Catherine Keller, they exist at the “horizon that always recedes again into a ‘not-yet’ that ‘already is,’ or nothing at all.”

Given the foregoing, our engagement with the geography of the Spirit’s movements (as captured in the notion of the Charismatic City) is thus not a mere areal differentiation of pattern of religious encounters or the action and meaning of human-God relation in specific context, but a vigorous attempt at spatialized theology of history or historico-geographical explanation of Spirit’s movements. In this method of inquiry, we are not asking questions about the outcomes of the adoption of Pentecostal-charismatic spirituality or constraints against it in a given geographical context. The method is to enable us to understand the dialectic of the Spirit not as a temporal mechanism (rhythm), but as a spatial phenomenon. And this effort is an assertion of space or socio-spatial dialectic in critical theological theory.

This assertion of space in theological theory is not necessarily a complete disregard for time, but a rebalancing effort both in theology and in critical understanding of grand natures of cities. In the Sacred City, time and space are sacred. The sense of purpose and meaning is present to time and space in the city. The divine was particularly present and concentrated within the city, and the flow of time and calendar upholds this conviction. But in the Secular City the divine presence is dispersed, and in the multiple places, spaces or spots and time have lost any meaningful purpose. At least, the meaning of future is deferred to eternity, present time is standardized, rationalized, and universalized for production,
distribution, consumption, and global exchange, and there is hardly any sense of indebtedness of the present generation to the past (and its gods). The past is lost or devalued in the new myth of progress to an ever-unreachable future.

There is also another important difference between the Sacred City and the Secular City. The Sacred City while accenting its space as the dwelling of God (gods, spirits) was not disconnected from the natural rhythms and organized sequences of time. But as the Secular City dispersed the divine presence (potencies) to a thousand immanent places, all illusion to specialness of space or any space evaporated. Time as born and borne by the myth of progress—temporal progress—became dominant and the Secular City is the city enslaved by the marching of time that never looks backward. The notion of the Charismatic City accents both time and space. It is about space reconnecting time and comprehending cities in the spatiotemporality of the body of Christ. (We will take up the theme of the body of Christ in chapter 9.) This city is not contained within any one nation or within any one secular city. It is interspatial sociality of places, which weaves itself as the “flesh” of the body of Christ. Nations and their cities are “called out” of their comfortable commons into a larger commons, the commons of the New Jerusalem, the global civil society, the world ecclesia. This weaving of bodies to participate in the body of Christ and to become the “flesh” of the body reminds us of the point that Graham Ward makes in his 2000 book, Cities of God. He envisions the situation and time when local ecclesial bodies will function first locally and then expand “ever outward to embrace the civic and social bodies within which they dwell. What we need today is a theology of the city that recalls us to the cosmological.”

In the Charismatic City, divine potencies are still dispersed, but space is seen as what places people, what grounds social relations. Places ground social relations and signify the relationality of the sites of social practices. To place, therefore, means to locate people in a specific spacetime matrix in which they stand in and stand forth. Places in space allow people to have a sense of locatedness. Thus, the conceptualization and the constitution of the Charismatic City “points to a remaking that could move the world away from historical uprootedness and discontinuity” that have plagued many persons and peoples.

With this in mind, the Charismatic City is not contradictory to the two other cities but contrastive. Many of the values of the earlier ones are preserved and transcended in it. The movement from the Church to the Secular City to the Charismatic City may be seen as the Spirit of life, vitality, the “love of life” making more explicit spatial move, embracing
people or the city in the open space. Jürgen Moltmann’s theology that links God’s Spirit to spatiality is instructive here:

When the heart expands and we can stretch our limbs, and feel the new vitality everywhere, then life unfolds in us. But it needs a living space in which it can develop. Life in the Spirit is a life in the “broad place where there is no cramping” (Job 36:16). So in the new life we experience the Spirit as a “broad place”—as the free space for our freedom, as the living space for lives, as the horizon inviting us to discover life… But how else could “life in the Spirit” be understood, if the Spirit were not the space “in” which this life can grow and unfurl? 38

