UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA
FACULDADE DE TEOLOGIA

MESTRADO INTEGRADO EM TEOLOGIA ***(1.º grau canónico)***

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A DESCRIPTIVE ASSESSMENT OF SACRAMENTS AS LANGUAGE EVENTS IN LOUIS- MARIE CHAUVET AND DAVID NOEL POWER

Dissertação Final

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Lisboa

2017

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ENDORSEMENT

I certify that this report is solely my work, and that it has never been previously submitted for any academic award.

Kornelius Supranoto Bardata

I, the supervisor, believe that this Dissertation is ready for assessment, and reaches the accepted standard for the Bachelor in Christian Studies.

Prof. João Eleutério

ABSTRACT

This paper is entitled: A Descriptive Assessment of Sacraments as Language Events in Louis-Marie Chauvet and David Noel Power. What motivates the author to proceed with this topic is that the author feels the need of finding a new and creative approach to the sacraments. The author is determined to discuss this topic using the methodology of library reading. The two theologians whose theologies are being presented in this paper, namely, Louis-Marie Chauvet and David Noel Power, are the main sources. In addition to reading the works of Chauvet and Power, the author also gets into discussions with the supervisor. Since Chauvet and Power live in postmodern world, their theology can be of the good readings for students of theology who are interested in the theology of the sacraments in the midst of this ever-changing world. Chauvet, for example, proposes a new looking into the sacraments as language of the Trinitarian communication with his people. The church is the place where this interaction happens. The interaction itself occurs through the listening of the Scripture, sacraments and ethical commitment. In the same rhythm, David Noel Power suggests a theology where the sacraments are read as the language of God's giving. They are the language of God's giving because the church is the bodily present of the Trinity in the church. This present is, in turn, celebrated and relived through the Scripture, the sacraments, liturgy, rite, customs and cultures. Through all these elements, the language of God's giving in the past is brought to life in the present time through the language of the church. Chauvet and Power recommend a fundamental theology through which the sacraments are no longer viewed as alienated from the daily experience of the church.

The paper is written primarily as the author's personal journey into the reflection on the sacraments. The author, therefore, hopes to achieve nothing more important than the growing of a personal love of the sacraments. In the second place, the author expects to have been able to introduce the fundamental sacraments of Louis-Marie Chauvet and David Noel Power to a larger context.

Keywords: Trinity, gift, Church, symbol, Christian identity, Scripture, sacrament, ethics, grace, body, corporeal, liturgy, memory, language, language event, communication, theology, ontotheology, metaphysics, mediation, immediacy, causality, Paschal mystery, absence, hermeneutics.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I cannot express enough thanks to the Catholic University of St. Joseph, Macau for giving me this precious opportunity to deepen my knowledge of theology. Special thanks to all the professors who were patient with me during my academic life. Also we have on our disposal enormous resources from the library which are indispensible to studies and research.

The same way do I feel indebted especially to Prof. João Eleutério who has been helping me as the supervisor up to the completion of this academic paper. He has worked more than a supervisor is supposed to do. I will never thank him enough.

I appreciate the support and help from my classmates, friends and all persons who have contributed to my studies, and in particular for the completion of this paper.

Great thanks to the Society of the Divine Word who has allowed me to experience many memorable moments at the Catholic University of Saint Joseph of Macau.

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Introduction

In ancient Mesopotamia when the workers finished sculpturing the statues of their gods, they stopped working and got ready to enter into the inauguration ceremony. The most important part of the ceremony was when the workers would throw into a river all the tools that they used to make the statues. Following this act, the workers and sculptures raised their hands up. A priest of the cult then would walk around to symbolically chop the raising hands with a wooden sword. After being beaten with the wooden sword, the workers and sculptures would say these words: "I did not make it, I swear I did not make it! I did not make it! I swear I did not make it!"[1]

This fact has some points of relevance regarding the theological debates about the sacraments in the Catholic Church. A Hungarian theologian, Alexandre Ganoczy reveals that among the theologians of the second century, Justinian and Tertullian's sacramental theology were characterized by a relation between what they call sacrament and the community of faith.[2] With Augustine occurred an epochal turning of direction in the understanding of the sacraments. Adopting a philosophical frame of thoughts from the Greek neo-Platonist world, sacramental theology has been brought back to the realm of the sacred.[3] From then onwards, the debates on the nature of sacramental theology has been colored by argumentation whether or not the notion of sacrament is related with human experience. Furthermore, if sacrament is related with human being, how does the sacrament affect the human experience?

[1] Cf. Josh Ellenbogen and Aaron Tugendhaft, "Introduction," in *Idol Anxiety*, ed. Josh Ellenbogen and Aaron Tugendhaft (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2011), 1.

[2] Cf. Alexandre Ganoczy, *An Introduction to Catholic Sacramental Theology*, trans. William Thomas (New York: Paulist Press, 1984, 15-16.

[3] Cf. *Ibid*., 20-21.

For a long time, the sacraments were considered as operative means of salvation, where they are only related with the human experience in an instrumental way. The sacraments were seen merely as tools or channels through which the divine acts. One way to ensure the efficacy of the sacrament is through operating the sacrament as appropriate as possible. What is at risk from this way of approaching the sacraments is that it provides a presupposition that God's mercy is controlled by human work. Inasmuch as the tool function or manage to be functioned properly, one can be sure of how effective the grace is given."[4]

Alongside this instrumentalist scheme of understanding the sacraments is the implicit problem that the relationship with God is immediate, even if it is affirmed as mediated. To emphasize the issue of this implicit immediacy, we can verify how the significance of the celebration itself and all elements that are pertain to the sacramental celebration such as, symbols (water, oil, bread and wine) ministers, assembly, gestures, liturgical rites, and customs, are underestimated. Again, what is at risk here is the bodily and corporeal dimension of the sacramental celebration.

Corporeality is a mark of the human existence. It is also the how a subject relates with the world and the world relates with him, it is how the intersubjectivity becomes possible. The faithful comes to celebrate the sacrament through corporeal participation. Corporeality sets stage for participation and communication to occur in the sacramental celebration. How far the corporeality is given attention in the Christian sacramental celebration?

The French theologian Louis-Marie Chauvet whose thought we are trying to discuss in this work initiates a new and creative approach to look at the sacraments. He begins from the

[4] Cf. Louis-Marie Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, trans. Madeleine Beaumont (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2001), xiv-xv.

very fundamental aspect of human existence: all human experiences happen through corporeality. Bodily experience, therefore, is to be taken as primary starting point to discuss the sacraments. Chauvet sees the sacraments as Christian mode of expression of the relationship between the faithful and God. The sacraments as experience means that they a language which peculiar to a group, the Christians. This way, the sacraments are a form of communication between man and God through human experience. Hence, Chauvet stresses that even spiritual experience of God happens through corporeal experience.[5]

Chauvet's notion of language is larger than what the Traditional philosophy usually identifies with utterance of written documents only. Chauvet sees language, first and foremost, as all the different forms of expression which therefore includes verbal languages, gestures, postures, movements and culture. In the frame of the sacramental theology, the language of God's self-communication with man is the church. In the church, the believing subjects are exposed to God's other forms of communication such as the Scripture, the sacramental celebrations and traditions. These types of God's self-revelation form the church. The church, in turn, forms the Christians. What is exhilarating of Chauvet is that there is no need of throwing our tools away or betraying our role-play in the sacrament. On the contrary, human participation is advised and urged. All sacramental celebrations are about human participation in the mystery of God in the church.

The sacraments as language become also the major emphasis of David Noel Power, whose work entitled: *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving* it will be likewise discussed in this paper. Sacrament as language event means what is primary is the communication. Sacrament

[5] Cf. *Ibid*.

is neither the affair of God alone nor of dominion of human instrumental primacy. On the contrary, sacrament implies a communication and participation of man in the mystery of the Trinity in the church.[6]

God communicates his divine self in the church through Word and Spirit. Through the actions of the church, "Christ and the Spirit are operative." The same way we can say that through the language of the church Christ and the Spirit are speaking.[7] For Power, the primary language of the church is her liturgy, customs, tradition and rite. [8] All of these are human mediation of God's self-giving in the church.

The interesting of Chauvet's theology resembles my main admiration of Power's theology. As expression of faith, the sacraments are the language of the church in offering thanksgiving and praise to God through liturgy. The church needs liturgy to relate and communicate with God. This need speaks of twofold importance. First, the church needs liturgy because it is only through liturgical celebration God is encountered in a lived experience. Second, the church needs liturgy in order to be always reminded that God is always the Other. This reminder will turn the church to be humble and open herself to the new inspirations from God. Hence, the tools were not to be thrown away but kept and preserved as mediation and reminder of the workers' and artisan's relationship with the sculpture and the idea of the divine that inspires them.

[6] David Noel Power, *Sacrament: the Language of God's Giving* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999), 1.

[7] Cf. *Ibid*.

[8] Cf. *Ibid*., 1-3.

There have been various responses to Chauvet's and Power's postmodern approach to the sacraments. Most of resistances, not to mention challenges, come from postmodern scholastic scholars. For example, Joseph Mudd in his work entitled *Eucharist as Meaning: Critical Metaphysics and Contemporary Sacramental Theology* comments on Chauvet's twofold practical understanding about Christian sacrifice in the Eucharist.

Mudd questions Chauvet notion of replacing the sacrifice of Christians in the liturgical celebration with filial attitude as Chauvet depicted Jesus who willed to die in order to be obedient to the Father. Mudd sees a risky consequence in Chauvet's reading about sacrifice in that Chauvet changes the commitment of Christian sacrifice from 'die for others' to a motivation to 'die for God.' Here, Jesus sacrifice is not read as 'lays down his life for others to live' but 'lays down his life for God.'[9]

Against Chauvet's critique of ontotheology, Mudd brings in the complexity of intimacy between God and man, supernature and nature. Chauvet's rejection of ontotheology would result in rendering sinful an act of desiring to know. Desiring to know, in Chauvet's reading is act of creating idol. Mudd, however, questions Chauvet's suspicion of idol in the name of intimacy, love between God and man where two hearts are searching for each other in giving and receiving of life.[10]

A theologian by the name of Raymond Moloney welcomes Chauvet's concept of sacraments as 'events of grace' with a question: "is this not efficient causality under another name?"[11] Considering language as 'events of grace' where the humanity and the divine are being

[9] Cf. Joseph Mudd, *Eucharist as Meaning: Critical Metaphysics and Contemporary Sacramental Theology* (Collegeville, Minnesota: 2014), 24-26.

[10] Cf. *Ibid*., 35-36.