**Outline of Chapters**

The book unfolds as a fractal, a leaf and its tree. As they say, the leaf is a tree and the tree is a leaf. Chapter 1 is the leaf, which is a miniature tree. Chapters 2–8 are the tree, an elaboration of all that is in chapter 1. Chapter 9, the penultimate chapter, speculates on the philosophical-theological notion of the city as a body; the Charismatic City as the body of Christ, the emerging universal body of Christ in which the gifts, resources, creativity, and spiritual momentum of this globalizing age profoundly and pro-fanely intersect. We make the daring argument that the Charismatic City is the true body of Christ (broadly considered), what the church is supposed to be. Chapter 9 takes the perspective of an observer of the tree and its leaves and such observer searching for a new metaphor of the city to describe his or her observation. Chapter 10, the concluding chapter, offers a summary of the “fruits” (findings) of the tree (book) and takes us deeper to see other dimensions of the tree, especially its roots.

Chapter 1 (“The Charismatic City: Religious Sense and Sensibility for Future Urban Design”) is a narrative of the Charismatic City. Like Stanley Hauerwas I believe that “every community and polity requires a narrative.” 39 This chapter in its narrative will lay out the logics and image of the Charismatic City in a systematic way. This narrative will not only condition our interpretation of the social ethics of the Charismatic City, but also the character of the ethics of the cities that lead up (or coexist) with it.

While this first comprehensive pass over the story of the Charismatic City serves a methodological claim for the whole of the book, chapter 2 (“The Church: Beginnings and Sources of the Charismatic City”) zeros in on the early beginnings of the city in the history of the Church as an ecclesia. For this I resort to Max Stackhouse’s interpretation of the place of the church in history and a key to the philosophy or theology
of history. His theology of history is the church (*ecclesia*) interpreted in terms of the spiritual impulses of history, the dynamics of globalization, and the movement toward the *New Jerusalem*, an urban, cosmopolitan civilization, a global civil society. The church, as the “mother” of a new and decisive kind of social institution beyond kinship, class, and state, is the turning point in history, and it is that which can potentially lead history to its fulfillment, to the *New Jerusalem*. Globalization is a providential process that is leading humanity to the global civil society, to the New Jerusalem. In this journey, he argues, the church is the originary image of globalization’s future. The role of social ethics (drawing its values and orientation principally from the Judeo-Christian worldview) is to define the proper ethos for the emerging global civilization.

His narrative of the evolution of the global civil society or the New Jerusalem focuses on its emergence *over time*. But we intend to examine it *over space*—both in a successive and simultaneous sense. From one perspective we see the city (the global civil society) on a continuum of cities: Sacred City, Secular City, and the Charismatic City. But from another angle, the Charismatic City is not a replacement or displacement of the Sacred City or the Secular City. Even as the Charismatic City is emerging, both the sacred and the secular cities endure and persist alongside it on the same terrain. More importantly, at any given time, a citizen is simultaneously in either a Sacred City or a Secular City, and in the Charismatic City. The emerging global commons, or the Charismatic City as a city without foundations, shoots or cuts through both the secular and the sacred cities without obliterating them. (This is the special form of conceptualization required by a spatial rather than a temporal turn to the subject. As the hymn puts it, time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears its sons away.) It is for this reason that, in chapters 3 and 4, we construct a pertinent form of Pentecostal social ethics for the Sacred City and the Secular City, respectively, even as we proceed in chapters 6–8 to construct the ethics of the Charismatic City.