[11] Cf. Raymond Moloney, "Symbol and Sacrament," in *Milltown Studies*, 38 (Autumn 1996), 148.

open to each other, through interpretation and fusion of horizons, Moloney defends that even then, language has to be treated as operator in a symbolic view of the world. Language as mediation still implies the presuppositions of causality.[12]

Bernard Blankenhorn, in the same direction, writes a critical review of Chauvet's reading on Thomas's causality.[13] Thomas, written Blankenhorn, did not mean to apply the understanding of sign as an approach to the sacraments. 'Sign' was never a sacramental approach in Thomas sacramental theology. The concept of sign comes as a shift in the development of theological reflections on the sacraments, that is, when sacraments were declared not only signs but also causes of grace. Blankenhorn indicates that Thomas' notion of causality is originated from Thomas' reading of Avicenna. Sacramental causality was quite known as the possession of the Patristic explanation of sacraments.[14] To conclude, Mudd's critical study on Chauvet's work exhibits the all-too-frequent failure of postmodern reflection to come to terms with its own claims.[15]

Our persistence to read these two authors would at some ways be encouraged by the criticism of the Postmodernist approach to the sacraments represented by Chauvet and Power. In addition, our motivation to study Chauvet and Power's fundamental theology of the sacraments is the creativity and originality of the proposals, as well as the link with the practical dimension of theology, namely the liturgy. There remains a great deal of valuable discoveries to be found

[12] Cf. *Ibid*.

[13] Cf. Bernard Blankenhorn, "Instrumental Causality in the Sacraments," in *Nova et Vetera*, 4/2 (2006), 255-294.

[14] Cf. *Ibid.*

[15] Cf. *Ibid*., 37.

from reading both Chauvet and Power. What is presented now at this work is all that we can afford at the moment.

This paper is divided into two parts. Each part contains of three chapters. The Chapter I is presenting a bio-bibliography of Louis-Marie Chauvet. The Chapter II analyses and presents the methodological and presuppositions of the proposal of Chauvet to establish a fundamental theology of the sacraments. The Chapter III explores the theology of the sacraments, namely exploring their definition as symbolic expression in the symbolic order of the church. We open the second part with the Chapter IV, where we present also a bio-bibliography of David Noel Power, The Chapter V analyses the hermeneutical presuppositions of Power that led him to his proposal to understand the sacraments. The Chapter VI explores the application of the consequences of looking at the sacraments as events of language expressing God's gift giving to the entire Creation.

All biblical quotations used in this work are taken from *The New Revised Standard Version* (Catholic Edition).

PART 1

CHAPTER 1 Louis-Marie Chauvet Bio-bibliography

Louis-Marie Chauvet's research can be considered to be the arrival of post-modern implementations in the field of theology of the sacraments. This work will only focus on Chauvet's theology of the sacraments, namely his approach on the notion of sacrament. Taking as his point of departure is the abandonment of the explanation of presence, signification and any concept of Being, Chauvet moves on to find another method of explicating the sacraments utilizing the methodology of postmodern philosophers. We will proceed by presenting his biography and part of his literary production relevant for our research.

1.1. Louis-Marie Chauvet's Biography

Louis-Marie Chauvet was born on January 26, 1941, at Chavagnes-en-Paillers in Vendée, western France.[16] "His birth was in the middle of the Second World War."[17] He grew up in a peasant family. Although life was athwart luxury, the parents continuously fostered the culture of reading in the family. Chauvet improved his interest in reading and writing under the motherly guidance of a simple woman who herself had decided to leave the school at the early age of her life because she had to begin to work. [18] Nonetheless, his mother was one example of a

[16] Cf. Philippe Bordeyne, "Louis-Marie Chauvet: A Short Biography," in *Sacraments: Revelation of the Humanity of God. Engaging the Fundamental Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet*, edited by Philippe Bordeyne and Bruce T. Morrill (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2008), ix.

[17] Cf. Bilju F. Vazhappily, "A Theological Encounter with Louis-Marie Chauvet: A Survey of Recent Anglophone Literature," *Questions Liturgiques,* 92 (2011): 46-85, esp. 46 (footnote no. 1).

[18] Cf. Philippe Bordeyne, "Louis-Marie Chauvet: A Short Biography," ix.

prestigious literary culture in the elementary education of the time. She bequeathed a legacy of a strong reading habit to Chauvet.

Chauvet, like many other boys of his village, was interested in living a life like a priest. After finishing his education at the seminary of Luçon, in the year 1966 Chauvet was ordained priest in his home diocese.[19] Thereafter he was delegated to continue his studies at the Catholic University of the West at Angers.[20]

Being a student at Catholic University of the west at Angers was a turning point in Chauvet's life. His academic adventure at the university laid a solid ground for his later interest in theology, as quoted by Bordeyne: "all theological discourse depends upon the dominant discussion of the era that preceded it, either to argue against it or to reinforce it. It is obvious that mine has been partly constituted as a reaction against the scholastic discourse of my formation at the theological faculty of Angers."[21]

At Catholic University of West Angers Chauvet was taught by some Thomist professors, among whom Chauvet found some were excellent teachers. [22] These outstanding teachers unfortunately were not able to quench Chauvet's curiosity and the inventiveness of minds of other students through their teaching of thomistic theology. They failed to stimulate the student's interests in theology for the thomistic theology, as well as what they were teaching at the university offered no reliable responses to the problems of the time.[23] It was the Church history

[19] Cf. *Ibid*, x.

[20] Cf. *Ibid*.

[21] Cf. *Ibid*., ix.

[22] Cf. *Ibid*.

[23] Cf. *Ibid*.

and biblical exegesis which took his attention the most. Chauvet found these subjects, because of their strong attention to plurality, quite applicable to the need of the time.[24] His passionate reading through Jean Colson's course on ministries in the Acts of the Apostles, for example, provided an astonishing inspiration in approaching the complexity of life at the time.[25]

In 1967 Chauvet defended his dissertation on "*The Priesthood of Christ according to the Epistle to the Hebrews*," which conferred to him the Canonical License Degree in Theology.[26] The presence of some fellow students was told to be helpful significantly for his theological research at the university. The name of Jean-Paul Resbewer stands out obviously. From his friendship with Jean Paul Resweber, who had been Chauvet's classmate at Luçon, Chauvet commenced his academic journey towards Heidegger's critique on metaphysics.[27]

Chauvet committed to continue his studies. He chose Paris as destination. He began his scholarly journey in Paris by attending courses at the Superior Institute of Liturgy in the Catholic Institute of Paris. Alexandre Ganoczy, one of the professors at the Institute, could sense Chauvet's outstanding versatility. Ganoczy recommended him a research topic on penance in the thought of Calvin with a long term agenda that is to comprehend how the Reformers understand the fruit of justification; since the aftermath of the Second Council of Vatican became the milieu of Chauvet's research of liturgical history. Not only that, Ganoczy also helped Chauvet to apply for a scholarship that helped him to spend a year in Mainz, Germany, at the Institute for

[24] Cf. *Ibid*.

[25] Cf. *Ibid.*

[26] Cf. *Ibid*.

[27] Cf. *Ibid*.

European History.[28] Afterwards, Chauvet went back to Paris where he obtained a first degree on l'École Pratique des Hautes Études in 1971,[29] but Ganoczy had been named to the University of Würzburg.[30]

Chauvet's academic journey was full of surprises. When he was pursuing his doctoral studies and his dissertation nearly coming to the end, Richard Stauffer, who had been helping him in dissertation writing, surprisingly quitted from his position due to health problems. The future seemed to be blurred at the moment. The silence was broken and hope rekindled when Pierre Burgelin, who is a Leibniz specialist, agreed to step in and joined the committee. From his reading through the work of Chauvet, Burgelin came to recognize that the last chapter was already more than sufficient for a dissertation. Chauvet finally defended his first doctoral dissertation at the University of Paris I - Sorbonne in 1973 with a Dissertation entitled: *John Calvin: Theological and Pastoral Critique of Scholastic and Tridentine Doctrine on the Sacrament of Penance*.[31]

Chauvet always loves parish ministry more than anything else. The moment he finished the doctoral studie, he returned immediately to a parish in Vendée where he was appointed as a vicar at Les Herbiers.[32] When his profound academic performance came to be known by the Dominican Pierre-Marie Gy, the director of the Superior Institute of Liturgy, Chauvet was strongly recommended to replace Professor Alexandre Ganoczy and to teach at the university.

[28] Cf. Bilju F. Vazhappily, "A Theological Encounter with Louis-Marie Chauvet: A Survey of Recent Anglophone Literature," 46 (footnote no.1).

[29] Cf. *Ibid*.

[30] Cf. Philippe Bordeyne, "Louis-Marie Chauvet: A Short Biography," xi.

[31] Cf. *Ibid*., xi.

[32] Cf. *Ibid*.

Chauvet refused the offer and insisted to work in the parish. Gy attempted to persuade Chauvet's diocese Bishop. This decision, however, remained unchangeable even when Most Reverend Charles Paty, the bishop of his home diocese, had granted permission.[33]

Chauvet was eventually convinced to see a larger need of the church. In 1974 he began to teach in the area of Sacramental Theology at the Institut Catholique of Paris, but without elbowing aside his engagement in parish ministry. From 1982 Chauvet served as the assistant parish priest at the Diocese of Pontoise, near Paris, where he was assigned to Saint-Leu-la-Forêt. After defending his dissertation in theology in 1986, Chauvet began to attract international audience's attention. In 1989 Chauvet was elected professor by the counsel of the Theology Faculty of the Institut Catholique of Paris.[34] From this time onwards, Chauvet has been devoting his life to teaching activity at university and pastoral ministry.[35]

1.2. Chauvet's works

Louis Marie Chauvet is well-known among the theologians who work on the sacraments for his first earth-shattering work published in the United States under the title *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence* (1995). With discourse mostly based on the critical tools of postmodern affirmation of the reality, most readers felt the profundity of this book is so overwhelming. The book was found to be well suited for special use

[33] Cf. *Ibid*., xii.

[34] Cf. *Ibid*.

[35] Cf. Glenn P. Ambrose, *The Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet: Overcoming Onto-Theology with the Sacramental Tradition* (Farnham Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2012), 2-3.

among particular audiences only.[36] Nevertheless the need to make his works more readable and accessible to common Christians and intellectuals remain piling high.

In 2001 *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body* was launched by the Liturgical Press. This second book of Chauvet displays a more applicable and digestible thoughts on sacramental theology. Offering numerous implications for pastoral and liturgical work, *The Sacrament: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body* simplifies the main notion it carries all along, namely, the "symbolical order." Chauvet explicates the logic of the symbolical order at the mercy of the body. The body, here, is to be perceived in a broader sense. Language, culture, tradition, scripture, name and similar bodies are depicted as symbolical expression of human existence, where human beings are historically connected with the "other."

[36] Cf. Glenn Ambrose, Presence and Absence Review of *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, in *America: The National Catholic Review* (November 2001). Americamagazine.org/issue/culture/presence-and-absence (accessed March 15, 2015).

CHAPTER 2 The foundations for Chauvet's Theology

2.1. A Critique of an Ontotheology

The critique of metaphysics is often used to name a common philosophical tendency that marks the arrival of postmodernism.[37] Postmodern thinkers take as their aims the main tenets of Modern philosophy, particularly the Enlightenment. They view Modern philosophy and Enlightenment's inward turn to the subject and search for a foundation for knowledge as causing to a shift from ontology to an ontotheological epistemology.[38]

Postmodernism can be traced in several names, such as: Friedrich Nietzsche, Michel Foucault, Ludwig Wittgenstein, Richard Rorty, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jacques Derrida, Emmanuel Levinas, Jean-Luc Marion.[39] Stanley J. Grenz nominates Michel

[37] While Chauvet himself defines the metaphysical framework as "…a *methodological* concept which we give ourselves, a concept showing *tendency* or an attracting pole characteristic of Western thought since the Greeks," post-modernism is hereby expounded as "another possible tendency or attracting pole for thought, starting from and remaining within this disparity: this second way is that of language, or of the *symbolic.*" Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, trans. Patrick Madigan and Madeleine Beaumont (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1995), 9. Post-modernism, however, remains an unclearly identified term in philosophy. Unlike other fields like postmodern architecture which can be figured out distinctively, the notion of post-modernist philosophy is uncertain. Nevertheless, post-modernism mostly is related with "a complex set of reactions to modern philosophy and its presuppositions, as opposed to the kind of agreement on substantive doctrines or philosophical questions that often characterizes a philosophical movement," or "a complex cluster concept that includes the following elements: an anti- (or post-) epistemological standpoints; anti-essentialism; anti-realism…." Bern Magnus, "Postmodern," in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, General Editor: Robert Audi (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999): 725-726, esp. 725. Post-modernism in philosophical field has caused an extension of a theory in literature called "structuralism." Structuralism argues that language is a social construct which therefore provides categories to understand human experience of reality. The world as a whole is a text. "Just as a text will be read differently by each reader, they said, so reality will be 'read' differently by each knowing self that encounters it." This means the refusal of a single narrative, and "abandonment of both 'onto-theology' (the attempt to set forth ontological description of reality) and 'the metaphysics of presence' (the idea that something transcendent is present in reality). Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996), 5-7. Cf. Ambrose, *The Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet: Overcoming Onto-Theology with the Sacramental Tradition*, 9.

[38] Cf. Ambrose, *The Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet*: *Overcoming Onto-Theology with the Sacramental Tradition*, 9-10.

[39] Cf. *Ibid*.

Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Richard Rorty as a trio of postmodern prophets.[40] As regards Chauvet's critique of metaphysics, especially in the section of 'language as symbolic mediation,' many authors agree that Heidegger's phenomenology stands out more visible than other postmodern philosophers.[41]

Chauvet is indebted to Heidegger (1889-1976) for Heidegger's understatement of traditional metaphysics. Traditional metaphysics has forgotten what Heidegger calls 'the ontological difference,' that is, 'the difference between being and entities." The traditional metaphysics, especially Aristotelian metaphysics, carries a *confused* concept of ontotheology:[42]

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[40] Cf. Stanley J. Grenz, *A Primer on Postmodernism*, 123.

[41] *Ibid*.; also cf. Bruce T. Morrill, "Building on Chauvet's Work: An Overview," *Sacraments: Revelation of the Humanity of God. Engaging the Fundamental Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet*, Philippe Bordeyne and Bruce T. Morrill, xxii-xxiii; cf. Megan L. Willis, "Language as the Sanctuary of Being: A Theology Exploration with Louis-Marie Chauvet," in *The Heythrop Journal,* (2010), 872-880, esp. 872-873.

[42] It is Heidegger's overview of metaphysics that shapes Chauvet's investigative study about traditional metaphysics. Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 26; Cf. Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*: *World, Finitude, Solitude* trans. William McNeill and Nicholas Walker (Bloomington , Indiana, USA: Indiana University Press, 1995), 44-45. Heidegger locates the historical birth of such a confusion. In *Identity and Difference* he writes that all begins with the principle of identity. "Parmenides says: Being belongs to an identity." Identity is the constitutive character of a thing; the unity with itself. This means that a thing can only be identical with itself. What comes later with the Western European thinking was different. The principle of identity was interpreted as the Same. "We interpret Sameness to mean to a belonging together." As a consequence," identity as it is thought of in metaphysics is represented as a characteristic of Being." Hence, while in Parmenides "Being as characteristic of Being…meanwhile we have already fixed the Sameness of thinking and Being as the belonging together of the two." Being becomes the principle foundation of two or everything. Martin Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, translated with an Introduction by Joan Stambaugh (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1969), 23-41. Cf. William Franke, *A Philosophy of the Unsayable* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame, 2014), 142-143. Cf. Carl L. Raschke, "The End of Theology," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, 46/2 (1978), 159-179, esp. 162. Mary-Ann Crumplin, in her description of philosopher Emmanuel Levinas' critique of Western philosophical logic, likewise names Parmenides the 'father of the Western Thinking.' Her research on the fragments of Parmenides' epic poem *On the Truth* (*Aletheia*) unlocks a distinction between what Parmenides says and how he was heard. Cf. Mary-Ann Crumplin, "Emmanuel Levinas on Onto-Theo-Logy: Parricide and Atheism," in *The Heythrop Journal,* 53 (2012): 100-110, esp. 100-101. Crumplin's research, however, reveals a numbers of shortages in Levinas's project on critique of Parmenides. Linguistic barrier is the first failure to be spelled out. Levinas did not have sufficient knowledge of Greek in which Parmenides' *Aletheia* had been written. This topic is clearly not of our concern here. What motivates our study here regarding Crumplin's rereading on Levinas' reading of Parmenides's Aletheia is that "the fact that Parmenides's affirmation of the identity of being and language is conceptually difficult for modern thinking to grasp." (103-104).

> "The confused state of traditional concept of metaphysics: the combining of the two separate kinds of lying out beyond (μετά) as pertaining to *supra*sensuous being and to the *un*sensuous characteristics of the being of beings."[43]

This confused ontotheology generates twofold repercussions. *First*, being is defined and perpetuated in the form of a name. For example: the Good or the One (Plato), the divine (Aristotle), Uncreated being, first cause (*causa prima*), *causa sui*, ultimate reason. Being is thus represented by a name.[44] At this point, the logic of being as *causa sui* in ontology is pictured identical with being as *theos* in theology. [45] *Second*, putting this *unsensuous* entity as the definition and property common to the entirety of entities, being has been treated as a mere technique of explanation of reality. Hence, metaphysics has laid ground for a staggering turn

[43] Cf. Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 44. The latter philosophical themes are more into the *what-ness* of a being or properties of the being, when it is perceived in general. This general concept is understood to be the object of *prima philosophia.* Cf. Panayot Butchvarov, "Metaphysics," *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, general editor: Robert Audi (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 564b.

[44] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 27. To attempt to recognize 'being' through the eyes of philosophy is next to temptations to apply philosophical categories to theological readings. Cf. James V. Schall, *The Modern Age* (South Bend, Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2011), 59-72.

[45] "The concept of ontotheology usually increases the onto-theo-logy confusion, which subordinates philosophy to theology and which reduces theology to an abstract exercise based on reason rather than on faith." Jim Hanson "Ontos and Theos: A Case for Neo-ontotheology," *Theology Today*, 69/2 (2012), 213-224, esp. 213-214. "This is the right name for the god of philosophy. Man can neither pray nor sacrifice to this god. Before the *causa sui*, man can neither fall to his knees in awe nor can he play music and dance before this god." Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, 72; cf. Fergus Kerr, *After Aquinas: Version of Thomism* (Garsington Road, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 85-87. Heidegger's position against the god of philosophy, later on, will be read by American postmodernist Merold Westphal as having two implications. *First*, overcoming onto-theology; and *second*, a way back to what philosopher Kierkegaard once debated, that is, a theology dependent on faith rather than logic. Cf. Merold Westphal, *Overcoming Ontotheology: Toward a Postmodern Christian Faith* (New York: Fordham University, 2001), 6-7.

from the discussion of epistemology of reality to the area of ontological metaphysics, that is, everything that exists ruled by a logic of 'foundation,' which requires a foundational being.[46]

Heidegger demystifies all attempts that try to resemble the appearances of the two distinct realities, *suprasensuous* and *unsensuous*. The first step to be taken is to question the nature of definition. The reasons are in order. *Firstly*, questioning the nature of definition means questioning the whole structure of ontotheology.[47] *Secondly*, making a definition means coming to a direct encounter with being, namely, an encounter without mediation (immediacy). This notion of immediacy has for long time created confusion in the operation of language in traditional metaphysics. [48] This leads us on to Heidegger's further critical examination of language.

2.2. Critique of Onto-theological Concept of Language

Along the line with the ontological character of metaphysics is a belief that there is dichotomy between being and language. Plato's philosophy, for instance, maps a separation

[46] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 27; cf. Ambrose, *The Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet*, 9-10. For this 'turn,' Heidegger in his essay on 'what is philosophy' and 'what is metaphysics' writes that metaphysics, in its traditional meaning, points nowhere but to the fundamental problem of metaphysics in itself. Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 56-57.

[47] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 27; "Metaphysics is onto-theo-logy." Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, 54.

[48] "These *two fundamentally different kinds of lying beyond* come to be combined into *one* concept. The question is not raised at all of what the *μετά* means *here*; rather this is left undetermined." Martin Heidegger, *The Fundamental Concepts of Metaphysics*, 44-45. "Everything else besides being, each and every being, even it is unique, can still be compared with other beings. These possibilities of comparison increase every being's determinability. Because of this, every being is multiply indeterminate. But being, in contrast, can be compared to nothing else. Its only other is Nothing." Cf. Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, new translation by Gregory Fried and Richard Polt (Yale University, USA: Yale University Press, 2000), 79-88. Heidegger's Being is however not to be mixed with the idea of 'being' of what he himself criticizes of the Thomistic foundational philosophy. The Being which underlies Heidegger's critique of Thomistic proposition of a foundational theology is a fact that necessarily exists. If it would never have existed, then, "…there just be one noun and one verb less in our language. Would there just be one noun and one verb less in our language? NO. *Then there would be no language at all*… they could no longer be addressed and discussed ... we ourselves could never be those who *say*. We would never be able to be those who we are because they are, in the ground of their essence, sayers, *the* sayers." This characteristic differs them from plants, animals and also from God. *Ibid*.

between the sensible and the intelligible realms.[49] Aristotle, though favors particular entity *(tode di)* over general "something" *(ti),* is no less dualistic than that of his master.[50] Heidegger's study on Plato reveals that Plato initiates a rupture between the two:

> "…language no longer "gathers in" Being in its unconcealing pro-cession as well as in its re-cession; it is no longer the very place where the world happens; it is the world's reflection."[51]

Language is no longer the world where everything is gathered and manifested as events but merely the shadows cast by the ideals beings embodied by thought. Again, what is certified here is that human being can encounter being directly in his mind without mediation of language.[52]

The primary effect of the dichotomy between the world and language is that language is treated as merely an instrument.[53] In front of a new reality where human being can now come across with being without language, language is belittled from the sanctuary of being to merely a tool. "They use language as a necessary *tool for the translation* of their mental representations for themselves (thought) or to others (voice)."[54]

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[49] Cf. Richard Taylor, *Metaphysics*, 4th edition (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992), 14-15; cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 29. Philosopher Derrida, as described by Jim Hanson, shares the same view as Heidegger that the problem of ontotheology lies with language, "with the disconnection between language and being." Jim Hanson, "Ontos and Theos: A Case for Neo-ontotheology," 214.

[50] Cf. Abraham P. Bos, "Aristotle on the Etruscan Robbers: A Core Text of "Aristotelian Dualism," in *Journal of the History of Philosophy,* 41/ 3 (2003), 289-306, esp. 289; cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 29.

[51] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament,* 29.