In chapter 3 (“The King’s Five Bodies: Pentecostals in the Sacred City and the Logic of Interreligious Dialogue”), I turn to the work of Nigerian scholar of religion Jacob Olupona to explore the nature and ethics of the Sacred City. Harvard’s Olupona has recently written a brilliant book on Ile-Ife, the Sacred City of Yoruba traditional religion, with the provocative title *City of 201 Gods: Ile-Ife in Time, Space, and the Imagination*. His book clearly shows that the Yoruba believe that there is a concentrated divine presence in Ile-Ife (fixed *axis mundi*). His analysis of the sacredness of Ile-Ife revolves around the nature and myths of Yoruba sacred kingship and yearly cycle of religious festivals. We will engage with his thought on his own terms and terrains, especially with regard to the
divine kingship. For it is in this sphere of analysis he best shows the concentrated divine presence in Ile-Ife and how group conflicts over how to interpret or appropriate this heritage are determinative of social ethics. He particularly discusses how Pentecostals are not submitting to the traditions of the Ile-Ife and this is causing social tensions in the city. We will attempt to construct a social ethic of interreligious conflict dialogue based on the Yoruba theory of sacred kingship and political sovereignty. The question we formulate and answer is what kind of social ethics will best serve Pentecostals in a sacred city in service of a different religion.

Olupona’s analysis of interreligious conflicts in Ile-Ife underscores the point I am making about crafting social ethics for the Charismatic City. The Pentecostals in Ile-Ife are simultaneously living in three paradigmatic cities and thus it is useless to talk about social ethics only with the Charismatic City in mind. They need a form of social ethics structured to address their concerns in a traditional sacred city. Ile-Ife is also a university town well connected with modernity. So the Pentecostals are also daily negotiating the ethos of the secular age. Furthermore, Ile-Ife is well influenced and linked with globalization and the modern means of communication. The traditional religion of the city has become a world religion and part of the worldwide resurgence of religions. Thus, Pentecostals in Ile-Ife are also card-carrying members of the intercalated Charismatic City.

If Stackhouse is the griot, jelí, that takes us through the ground story of the Charismatic City in chapter 2, and Olupona informs us of the vibrancy of the Sacred City in our era in chapter 3, then Harvey Cox who wrote the bestselling *The Secular City* in 1965 will guide us through the ways in which Pentecostals are inhabiting the Secular City all over the world in chapter 4 (“Fire from Heaven: Pentecostals in the Secular City”). We will engage Cox’s thought and deploy it to decipher the form of Pentecostal social ethics suitable or operating in the Secular City. Cox’s portrayal of Pentecostals as focused on imagination, moral relevance of surprise, and apprehending concrete particulars hints at an improvisatory approach to ethics.

The engagement with Cox starts with his 1995 book *Fire from Heaven*, and burrows deep into this thought. Our engagement with Cox is important for the following four reasons. First, his analyses of Pentecostalism and related social issues are based on ethnographic research. His findings not only give us a perspective on how Pentecostals are viewed and interpreted by secularists, but also offer us an opportunity to push back on some aspects of their analyses.

Second, for 50 years, his thought has been grappling with what kind of religiosity informs or will inform ethical responses to social problems.
Cox combines ethnographic methods, philosophical theology, and history to craft a narrative that examines the intersection of “pentecostalization of religions” and the ethical shape of religiosity in the emerging global civil society. Chapter 4 shows how theologically liberal ideas in his *Fire from Heaven* (1990s) and *Secular City* (1960s) are today used to theologize the relevant shape of faith in the global civil society in ways that hauntingly suggest Pentecostalism, a conservative religious movement, is implicated in the emergence and working of the global secular city that rejects notions of transcendence in religion.

Third, Cox also draws from the idea of New Jerusalem as the focal point for understanding the nature of pluralism in the twenty-first century. This is an idea we have already seen in Max Stackhouse’s work in chapter 2. What Cox teaches us here is that any serious attempt to grapple with religious ethics as a fund for solutions to social problems in the emerging global civil society must reckon with the “pentecostalization” of religions: emphases on religious experience, deeds (not creeds, beliefs, and doctrines), and faith as an exemplary way of life and as confidence in encounters with the divine (and not text-orientation).