[52] Cf. *Ibid*., 30. This point, in fact, encapsulates a central concept in the theory of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), as rephrased by David Holdcroft, namely, "a language (*langue*) is a system of signs forming a well-defined object which can be studied independently of the other aspects of natural language." It is added that Saussure grasps the conception of a linguistic unit as a 'double entity' the two parts of which are joined by association for otherwise "the view is seriously mistaken: it assumes the existence of ideas that antedate words; it leaves it unclear whether a word is a vocal or a psychological entity; and it assumes far too simple a picture of the relation between a name and what it names." David Holdcroft, *Saussure: Signs, System, and Arbitrariness*,(New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 47-48.

[53] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 33.

[54] *Ibid*.

As instrument, language falls under the facts that language can only be effective as long as it is used properly, if not language becomes deficient. This opens up to possibilities that language misinterprets the reality in mind. In other words, language is not only instrument but also an instrument of betrayal.[55] Hence, as instrument of betrayal language is undoubtedly an obstacle to human realization.[56]

Part of Chauvet's study of Heidegger's critical reflection on language of ontotheology is Heidegger's description of analogy. "Analogy is as congenial to metaphysics as is the ontological substrate of entities…."[57] Taking Thomas as the guide, Heidegger, as expressed by Chauvet attempts to sketch the structure of analogy. Analogy, in Thomistic thought, consists in an act of judgment, and not in concept. Analogy refers to the relation of humankind to God and not God's essence. In underlining this statement Thomistic was not an innovator since for a long

[55] Cf. *Ibid.* As an instrument, language can be used for different purposes. Joseph Pieper's reading on Gorgias, one of the figures on Plato's dialoque, expresses that language can likewise "…pursues some ulterior motives that it invariably turns into an instrument of power, something it has been, by its very nature, right from the start." Joseph Pieper, *Abuse of Language, Abuse of Power*" (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 19-20.

[56] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament,* 33. Here, Chauvet refers back to Heidegger's critical view of a strong tendency of Platonic dualism within traditional metaphysics. Chauvet brings to comparison the language's detrimental effect on self-realization of the traditional metaphysics on the one side, and the Platonic concept of *soma-sema* (body sign). Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 33-34. This critique leads us on to Augustine.

Augustine, as quoted by Chauvet, asserts that language is consequence of original sin. Human being used to be in the inner source of a direct knowledge of God. Once our first parents discovered the deprivation of this inner source as the consequence of their fall, they created language as instrument to communicate with God. Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 33-34. Now as language has been poorly narrowed down to sounds emitted (signifier), the state of mind (signified) and reference, and at the same time mind and language are existentially separable from each other, therefore, "words do not always have the power even to reveal the mind of the speaker." St. Augustine, "The Greatness of the Soul: The Teacher," *Ancient Christian Writers*, Translated and annotated by Joseph M. Colleran (New York: The Newman Press, 1949), 181.

"One important component of the Common Western Metaphysics is the thesis that there is such a thing as objective truth…. Our beliefs and assertions are either true or false." Peter Van Inwagen, *Metaphysics*, 2nd edition (Central Avenue, Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2002), 73. If our beliefs and assertion are false then the problems certainly are not with the World or the objective truth. Conversely, what happens is that our beliefs and assertion are just not doing their parts appropriately. " Our beliefs and assertions are thus related to the World as map is related to the territory: it is up to the map to get the territory right, and if the map doesn't get the territory right, that's the fault of the map and no fault of the territory." Cf. Inwagen*, Metaphysics*, 73-75.

[57] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament,* 33.

time onto-theological tradition, noticeably in Dionysius and many Greek Fathers, had attempted to keep the incomprehensibility of God intact to promote the trail for negative theology.[58]

By postulating God, analogy declares the inability of concepts in demonstrating God. Hence, analogy does not apply a direct proportion or attribution, "according to which a single reality (for example health) would subsist with different relations in different terms (for example…healthy urine as a sign of health)."[59] For example, if a word such as: "goodness" is said about God, the word "goodness" does not explain a thing of God's goodness. The word "goodness," in terms of what it signifies, relates to God by way of negation.[60]

In reverse, analogy exemplifies a "*relation between relations*" in an instance of analogy by proportionality.[61] This means that when the word "goodness" is uttered about God, the only reason is because by analogy of proportionality several realities may find themselves in the same relation, "as old age may be to life what evening is to day." [62] Analogy of proportionality prioritizes an equivocal understanding of the word rather than univocal. Thus, the word "goodness" can only be used equivocally and not univocally for God and creatures.[63] Hence, if analogy is only applicable alongside logic of proportionality where relation becomes its most

[58] Cf. *Ibid*., 37-38.

[59] Cf. *Ibid*., 38.

[60] Cf. *Ibid.*

[61] Cf. *Ibid*.

[62] Cf. *Ibid*.

[63] Cf. *Ibid*. "When 'wise' is used of a man, it so to speak contains and delimits the aspect of man that it signifies, but this is not so when it is used of God; what it signifies in God not confined by the meaning of our words but goes beyond it." *Summa Theologiae* 3, q. 13 a. 5.

substantive and pivotal element, Chauvet continues ask: on what basis may we posit such a relation?

Taking a quotation from Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*, Chauvet describes that ground where the validity of our analogies rest, namely: "…in the virtue of the order that creatures have to God as their source and cause in all the perfections of things pre-exist transcendentally."[64] To Chauvet's reading, in drawing the strength of analogy from a posited 'relation' of the creature to its Creator as of the effect to its Cause, analogy implies as its prerequisite here is the demonstration of the existence of God.[65] What is problematic here is that analogy is acceptable inasmuch as God is proved to exist. Nonetheless, quotes J.L. Marion, Chauvet indicates that thomistic demonstration of the existence of God, in each of its five proof, all end with statement that 'all call this God.' This means that all the principal causalities explain about God's existence.[66] The complexity of analogy and its conflicting source of inspiration illuminate Chauvet's endeavor to reflect on what is beyond the logic of analogy. Analogy presupposes immediacy. Presupposition that man can encounter God sans mediation is still assumed at the heart of analogy.[67]

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[64] St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, vol. 3, I, q. 13, a. 5, trans. Herbert McCabe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 65 ; Chauvet in *Symbol and Sacrament*, 39;

[65] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 39. This statement might sound indefensible, since it is not inscribed on *Summa Theologiae*. Chauvet looks into it through a sharper eye. It does not have to be a written language because when one thinks, he already thinks with words. He thinks in language. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 40; Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 7.

[66] Cf. *Ibid*. "The onto-logic of the relation of potency to act as that of the determinable to the determined, and the perfectible to the perfect, passes deep into the fabric of Thomistic contemplation. And the ontological likeness of differing rationis of act and potency is the analogy of proportionate being. It is this that renders possible the causal reasoning concluding to the existence of God in every one of his proofs. Steven A. Long, *Analogia Entis: On the Analogy of being, metaphysics, and the Act of faith* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011), 32.

[67] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacraments*, 39-41.

What lies at the heart of Chauvet's fundamental theology is that language is not an instrument of theology. Unlike analogy which treats language as tools of theology, Chauvet underscores the fact that theology itself happens in and through language. Theology is a journey through the mystery of language. One might ask why? For Chauvet language represents the nature of the complexity of our relations with each other and with God. Chauvet writes:

> "In thus locating the place of theology at the heart of the mediation by language … we place theology's *critical thrust* no longer in a prolongation of the negation onto-theology stressing the unknowability of God but rather in the direction of the believing *subjects* themselves."[68]

By revivifying the crucial position of believing subjects and language, Chauvet avoids the entrapment of two main theological tendencies. The first is the tradition proposing that "in order not to silence God, we must be silent about God" (negative theology). The second is the tradition suggesting that one can encounter God without mediation of language, culture, devise, therefore language is only one of the instruments to represent God (ontotheology).[69]

Against the first Chauvet argues that the only appropriate silence about God is one mediated by language.[70] Similarly, against the latter Chauvet discloses a fact that history of humankind is always contemporary with the existence of language. Humankind does not create language but humankind is always within the domain of language.[71]

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[68] Cf. *Ibid*., 41.

[69] Cf. *Ibid*., 55-58.

[70] Cf. *Ibid*., 41-42.

[71] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* 6-7.

Developing a new attitude and perspective about language marks various acts of overcoming ontotheology. In *Symbol and Sacrament* Chauvet uses many expressions as to picture those types of new attitude, such as: *'openness of being'* and *conversion*, which means to *reverse the direction*.

Conversion and openness of being is not easy. Ontotheology has become like air without which man cannot breathe. Consequently to jump out of ontotheology would become like a futile attempt. Chauvet, therefore, suggests 'conversion' as a way of change from within. Standing right next to conversion is to let go. Letting go is "to unmask the false evidence on which rests the eidetic representation of being,"[72] and at the same time to surrender to the gratuitousness of language and to be spoken by it. [73] Since we think in language, critique of language of ontotheology is related to the way the sacraments are thought. This will lead us on to the third critique.

2.3. The Problem of Sacramental Causality

Chauvet's critique of the thomistic discourse on sacraments is first and foremost addressed to the logic of thinking that frames its notion of the sacraments.[74] Thomistic theology of the sacraments is grounded upon a particular logic of what so-called metaphysical causality.[75] Our question remains: what is sacramental causality? How does it operate in the understanding of the sacraments? How this sacramental causality is considered insufficient to describe the essence of the sacraments, not to mention how Chauvet sees it rather as a hindrance or problem

[72] Cf. *Ibid*., 53.

[73] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 61.

[74]Cf. Ambrose, *The Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet*, 36.

[75] Cf. *Ibid*., 42.

in theology of the sacraments? Before we begin to study Chauvet's key answers to the questions, we will view some points of thomistic understanding of the sacraments as Chauvet understands them.

The treatise on the sacraments is located in the Third Part of the *Summa* after Christology and soteriology. In fact, the treatise on the sacraments is brought forth by a number of discussions in Ila-llae regarding "*the virtue of religion*." The section of the virtue of religion talks about "the acts by which humans make contact with God: acts of interior devotion (q. 82)…."[76] Hence, sacraments are considered the summit of the ethical life of all Christians.[77]

The *Summa*'s presentation of the sacraments as the summit of the Christians ethical life serves as human's response to one of the two actions of Jesus Christ. *First*, the Word became flesh, Christ, had performed a first movement of exterior worship by way of *ascending* to the Father. Christ prays and worships the Father. Christ' way of *ascending* corresponds to a second movement, namely, *descending* through which the project of salvation through justification and sanctification is accomplished.[78]

Justification and sanctification are both Christ's work. The possibility of salvation for humankind therefore happens primarily in Christ and through Christ's second movement of incarnation, *descending*. [79] Regarding the sacraments, sacraments are expressions of a "faith

[76] Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 9-10.

[77] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at The Mercy of the Body*, xvii.

[78] One might well think that sacraments as the *virtue of religion,* as they were explicated in *Summa* touches more deeply the question relating to the exterior acts or exterior worship than it does the justification and sanctification of human being. Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 10.

[79] Cf. Chauvet, *Sacraments: The Word of God at The Mercy of the Body,* xvi.

which justifies."[80] Sacraments function as instruments in twofold meaning: *first*, as instruments through which people's entire lives is presented as "spiritual offering which they present to the glory of God," and s*econd*, as instruments through which 'grace' is poured upon those who are proved justified, or sacraments are "channels" of salvation.[81] It is at this stage that the 'summit' of human ethical life has met Christ's descending movement in incarnation in the form of instrumentality.[82]

As 'channels' of salvation, the sacraments are indisputably important for what they are, and particularly, the effects they cause. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* of 1950s teaches the sacraments as: "visible signs instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ to produce and increase grace in our souls." As 'channels' which produce and increase grace in our soul, the sacraments as famously introduced by Saint Augustine, are 'sacred signs.'[83] The sacraments are sacred signs through which grace is produced and increased in the soul.

Ever since the sacraments are considered channels of grace, the accent of importance is given to the *efficacious dimension* of sacraments. The value of sacraments is determined by how far they affect grace in one's soul. Thus, its *operative means* becomes the concentration of all

[80] Cf. *Summa* III, q. 68, a. 8 as found in Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 10.

[81] Cf. *Ibid*., xiv; Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 10.

[82] "They carefully strove to purify the images enumerated above through analogy. By this method they meant to show that they were not duped by the vocabulary they used. In the spiritual order of grace, all concepts and images are approximate: while spiritual reality is partially similar to what these terms mean, it is simultaneously partially different." Chauvet is quite meticulous to examine how Thomas attempted to express the sacraments as channels in an analogous description. Sacraments contains grace, for example, are not to be understood as if a vase containing remedy. What is at stake here, analyzed Chauvet, is a great distinction between the doctrine of eminent theologian and what it becomes in pastoral manuals and catechism, for example. Some nuances are gone along the way. Cf. Chauvet, *Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* xvi.

[83] *Ibid*.

activities regarding the sacraments.[84] In paying attention to their operative means of producing grace to the soul, 'the symbols' 'and the 'position of subjects' who perform sacraments have lost their importance. For instance: nobody cares to ask why the practice of immersion into water in baptism actually symbolizes the immersion into death with Christ. What is more important is how the whole ceremony is observed carefully in order to affect grace and salvation to soul.[85] Again, the sacraments are effective inasmuch they can please God in order to produce grace for the salvation of soul.[86]

Chauvet enumerates some practical defections of such an instrumental understanding of sacraments. *First*, the tendency to see the importance of the sacraments from their efficacy *ex opere operato* would generate misleading concepts about the priesthood, for example. A priest is seen more as a sacred intermediary (*sacerdos*) between God and human beings than a pastor and minister of the gospel. *Second*, by stressing Jesus' descending movement to all who are justified and sanctified, the notion of church, community have been gradually replaced by the importance of individual virtuous; and "interioristic" disposition becomes more preferable than exterior expressions.

[84] Cf. *Ibid*.

[85] Cf. *Ibid*.

[86] Chauvet explicates four images of the sacraments under this model of understanding. *Firstly*, sacrament is as instruments where the idea of a quasi automatic production becomes the priority. If the sacraments were utilized properly, they will really affect grace. *Secondly*, the image of sacraments as 'remedy.' Sacraments are considered a sort of magic tools that can cause restoration of what was lost or wounded. *Thirdly*, sacraments are channels through which grace flow from above. *Fourthly*, sacraments are depicted as germ through which God would deposit something in the soul. In this section the author refers more to the last example, namely, sacraments are channels of grace and salvation although in later discussions the three will be employed together or interchangeably. Cf. *Ibid*., xiv.

2.4. Chauvet's notion of Language

We have seen the incompetence of traditional metaphysics to provide a more humanistic approach to sacraments. Humanistic, in this sense, does not imply the notion of humanistic as found in the history of philosophy where man becomes the center of everything. [87] On the contrary, humanistic here complies with an often neglected side of the sacraments, that is, sacrament are only mediations in encountering God. Traditional metaphysics rejected this concept of mediation by disguising sacraments with instrumental and magical layer. This marks a great deal of rejection of what is visible and disposable to the senses.[88]

Chauvet, reversely, elevates the importance of human body and bodily expressions as principle of sacraments. Body is what situates human being into existence in the world. Hence, the sacraments happen through the human body. Body and all its corporeal components, therefore, will be widely discussed.

2.4.1. Language of Human Existence

Chauvet's major argument about human being and its corporeality is based on a basic logic that corporeality denotes human being's existence in the world.[89] "One of the principle

[87] Cf. Tad Guzie, *The Book of Sacramental Basis* (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), 61.

[88] Cf. Chauvet, *Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* 5.

[89] Cf. Chauvet*, Symbol and Sacrament*, 150.

functions of somaticity is that of making man "worldly' – that is, of making him being-in-the-world."[90] Thus, being human means necessarily being-in-the-world.[91]

Being as corporeal entity in the world, human being can coexist with other beings, while at the same time is able to differ oneself from others.[92] For instance: as human, he is different from many other living creatures, such as cat, snake or eagle; as a male person, he is different from a female person; as a person from Australia, he is different somebody who is from Rome. Body creates 'difference,' 'separation' from other 'bodies.' In making this distinctiveness visible the concept of 'subject' appears.[93]

Perceived as subject in the world, human being is part of the world's story as subject. He is subject of history.[94] For this objective truth that Hans Urs Von Balthasar rejects the Hegelian type of looking at history. Hegelian model of history spares no enough room for human genuine acts in the world. Balthasar adds that history which reads only as the movement of the spirit is insufficient.[95] History must be about a person's corporeal history which happens factually.

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[90] Battista Mondin, *Philosophical Anthropology: Man: an Impossible project?* (Bangalore, India: Theological Publications in India, 2011), 233.

[91] Cf. Martin Heidegger. *History of the Concept of Time: Prolegomena*, trans. Theodore Kisiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 159-160. "To the question "who am I," it is highly unlikely we could provide a response without prior meditation on another question: "where am I?" The "where am I" provides answers to "who am I." Basic knowledge of this logic of place is called topology. Topology reshapes not only the acceptance of the importance of the body, but also intensifies the awareness of the affectivity of the body to the work of soul. Jean-Yves Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute: Disputed Questions on the Humanity of Man*, trans. Mark Raftery-Skehan (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 7-10.

[92] Cf. François Raffoul. *Heidegger and the Subject* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1998), 213.

[93] Cf. *Ibid*.; Vincent J. Miller, "An Abyss at the Heart of Mediation: Louis-Marie Chauvet's Fundamental Theology of Sacramentality," In *Horizon*, 24/2 (1997), 230-247.

[94] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 150.

[95] Cf. Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *A Theology of History* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1970), 7.

Refutation of previously held view, namely, Hegelian reading of history, is a parallel case with the rejection of Descartes' view of knowing subject. The subject, for Descartes, is related only with mind. Body has nothing to do with obtaining knowledge. Helen Longino, who is Clarence Irving Lewis Professor in Department of Philosophy and Chair of the Department of Philosophy at Stanford University, presents a different discovery. Longino, as quoted by John Greco, on the other hand argues that the concept of knowing subject is always embodied. A knowing subject is always situated in a particular circumstance of bodily conditions of which some are often times inescapable. Cognitive development, affectivity of physical capability, cultural training, interest, responsibility and many other corporeal qualities are all conditions which affect the way to grasp information from the world.[96]

As summary, let us revisit the importance of corporeality in the understanding of the human being. First, corporeality is essentially indispensable for human being to exist fully as human being in the world. Second, corporeality becomes the primordial condition for the emergence of human being as subject. Third, corporeality contains history and memory.[97] Fourth, as consequence of the third point, is that corporeality bridges past, present and future.

Phenomenologist Merleau-Ponty underscores the definition of human being as embodied in descriptions of his bodily activities. For his corporeality human being is not only in the world but, more than that, 'inhabiting' space and time:[98]

[96] Cf. John Greco, "Introduction: What is Epistemology," in *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology*, eds. John Greco and Ernst Sosa (Massachusetts, USA: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 25-26.

[97] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 150.

[98] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962), 161-168.

> "He sits on the seat, works with pedals, pulls out the stops, gets the measure of the instrument with his body, incorporates within himself the relevant directions and dimensions, settles into the organ as one settles into a house."[99]

Body or corporeality defines the way human being exists in the world. To this Chauvet adds that body speaks for human being about three aspects, namely socio-cultural, ancestral and cosmic.[100]

2.4.2. Culture as language of Identity

Human corporeality, as the meeting point of socio-cultural, memory and cosmic, is therefore the perfect field to study culture. But what is culture? Edward B. Tylor (1832-1817) who was a professor of anthropology at Oxford defines culture in very different terms: "Culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." [101] In other words, culture is a humanized world.

Almost the same way, Chauvet gives the definition of culture as construction of reality through language. Culture is collection of reality in the form of language.[102] Hence, culture and language are always together. Furthermore, culture and language are "contemporary with human beings –with humanity which begins with it, and with every single individual."[103]

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[99] *Ibid*., 168.

[100] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 150.

[101] Cf. Edward B. Tylor (1832-1817) who was a professor of anthropology at Oxford defines culture in very different terms: "Culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom* (John Murray: London, 1820), 1 (https://archive.org/details/primitiveculture01tylouoft).

[102] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* 8.

[103] *Ibid.,* 7.

They are affecting and being affected by each other. A simple example can be derived from traditional metaphysics idea of language. When language is observed under the 'instrumentalist scheme,' the concept of body or human being is likewise seen the same direction.[104] Ming-Mu Kuo and Cheng-Chieh Lai provide a second example. The English word 'nice,' in 15th century would refer to "foolish, wanton, lascivious and even wicked."[105] The same word now means "pleasing, agreeable, polite and kind," which unfolds the fact of frictions in value system among English speakers.[106] Language, culture and concept of human as subject develop qualitatively in equal measure.

As language can cause degradation in man's value system, Chauvet affirms that language also becomes the condition through which human being manifests himself as subject. Through the help of an extensive study on the thoughts of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901-1981), as written by Katerine Bauer, Chauvet concludes that the idea of 'self' or a human as subject comes primarily from the sense of 'separation' as triggered by language. [107] Lacan's observation is explained in his famous article called 'The Mirror Stage."[108]

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[104] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 150; Glenn Ambrose, "Presence and Absence Review of *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body"*, in *America: The National Catholic Review* (November 2001). Americamagazine.org/issue/culture/presence-and-absence , last accessed March 15, 2017).

[105] Ming-Mu Kuo and Cheng-Chieh Lai, "Linguistic Across Cultures: The Impact of Culture on Second Language Learning," in *Journal of Foreign Language Learning*, p. 5, http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED496079.pdf, last accessed 3/31/2017, 2:27; S. R. Allison and C.B. Vining, "American Culture and Language," in *Bilingual Review,* 24 (1999): 193-207.

[106] Cf. *Ibid*.

[107]Cf. Katerine Bauer, "The Psychoanalytical Inspiration of Chauvet's Notion of Symbol," in *Communio Viatorum,* 51 (2009): 37-38, esp. 41.

[108]Cf. *Ibid*.