Finally, Cox makes a fine distinction between the death of God and the dispersal of the divine presence from traditionally authorized centers of religious powers. His key point is that the rise of the Secular City should not be construed as the death of God in human affairs. The argument of the dispersal of divine presence does not automatically imply the social or ontological death of God. Rather, it makes innovative demands on how we speak about God in the secular age marked by a public resurgence of religion.

In chapter 5 (“Forward Space: Architects of the Charismatic City”), we are not seeking to explain or explicate the Charismatic City, but to implicate it. To implicate the Charismatic City, to ask what we should do with our contemporary or future cities, means starting from the crucial clarifications of the Charismatic City, to attempt a vision of the future city and its design. It is thus not just about uncovering the Charismatic City in the midst of ongoing globalization, a certain freedom of contemporary citizens to give and receive connections marked by exuberant (spiritual) energies, but rather, starting from a precise study of this freedom, to make this freedom the condition of the possibility of future cities or the repair of the social fabric of current cities. And in this way we shall offer a perspective on Pentecostal social ethics as suitable for the emerging global civil society. As it has become somewhat customary in my recent scholarship, I will endeavor to locate such perspective at the multiform intersection of theology and social sciences as coordinated by continental philosophy.
Chapters 6–8 are primarily concerned with developing this perspective, paying attention to the form, suppleness, justice, and orientation of connections. I do so by describing the nature of moral existence in a sociopolitical community that acknowledges not only the diversity of individual gifts, but also our life as a gift. Moreover, I will argue that the connection between basic equality of all human beings and the immanence of the Spirit enables the Charismatic City to face the problematic character of the common good and to truthfully heal the (glaring or concealed) factures of the modern city via a wider-reaching scope of friendship.

Our analysis of friendship in chapter 6 (“Pentecostals in the Inner City: Religion and Politics of Friendship”) suggests that it is not just enough for the Charismatic City to have an ethic of friendship, it must intentionally strive to be a social ethic of friendship. Friendship as a virtue of the inhabitants of the city and social practice of the polity is what it means to have the ability to sustain the narrative that defines the very character of the Charismatic City as a world ecclesia. If this stance is accepted, then the form of the Charismatic City must exemplify friendship.

Chapter 7 (“The Communion Quotient of Cities”) picks on this theme to discuss the nature of spatiality—copresence with one another and with God—in the Charismatic City. We will study the spatial dynamics of our cities in order to point us to what they should appropriately be. Thus I concur with theologian Willie James Jennings when he writes in his 2010 book *The Christian Imagination*:

> By attending to the spatial dynamics at play in the formation of social existence, we would be able to imagine reconfigurations of living spaces that might promote more just societies. Such living spaces may open up the possibilities of different ways of life that announce invitations for joining. Of course, our imaginations have been so conditioned by economically determined spatial strictures that increasingly different people do in fact live next to each other and remain profoundly isolated.\(^{42}\)

The chapter explores ways of philosophically conceptualizing qualitative or quantitative periodic measures of the spatiality of cities. This is to serve as a reminder for how well any particular city is making room for the poor and marginalized to have their own place. This measurement hints at the “communion quotient” of our cities. Are the rich and powerful present to the “least of these ones” in the most intimate way in a rightly ordered fellowship that respects individual distinction.

Chapter 8 (“Religious Peacebuilding and Economic Justice in the Charismatic City”) concludes this section on social ethics with an examination of the concrete issues of peacebuilding and economic justice in a
globalizing world. In this chapter, we will make peacebuilding another measure of communion, and economic justice the plumb line. If peacebuilding is about eliminating (addressing) injuries based on injustice, acknowledging and correcting neglect to establish and sustain right relationships, and paying attention to dynamics of history, then economic justice is one veritable instrument to gauge its progress. Peace and economic justice are interactive in the Charismatic City.