Lacan's studies show that between the age of six and eight months, when a child gets himself mirrored he does not immediately recognize the image he sees in the mirror as a self-image.[109] He sees only one thing that is combined of different parts, the ones he thinks to be a real thing. Neither does he have the sense of the distinction between himself and the reflection in the mirror. He is overwhelmed by the desire to touch and to take hold of 'the real thing' in the mirror. When someone begins to call him by a word, that is, his name, this primal innocence is broken. Hence, he enters the phase of recognition of the self. In this phase, he starts to sense a different self-image. He begins to distance himself from the reality in the mirror, that he now sees as something different from him. He knows and recognizes himself as a distinct subject better in this inner split because of the use of name, that is, language.[110] In short, language and 'separation' give birth of subject. Therefore, Chauvet, quoting Lacan's own words writes: "it is by its partition that the subject proceeds to its parturition."[111]

This discovery has found its massive similitude in the study of sociologist Claude Levi-Strauss about the fact of the prohibition of the incest. Strauss' approach to the concept of social kinship, which assumed to have been inspired by Saussure, proceeds in fashion contrary to most of his predecessors. When majority of his predecessors believed that kinship and marriage life is determined largely by the prohibition of the incest taboo,[112] Strauss, as stated Susan M. Voss,

[109] *Ibid*. Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 10.

[110] Cf. Katerine Bauer, "The Psychoanalytical Inspiration of Chauvet's Notion of Symbol," 41.

[111] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 10-11.

[112] Cf. Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, trans. J.H. Bell, J.R. Von Sturmer and Rodney Needham (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 41; Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 135-137.

writes that the biggest enforcement for the spreading of the prohibition of the incest taboo is the understanding of kinship and marriage life.[113]

People's understanding of kinship and marriage life has been deeply influenced by the civilization. Kinship and marriage life are seen as socio-cultural way to survive through building up alliance with enemies. To make peace with enemies is to ensure the survival of one's society. Male in the society are advised to marry girls from the enemies territory.[114] If we observed carefully, Strauss method of presenting the prohibition of the incest taboo brings about a 'missing link.'[115] This missing link is a transition from a state of nature where the incest taboo is found, to a state of culture where thoughts of survival has put limit to that natural condition of sexual desire. It was the state of culture that elevates man from simply following his natural sexual tendency to the state of being honorable by sacrificing oneself for the betterment and survival of the society. To conclude, what separates man from his natural desire in the prohibition of the incest taboo is nothing but culture or language itself.[116]

What is apparent through our observation of both Lacan's psychoanalytical investigation and Strauss' socio-cultural research is that language creates separation in man's relation with nature. The child gets separated from a primordial unity with the thing that was considered real when s/he was called by 'name.' The prohibition of the incest taboo happens also through the cultural concept of survival and alliance. It is to be noted, however, that language does not only cause a separation.

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[113] Cf. Susan M. Voss, "Claude Levi-Strauss: The Man and His Works," in *Nebraska Anthropologist,* 3/1 (1977): 21-38, esp. 28.

[114] Cf. Howard Gardner, *The Quest for Mind* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973), 127.

[115] Cf. *Ibid*.

[116] Cf. Susan M. Voss, "Claude Levi-Strauss: The Man and His Works," 28.

Language plays also the role of separation by itself being mediation.[117] How does this mediation function? 'The name' for the child does not become a mere mark of a breakaway from 'the thing that s/he thought to be real,' but mediates his/her relation with 'the thing' by putting it at distance. The relation remains, but it is no longer an immediate relation; it is now a mediated relation. Hence, whenever 'his/her name' is mentioned, she recognizes him/herself as independent subject in a mediated relationship with 'the thing' from where s/he had broken away.[118]

Quoting Antoine Vergote,[119] Chauvet asserts that we live in the world where everything has a name. We possess the knowledge about 'everything' by its name. This also means that everything *'always-already'*[120] in the language, everything *always-already* speaks.[121] What we hear is "language speaking," or as Heidegger says it, everything is "in the service of language,"[122] which therefore is in the service of culture. If everything speaks, then everything contributes to the rise of the identity of human being as subject in the world because culture is construction of reality in the form of language.

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[117] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 10-12.

[118] *Ibid*., cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 136.

[119] Antoine Vergote (1921-2013), also known as Antoon Vergote is a Belgian Roman Catholic Priest. He taught at the Catholic University of Leuven as an Emeritus Professor. He did a great deal of researches in various fields, such as theology, philosophy, psychology, psychoanalysis, hermeneutics, linguistics, cultural anthropology and phenomenology. Antoon Vergote, who was a former student of Lacan, was named "the most eminent figure in the field of psychology of religion" and "a key figure" in European intellectual movements during the 20th century. Cf. http://www.drmarideltandresphdpc.com/prof.-vergote.html, last accessed: 4/1/2017, 2:18.

[120] '*Always-already*' is Chauvet's typical adverb that appears largely in his works.

[121] Cf. Martin Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?* trans. J Anderson and E.H. Freund (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), 93; Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* 11-12; thus, 'to name things is not just, is not first of all, to attach a label to them for ease of communication. To name is to 'call' things 'to come and be present' so that they can speak to us." *Ibid*., 78.

[122] Martin Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?* 93.

Culture is now likened to air that we breathe. It is similar to sky that covers our heads regardless we want or we do not want it.[123] Human being actually does not have option for living outside culture because it is only through culture that human being is spoken as subject in the world.

2.4.3. Language and Culture as Symbolic Order

On this part, we will discuss Chauvet's concept of symbolic order. Symbolic order describes the nature of language and culture as, first, symbols, and second, symbolic order. We ended the previous discussion with a concept of culture as language as the only condition through which human being is spoken as subject. If we observe this statement carefully, Chauvet in fact proposes a concept of 'cultural structure.' Why a structure? The reason is next to clear that corporeality, culture and human being are contemporary with each other. They form and are formed by each other. It is here now we are going to discuss about Chauvet's notion of symbolic order. How do corporeality and culture become the language of symbolic order? Chauvet considers the use of symbolic order is more benefiting for what he will later explains about the notion of symbol in ancient Greek world.

2.4.3.1. Definition and Elements of Symbol

Word symbol comes from Greek *sym-ballein* which means "to put together, to place side by side the elements of a whole."[124] This definition might well sound like that of putting together the different parts of a puzzle. The symbol communicates a much wider complexity than a puzzle.

[123] Cf. Martin Heidegger, "Letter on Humanism," in *Basic Writings,* ed. D.F. Krell (London: Routledge, 1978), 217. Does not mention the word stone being hurled at us already spark in us a sensation of pain? One does not have to conduct a test or a laboratory observation in order to prove this sensation.

[124] Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 14; Klemens Richter, *The Meaning of the Sacramental Symbols: Answers to Today's Que*stions, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 13.

Symbol is different from a puzzle because it expresses a notion of pact or contract.[125] Referring back to ancient Greek practice of entering a social contract, the parties involved are equipped with some kind of shared objects. As regards to this historical setting, Chauvet gives a preliminary definition of symbol, that is, "a piece of an object given to contracting parties in order to allow them or their descendants to recognize themselves as parties in this contract."[126]

From the above definition we can draw out some concepts which are constitutive for a symbol to be a symbolic contract. *First*, symbolic contract presumes a symbol as a shared object. It has to be visible, legible and intelligible to the senses. This shared object is property of all parties involved in the contract. As property of all who become parts of a contract, symbol conveys a subtle nuance of familiarity and mystery. A symbol brings us into touch with realities which are at once familiar, for symbol is part of a contract, ensemble, and mysterious, for the ensemble is now absent and yet represented through the symbol.[127] Hence, a symbol is called 'symbolic order,' namely, a symbol is meaningless without perceiving it in an order with the ensemble.[128]

Second, no less important from the first is the luminous side of a symbol as 'mediation' of identification. Here we are talking about the process of identifying somebody as subject, as liable part of the contract through 'mediation.' If only a person is able to present his symbol that

[125] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of The Body*, 14.

[126] Cf. *Ibid*., 70.

[127] Cf. Tad Guzie, *The Book of Sacramental Basis,* 47; Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 15; cf. Gideon Goosen, *Hyphenated Christians: Towards a Better Understanding of Dual Religious Belonging* (Bern, Switzerland: International Academic Publishers, 2011), 96-97.

[128] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 15.

he is recognized as of one of the subjects of the contract.[129] In this case a symbol carries along in itself a function of 'representing one's position as subject of a contract.' By looking at the symbol and living by it, one is reminded that he is a subject of a contract. This fact of being a reminder is not to be grasped as imagination. Chauvet provides a precaution against treating a symbol as 'an imaginary.' The difference is that:

> "whereas the symbolic place the real at a distance by representing it and thus enabling it to be integrated into a culturally significant and coherent whole, the imaginary tends to erase this distance in order to regain the immediate contact with things."[130]

Third, a symbol therefore poses the concepts of the presence and the absence of the real at the same time. This means that symbol can only be intelligible in its fundamental relation with an ensemble. To isolate a symbol from its being representation of an ensemble and to find its signifying place outside the ensemble is tantamount to the destruction of its symbolic

[129] Cf. *Ibid*., 74-82, Chauvet provides a great deal of discussion on this concept. In daily life, symbol is always mistakenly assumed as similar to sign. Symbol and sign are different. They are different in several essential aspects. First, while quoting Ortigues, Chauvet states that if "sign leads to something other than itself," symbol, on the other hand "does not lead to something of another order than itself, as does the sign, but it has the function of introducing us onto an order of which itself is a part." Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 74-78. The most exact example that the author finds very precise is the sign of the cross. The sign of the cross can be a sign or a symbol. When my eyes caught a view of somebody making the sign of the cross in a restaurant, the image of Christianity spontaneously pops into my head. In this case, I consider the sign of the cross as is a symbol of Christianity because the sign of the cross itself is a visible property of Christianity. On a different occasion, a Sunday school teacher is instructing the student to make the sign of the cross. Afterwards, s/he explains what the sign of the cross signifies to us, such as: the sign of the cross is the sign of God's saving love through his Son Jesus Christ. In this second case the sign of the cross is considered a sign and not a symbol. From this example we can derive the second special feature of symbol. Symbol communicates itself as part of a larger order, whereas sign conveys an information or knowledge. While sign denotes the meaning or value of information, symbol communicates itself outside the order of value. Language can function as symbol and sign. Symbol and sign have become so immersed in their daily usage.

[130] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at The Mercy of the Body,* 15.

dimension.[131] In other words, symbol always refers reverently to the "other."[132] Symbol is a reminder of the other.

2.4.3.2 *Symbolic Order*

Every culture communicates uniquely the absence of 'the real' through various levels of mediation, such as: economic, social, political, religious, philosophical, value system or moral codes, ideology and principles. All these cultural features are interconnected with each other in building up a symbolic mediation with 'the Other.'[133] This way, Chauvet's symbolic order is closely related to what we have seen earlier as cultural order where everything is constructed in the form of language.

In symbolic order, language and culture are to be explained as an interconnected symbolic order. This means that all elements of language and culture are always-already constructed as an interconnected symbolic order proper for human existence. [134] As proper symbolic order, language and culture and all their elements are necessary principles of human existence. Let us bring back our discussion on the law of prohibition of the incest taboo. The law does not only imply the confiscation of sexual desire that is against the moral regulation of all cultures, but the law also addresses the stability of social and cultural relationship.[135] Besides safeguarding the stability of social and cultural relationship, the same law, by acting in the same manner would prevent a scandal in the eyes of religions as well as cultivate a political order.

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[131] Cf. *Ibid*., 15-16.

[132] Cf. *Ibid*., 16.

[133] Cf. Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 84-85.

[134] Cf. *Ibid*.

[135] Cf. *Ibid*.

This interconnectedness and constructed symbolic order is the milieu where the subject emerges. Subject and symbolic order "build themselves up in tandem."[136] All components of culture are joined together. Our societies are located upon this solid joined element. Our societies enjoy stability as long as all these different elements can stick together in order. [137] Their harmonious connectedness determines how our societies develop over times.

To separate one aspect away from the other aspects is likely to create an imbalance in the whole system of organization, especially since in Chauvet's symbolic order, the condition of being joined together is a must. Chauvet provides the reason: "the symbolic order is the mediation through which subject build themselves 'the real' into a 'world,' their familiar 'world' where they can live."[138] Each person makes his/her way to be integrated fully into this *always-already* inhabited and constructed symbolic world.[139]

[136] *Ibid*., 86.

[137] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 15.
[138] *Ibid*.

[139] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 12.

CHAPTER 3 Sacraments as the Gifts of absence in the Church

3.1. Ecclesiality and Christian Subject

Having seen how language situates human being as subject in a symbolic world, we are now on the track to clarify that what is proper to humanity at large is also compatible to members of an "ecclesial" order in particular. If it was necessary for a person to speak the language of his tribe or city in order for him to be recognized as subject and partaker of the tribe or the city, likewise any member of the church should speak a certain language to be admitted into its ecclesial communities.[140]

Chauvet speaks of Christian identity.[141] "How does someone become a believer? How does someone pass from non-faith to faith?"[142] The Christian identity is fundamentally larger than a mere documented registration of a person that often marks one's official and initial entry into a particular organization or community. Here, Chauvet notably signifies the most personified quality of the Christian identity that links to the very core of a person, namely personal decision to freely and deliberately confess the Christian faith.[143] The profession of faith in Jesus Christ remarkably denotes the initial assumption of the Christian identity; a person becomes a believing subject.

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[140] Cf. *Ibid*., 17.

[141] Cf. *Ibid*., 19. Identity is the most basic and distinctive part of a subject that places him in a relation with other distinctive subjects. Cf. K.A. Wall, "Identity" In *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, prepared by an Editorial Staff at the Catholic University of America, Washington, District of Columbia, vol. VII (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 345-346.

[142] Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 161.

[143] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 19.

As a personal decision, the Christian faith pertains to one of the deepest dimensions of the human being. It constitutes a person as a Christian, it gives birth to the Christian subject in the sense that Chauvet proposes for the emergence of the subject. Our main presupposition here is that Christian faith determines how one would perceive life, understand the world and develop a unique code of attitudes towards life and the world. In short, professing the Christian faith surmises how one would subjectively give meaning to one's personal life in the world.[144]

As a symbolical expression Christian faith belongs to our world and it is expressed in the diversity of ways that constitute language. In the story of the two disciples who set a trip to Emmaus (cf. Luke 24, 13-35), Chauvet depicts how the profession of faith take place in human ways, and hereby belong to the language of the world.

After the death of Jesus two disciples headed for a village called Emmaus. Fear engulfed them. Jesus' convoluted death filled them with bewilderment and sense of loss. All the thoughts about 'Jesus of Nazareth' (v. 19) unpredictably went astray. They found no consistency between their expectations and the condemnation of Jesus.[145] The main issue here is that the two disciples, as the women who came to the tomb (cf. Luke 24, 1-12) or Thomas the disciple (cf. John 20, 24-29) remain stuck at a strong desire for a corporeal image of Jesus. They were still consumed by a desire to have a direct encounter with Jesus.[146] Desire of immediacy hinders them from seeing

[144] Cf. *Ibid*. Faith is within man's power to believe and not to believe. C.H. Pickar, "Faith," In *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, prepared by an Editorial Staff at the Catholic University of America, Washington, District Columbia, vol. V (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 792-796.

[145] Their journey away from Jerusalem condenses into acts of protests against the great deal of perplexity of all realities about Jesus; Robert J. Karris, O.F.M., "The Gospel according to Luke" In *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary*, eds. Raymond E.Brown, S.S. et al., (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), 720-721.

[146] Cf. Chauvet, *the Sacraments: the word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 19-24.

more deeply into their past-historical experience with the master. The same desire impoverishes Jesus' preaching about God's plan for him in the world.[147]

The truth is that Jesus is to be found nowhere in Jerusalem or in Emmaus. Jesus has risen from the dead. However Jesus' resurrection is not followed immediately by the opening up of the two disciple minds, so that even when *he was walking with them*,[148] Jesus looked unfamiliar to their sights:

> "Everything is at a standstill in their minds: they have allowed themselves to be shut up in the tomb of death with Jesus, and their difficulties are as heavy as the stone that closed that tomb."[149]

Chauvet's proposition here is that "faith begins precisely with such a *renunciation of the immediacy*."[150] For a person to arrive at the profession of faith in Jesus, he has to overcome immediacy as a problem to accept the invisible presence of Jesus. Denouncing the tendency of immediacy frees a believing person from the slavery of false images and doctrines.

A second dimension of the structure of Christian faith is the *initiative on God's part*. The two puzzled disciples were walking and conversing with each other when Jesus, who appeared in the form of a stranger, came and joined them (v.15). A similitude can be found in some other parallel excerpts from the Resurrection Narratives. Having not been able to locate the body of the Lord, Mary Magdalene was deeply enshrouded with sadness and despair. Jesus appeared to her. Jesus asked her of what has burdened her so badly. Mary Magdalene, blinded by so rough

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[147] Cf. Robert J. Karris, O.F.M., "The Gospel according to Luke," 720-721.

[148] God takes initiative to accompany one's journey of building up a Christian faith.

[149] Chauvet, *the Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 19-24.

[150] *Ibid*. 25.

exhaustion, asked in return if he knew by chance where the body of the Lord was laid (cf. John 20, 15). Mary's questioning the stranger denotes the dynamic tension of her antagonistic conversation with a stranger.[151]

God's initiative provides a lead to conversion [152] that requires some necessary competences. The two disciples stopped on the road, and began to listen to the stranger attentively (vv. 26-27). Word "stranger" in the Bible is employed for a purpose. Derived from Hebrew word "*zar*," word stranger designates someone or something "different" from what is considered familiar or comfortable,[153] which approximately concludes what a conversion to life of grace means to a Christian before s/he comes to the profession of faith in Jesus.[154]

The third dimension of the structure of Christian identity is the *mediation of the church*. The moment of opening of the disciples' eyes is initiated by the stranger's explaining the Scriptures to them and breaking the bread at the supper (vv. 30-31). He taught them the proper way to read and interpret the meaning of the Scriptures. He struck open their eyes by recalling their little pieces of memory of his words and preaching, and putting them side by side with the

[151] Cf. Joanna A. Brant, *John* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2011), 266-270.

[152] Conversion ensues the opening of the eyes, in the story of the two disciples to Emmaus, and the recognition, on the story of Mary Magdalene - cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 23.

[153] Cf. E. J. Ciuba, "Stranger (in the Bible)" In *New Catholic Encyclopedia* prepared by an Editorial Staff at the Catholic University of America, Washington, District of Columbia, vol. XIII (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 729-730.

[154] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 23; G.F. Kirwin, "Conversion to Life of Grace" In *New Catholic Encyclopedia* prepared by an Editorial Staff at the Catholic University of America, Washington, District of Columbia, vol. IV (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 290-292.

very memory of their master in the breaking of the bread.[155] Likewise, Mary Magdalene came to recognize the Lord after having been called by her name (John 20,16).

The mediation of the Church highly values the importance of converting one's desire for immediacy and assent to the mediation of the Church. Recognition is made possible by one's active and full participation in listening to the Scripture, celebrating Eucharist and rendering others with Christian names. [156] The first two underline that Christian identity are gradually formed by partaking in Christian deeds, the latter accurately attests that Christian name stands out for recognition (Acts 11, 19-26).

The central theme here is the obligation and assent to the mediated salvation by word and deeds of the church.[157] A Christian subject becomes it only by speaking, practicing and living the language of the church.[158] We can briefly conclude that a person's ardent commitment to speak the language of the church in order to overcome immediacy marks the fulfillment of Christian identity.

The emergence of the Christian subject is not only perceived as an assent to the language and deeds of the church, but also occurs within the church. The Christian identity implies the

[155] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* 19-24. The moment the two disciples recognized their master, they set a trip back to Jerusalem. Kenneth Cragg employs their geographical journey as to symbolize a Christian subject's growth of faith. Firstly, journey to Emmaus was a historical trip. Secondly, the trip of Emmaus carries a theological value because it relates to the life and death of Jesus. Lastly, journey to Emmaus represents the Liturgical image of Christianity. The journey to Emmaus portrays a perennial symbol of faith way-faring into truth. Cf. Kenneth Cragg, *The Breaking of the Bread* (London: Melisende, 2010), 264-265

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[156] Cf. Pheme Perkins, "The Gospel According to John" In *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* eds. Raymond E.Brown, S.S. et al., (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1990), 982-984.

[157] Cf. Anton Vogtle, "Jesus Christ" in *Sacramentum Verbi: An Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology*, ed. J.B. Bauer, vol. 2 (Humility to Righteousness) (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 419-437.

[158] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacrament: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 26-28.

incorporation of each member into communities that can be perceived as an "ecclesial we."[159] The individual Christian identity is contemporary of the emergence of the "ecclesial we." Quoting Yves de Montcheuil's work on ecclesiology entitled *Aspects of the Church*, Chauvet emphasizes that the Christian identity implies a notion of church *shaping* Christian identity. The Church gives birth to the Christian identity and not the other way around. "In order to be Christian, one must belong to the church:"[160] Like the body to a human being to exist fully as human in the world and, language for a social person to be recognized as subject in a society, therefore is the church to all Christian subjects. The church is primary because it is the only condition for Christian subject to emerge.

3.2. Elements of the Ecclesial Language

For many centuries the word sacrament is identified with the seven sacraments in the church. Although this part is not going to visit the vast extension of the history of the sacraments in general or the seven sacraments in particular, we will go through a brief overview of the sacraments in general.

Tertullian was the first to introduce the word sacrament in the church, that is, in its Latin form: *sacramentum*.[161] As Latin remains the language of the church, Tertullian employed the word *sacramentum* as an equivalent of the Greek word *mysterion* to preach to his Latin-speaking audience. As regards the meaning of *sacramentum*, for baptism, Tertullian brings in the idea of

[159] Cf. *Ibid*., 31-32.

[160] *Ibid*.

[161] Cf. Joseph Martos, *Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Catholic Church*, revised and updated version (Liguori, Missouri: Liguori Publications, 2001), 29.

initiation of a Roman soldier to the army and the soldier's oath to submit to the emperor. This is to explicate baptism as a religious initiation and a pledge of fidelity to Christ.[162]

As time evolved, the discussion went on to determine what are to be considered sacramental. For Hugh of St. Victor (+1141), as quoted by Guzie, writes that: "holy water, liturgical vessels and vestments, the dedication of churches, the incarnation of Jesus and the church itself as the body of Christ."[163] Peter Abelard who shared the same part of history with Hugh of St. Victor enumerated six sacramental acts but excluding holy orders.[164] Peter Lombard (1161) seemed to have contributed to the formation of the seven sacraments.[165] "The number of the sacraments as seven was not fixed until the Second Council of Lyons in 1274."[166]

The seven sacraments are conveniently divided into three groups. The first group is the sacraments of Christian Initiation: the baptism, the confirmation and the Eucharist. The second group is constituted by the sacraments of healing: the anointing of the sick and the penance. The third group is constituted by the sacraments of mission or vocation: the marriage and the ordination.[167] All the sacraments are oriented to the Eucharist because it is in the Eucharist that the life and faith of the church is culminated and celebrated in its fullness.[168]

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[162] Cf. *Ibid*.