The inner force of the aforementioned chapters demands that we take a crack at the philosophical-theological notion of the city as a (cruciform) body with the potential to enrich our understanding of the concept of the body of Christ. Not only that the preceding analyses drive us to the notion of the Charismatic City as (or is in some sense) the body of Christ, but also the theological, historical philosophical, and ethical discourses of the previous eight chapters are (implicitly) grounded in certain key qualities of the body of Christ. The body is an entitative and nonentitative space/clearing, a concourse of the concrete and abstract, persons and processes, and products and practices. Its logic is coordinated by immanent dispersed divine presence insinuating itself into all facets of our lives and socialities and by a being-with, a “belonging-community” not premised upon race, class, gender, gene, geography, and/or culture.

Shifting registers somewhat, a similar point can be made with common insights from the work of Gilles Deleuze. In consideration of the social flesh of the divine person, who the writer of the book of Hebrews says is the same yesterday, today, and forever, what we take as the body of Christ should be somewhat viewed as a repetition of difference, not of the same or prior fixed identities/borders. Rather, the body of Christ is a series of events that mark the place where the body and its becoming, extension, and swerve (“the coming community”) intersect. The repetition of differences, which are not oppositions, prevents the closure of the body or any system on itself. So the phrase “the same yesterday, today, and forever” as applied to the social flesh is not a simple positing of dead, static identity/matter, but the becoming-different, the rupture and redoubling of existence that perpetually occur in the gap between present and past, and future and present. This is the messianic logic and state of disequilibrium in the time that remains, the body encountering, generating, and preserving a difference that makes a difference. The body of Christ is ever the same in making a difference and thus repeats and expands across time.

Christians understand the body of Christ to gesture beyond (but includes) the human body of Christ and the church. The body encompasses the care and respect for human bodies, embodiment, and preferential option for “the least of these.” The concept of the body of Christ is eucharistically oriented and emboldened to incorporate human products,
transformation of material elements. The metaphor of Christ’s body also involves the broadening of the sacramentality of the Holy Spirit’s dwelling and animation to incorporate human creations and processes as potential sites of the sacred. The image of the body of Christ highlights and accents the love of neighbor, material encounter with the Other/victim, openness to friendships with enemies, attention to differences and solidarity in view of the diversity of human ways of being and doing, and the eschatological communion of all creation.\textsuperscript{45} The body of Christ is about, in, for, and with just and loving relationships, gracefully rooted in life-enhancing goodness, faithfully curved in on wholeness for all, and it is in transformative service of liberation, justice, and hope.\textsuperscript{46} It is, indeed, a light—one that can neither be hidden under a bushel nor confined to the domesticated brightness of candles on a pious altar’s candlesticks.

The body of Christ is a light to the world, a shimmering city of lights showing and scattering God’s light to the world and always extending invitation to all God’s children to witness God’s presence (light) and boundless love in the world (the whole of creation). The global city is a gathering place for all nations; and the Charismatic City is its hill beckoning and drawing peoples “up the hill” of full abundant lives to walk in “the light of God” (Isa. 2:1–5) and to become all that God wants them to be. Prophet Isaiah portrayed the community and the reign of God as a radiant open city—receiving and reflecting light—into which all the earth and its peoples are invited to bring in their gifts and treasures of civilizations and cultures (Isa. 60:1–3, 11). This is a vision and sentiment echoed in Revelations 21:24–26. As already indicated, chapters 6–8 will attempt to show some of the ways this open city, this city of lights, can retain and augment its “saltiness” and manifest and sustain good deeds (Matt. 5:13–16).\textsuperscript{47}

The challenging practical political question from all these is this: How can God’s presence and power that are coursing through the global city enable us to see, judge, and act differently in order to create alternative realities that not only resist capitalist nihilism, but also support human flourishing that is in harmony with the fragile planetary ecology? This is the rousing call of the Charismatic City that is emerging out of the global secular city and late capitalism. By integrating the notion of the Charismatic City into the concept of the body of Christ, I am calling our attention to, arguably, an emergent moral–spiritual power in urban spaces that might enable us to transform the global city for the general good of human beings and more-than-human nature.

Now that I have provided some methodological insights into the movements in this book leading up to chapter 9 (“The Charismatic City as the Body of Christ”) and also shown how the chapter itself advances
creatively and constructively, let us turn to the key questions that engender, hold, and energize the tissue of the chapter’s whole argument. We come to chapter 9 with two theological questions and an attempt at responding to them. What does it mean to think of the Charismatic City as the body of Christ? The body of Christ exceeds the church: for in him all things consist—meaning creation and human socialities hold together (Col. 1:17). The broken flesh of Jesus broke down dividing walls of hostility, removing fundamental boundaries to constitute a new space of reconciliation for the formation of new humanity in God’s presence (Eph. 2:13–16). Just as Jews and Gentiles became one new humanity in place of two, the church and the City can move from two bodies to one in the new space built by (on the body of) Jesus of Nazareth. My argument is that the Charismatic City, the global civil society, the cosmopolitan urban civilization, the global commons is the third expansion of the body of Christ around the globe after the original expansion as the Church and the subsequent expansion as dispersion of the divine presence, which resulted in the Secular City. As Cox once put it, the church is the outrider for the Secular City. “The church appears where tribal and town chauvinisms are left behind along with their characteristic mythologies, and a new inclusive community emerges. The church is a sign of the emergent city of man, an outrider for the secular city.”

Any serious probing of this dynamic of the body of Christ will quickly raise the question of not only what the body of Christ (accumulated and dispersed divine presence) does to the city (social being contextualized in spatial structures), but also what the city can do to the body of Christ, divine presence. How does the divine presence morph and perform in an expanding geographical (or abstract) space without a center or central control? How does space react back on divine (omni-)presence or the body of Christ?

Proceeding from the thoughts in the above paragraph, we can ask the question about whether the Charismatic City is the (or a) new body of Christ in the language of spatial relations. What does it mean to think of the body of Christ as a space or in spatial relations? The body of Christ can be explained as an organization of “spatial relations.” We can quickly illustrate this in two ways. First, the body of Christ is both space-forming (structural relations between the universal and the particular of church) and space contingent (socially constructed; it is filled with politics and ideologies). The body of Christ is both the projection of common (spiritual) bonding on space and an historical ensemble of material bodies in space as a material product.

Second, the body of Christ revolves around two dimensions: one of social or spiritual (God-human. Even this is somewhat spatial: heaven and
earth in transcendence, here and there in immanence-transimmanence) and the other of space (core-periphery). The genius of the body is the interweaving of these two dimensions, but the shortcoming of theologians is their insistence on separating them or failure to take the spatial structure as important as the spiritual or social dichotomy. An important exception is Andrew Walls, the Scottish church historian who sees the sociospatial dialectic of church in terms of core-periphery relation and attributes it to the “instrumental medium of geographically uneven” presence of the Holy Spirit. Walls is not denying the omnipresence of God, he is only pointing to regional or spatial inequalities in the presence, intensity, or reception of the divine power as necessary means for the continued expansion, growth, and survival of the Church. 49

Wall’s insight in a certain sense plays on the dynamics of concentration and dispersion; a logic that the secularists who pronounced the death of God or Christianity failed to understand.

What the secularist did not reckon with in the 1960s was that the motive force of the divine presence is both concentrating and dispersing at the local, national, and international levels. As the divine presence was dispersing away from the traditional sacred centers, it was concentrating within the nation (the emerging evangelical right, Pentecostal circles, and new centers of worship), and at the international level the gravity of Christianity was shifting from the core North to the peripheral global South. (This new form of concentration does not translate into centrality as in the sacred city notion.) The geography of divine presence is shot through with a dynamic of core and periphery, concentration and dispersal. In chapter 1, we will combine this dynamic with the voluntary principle to explore the logic and nature of the Charismatic City and also to explore a type of ethics of urban design that will suit full human flourishing in it.
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