[163] Cf. Tad Guzie, *The Book of Sacramental Basics*, 40; Kurt Stasiak, *Sacramental Theology: Means of Grace, Ways of Life. Catholic Basics: A Pastoral Ministry Series* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2002), 48.

[164] Cf. *Ibid*.

[165] Cf. Tad Guzie, *The Book of Sacramental Basics*, 40.

[166] Fr. Francis Selman, *The Sacraments and The Mystery of Christ* (Kennington, Oxford: Family Publications, 2009), 78; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nº1117.

[167] Cf. *Ibid*., 80.

[168] Cf. *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church Lumen Gentium*, nº 11; Francis Selman, *The Sacraments and The Mystery of Christ*, 80; "the sacraments make the church." *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1118.

Chauvet defines the sacraments as faith expressions that belong to a particular religious group called Christians.[169] This proper language includes the form of verbal language, gestures (or quasi language), postures, movements and all forms of bodily expression that are part of the Christian tradition. [170] Chauvet's innovative proposition of sacraments not only reveals a theology's hermeneutical turn from the narrative of the past but also a relocation of the sacraments together with the discussion of the Christian existence. [171] The sacraments are considered as a language because it is through them that Christian identity emerges and is called out.

Chauvet writes that sacraments, in the context of Christian identity, are inseparable of the Scripture. The sacraments are a 'precipitate' of the Scripture.[172] The Scripture announces the mystery of God who revealed himself in history, reaching the fullness of that revelation in Jesus Christ and allows the church to keep that fullness, although marked by an eschatological tension, through the work of the Holy Spirit. This announcement becomes the sacramental character of the Scripture. As 'precipitate' of the Scripture, the sacramental celebrations of the church are the liturgical way of commemorating the same mystery of God's revelation in history. As the Scripture and sacraments are contemporary of each other, Chauvet sees the importance of the Scripture reading in church's sacramental celebrations.[173]

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[169] Chauvet, , *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* 3.

[170] Cf. *Ibid*.

[171] Cf. Lieven Boeve, "Theology in a Postmodern Context and the Hermeneutical Project of Louis-Marie Chauvet," in *Sacraments: Revelation of the Humanity of God, Engaging the Fundamental Theology of Louis-Marie Chauvet*, eds. Philippe Bordeyne and Bruce T. Morrill (Collegevile, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2008), 5-23, esp. 6-8.

[172] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* 47.

[173] Cf. *Ibid*., 51-52.

The Scripture is read and proclaimed through church's liturgy. In the one hand, the liturgy of the church gives forms and guidelines on how the Scripture is proclaimed and lived in and by the assembly of believers.[174] On the other hand, the church's liturgical celebrations are expression of the proclamation of the gospel through gestures and of rites the present.[175] This means that every time the sacraments are celebrated, the Scripture is proclaimed and relived.

The Scripture has entered the territory of church's experience through liturgical celebrations, namely, through the sacraments. Chauvet, however, does not leave the sacramental celebrations as a mere memorial of God's work in history or only as a proclamation of the Scripture in the present. By bringing back the practice of Jewish worship of the Old Testament, Chauvet reshapes the presence of the Scripture in the church's sacramental celebration as both memory and offering.[176]

Jewish worship is strongly characterized by the commemoration of what God had done to their ancestors in the past (cf. Ex. 13,8). Freedom, lands, stability and community that they own now are only thinkable because God's mighty hand had opened the possibility in the past. This past event is worthy for safe keeping simply because it is there that the explanation of the present is found. The present is a gift from the past.[177] Every day is a gift of God from the past. Since this gift is meant for all, therefore all people have to experience them as present too. At this point, Chauvet asserts that this task of sharing the gifts to everyone can only be done through participation of everybody. Proclamation of the Scripture and sacramental celebrations assigns to

[174] Cf. *Ibid*.

[175] Cf. *Ibid.,* 57.

[176] Cf. *Ibid*., 54-58.

[177] Cf. *Ibid.*, 56-57.

everyone a same task to extend the gift to his/her neighbor. Ethical awareness, in Chauvet's vocabulary, is primarily a theological consciousness and not moral sensation.[178] Ethical acts are forms of participation of everyone in making God's primary gift reach all the people of God. To summarize this part, Chauvet underlines that the Scripture, sacraments and ethics are the symbolic order that makes the Christian identity emerge because they related with the church.

The church, the celebrating assembly refers to the *place* and *time* where and when this symbolic order manifests itself: the Scripture, the sacraments and ethical commitment as a theological consciousness are contemplated on their entirety. [179] Chauvet illustrates the articulation of the different elements of this ecclesial symbolic order with the Eucharist. At the Eucharist, the people gather as an assembly convoked by God. They recall their "living memory" of the master, Jesus Christ, through the listening of the Scripture. They celebrate God's salvific work in Jesus Christ in the liturgical action. At the same Eucharist, the assembly is determined to exchange gifts with God who had already given them all possibilities to be grateful, that is, through the offering of one's life in caring for others.[180]

3.3. Church at the Heart of Absence

The episode of the disciples of Emmaus is used by Chauvet, as we saw previously, to illustrate the need to overcome the temptation of the immediacy in order to have the emergence of the Christian subject as well as the language of the Church. The central point of Chauvet's

[178] Cf. *Ibid*., 62.

[179] Cf. *Ibid*., 34-38; Cf. M. B. Schepers, "Ecclesia," *Encyclopedia Dictionary of Religion*, vol. A-E, eds. Paul Kevin Meagher, Thomas C. O'Brien, Sister Consuelo Maria Aherne (Washington, D.C.: Corpus Publications, 1979), 1147-1148, esp. 1147; Edmund Hill, "Church," in *The New Dictionary of Theology* eds. Joseph A. Komonchak, Mary Collins and Dermot A. Lane (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1987), 185-201.

[180] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 144.

discussion here lies at the theology of sacraments as language of absence.[181] In other words, to perceive the sacraments as symbolical language of divine absence is parallel to understand the mystery of Easter as language. To presuppose the mystery of Easter as language is to look at it as a mystery that speaks. To understand the mystery as something that speaks is, in turn, likened to see the human, bodily, face of the mystery of Easter.[182]

For Chauvet, the visible human face of God is the Son, Jesus Christ.[183] When Philip asked Jesus to show the Father's face to him, Jesus answered him: "have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." (John 14,9). These words of Jesus apparently go hand in hand with the following advice to Philip that reads: "the words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works" (John 14,11). Chauvet rephrases Jesus' witness for himself that through him God is placed at distance and be at the closest at the same time:

> "*God reveals God in what is most different from God*. God reveals the divine self ultimately as God when God 'crosses out' God in humanity. God reveals God as human in God's very divinity."[184]

Quite different from traditional theology which reads the above theological proposition from the perspective of incarnation, wherefore had to deal with the polemic of the divinity of the Son,[185] Chauvet prefers to ask: "*of what God* are speaking when we say that we have seen God in

[181] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 156-157.

[182] Cf. *Ibid*.

[183] Cf. *Ibid*., 162-163.

[184] *Ibid*., 163.

[185] *Ibid*., 156.

Jesus."[186] To respond to this question let us turn our attention back to the experiences of Jesus Christ's disciples as narrated in the gospel.[187]

As a living experience of the disciples, the gospel proclaims 'the glad tidings'[188] of the resurrection of Jesus Christ which had preceded and inspired the writings of the gospel itself.[189] The overjoyed disciples witnessing the paschal event aspires some to begin to document all that they could possible remember about Jesus, his birth, his ministry, signs or miracles. This means that the paschal event becomes the motivation and assurance for the disciples to take into consideration the importance of the good news of Jesus to be preached to all people.[190] Hence, it is for a reason that the infancy narrative of Jesus was dated later and sustained by paschal meaning.[191]

Easter becomes so important for the disciples because it marks the 'rising' of a new hope for them. The death of a figure that was assumed to be the long-awaited Messiah was a scandal for some (cf. 1 Cor. 1,23). Instead of being the king over his people Israel, this Messianic figure

[186] Cf. *Ibid*.

[187] Cf. Tad Guzie, *The Book of Sacramental Basics*, 14-16; L. F. Hartman, "Gospel," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. VI (Washington, D.C.: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 635-636, esp. 635; M.S. Enslin, "Gospel (Message)," in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible. An illustrated Encyclopedia*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (Nashville, NY: Abingdon Press, 1962), 442-448, esp. 444;

[188] Cf. Joseph Schmid, "Gospel," in *Sacramentum Verbi: An Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology* ,vol. I, ed. J.B. Bauer (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 328-332, esp. 328.

[189] Cf. L. F. Hartman, "Gospel," in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. VI (Washington, D.C.: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), 635-636, esp. 635.

[190] Cf. Clement of Rome, "Epistle to the Corinthians", nº 42 in *The Epistles of St. Clement of Rome and St. Ignatius of Antioch*," *Ancient Christian* Writers nº 1, newly translated and annotated by James A. Kleist (New York, Mahwah: Paulist Press, 34-35. Cf. For instance, overwhelmed by the joy of knowing the Lord is resurrected from among the dead, in round about 70, a Christian by the name Mark determined to bring together enough material about Jesus Christ. If Easter would never occur, could Mark's writing exist? Christopher Bryan, *The Resurrection of the Messiah* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 65.

[191] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 157; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 112.

had died a horrible and agonizing death. What was left from this confusing scene were desperation, bewilderment, anger and disappointments which were likely to have entered the head and heart some of the disciples (Luke 24, 13-22). Thus, it is hardly surprising that from the very beginning there are already many ways of explaining what really had happened on Easter, such as: Jesus did not really die on the cross. He only fainted. When his consciousness is back, he walks away alive; or that the disciples were hallucinating about seeing Jesus coming back to life.[192] All these presuppositions add up to the disciples' confusion.

The resurrection of Jesus really struck a blow against their perplexity. With their eyes the disciple witnessed not only the fact that Jesus is still alive, but more than that, Jesus had defeated death (John 11,41-44; I Tim. 1,10; I Cor. 15,24-26; 15,25-26; Heb. 2,14; Rev. 20,14; 21,4). Jesus' victory over death implies a signification that a true messianic triumph over death only happens through suffering and death itself, which therefore speaking of the paschal mystery is always inseparably speaking about Jesus suffering and death.[193] Thus, the joy of Easter has revived the disciples' hope for Jesus authority and certainly doubled their strength to have faith (Luke 24,33,41). Jesus' resurrection is also the disciples' resurrection.

Jesus is *always-already* the expression that God is with us in all situations. Through his suffering, death and resurrection Jesus reveals the utmost solidarity of God with man's suffering and death. This solidarity speaks best when God undergoes suffering and death in Jesus Christ his Son. The Father did not intervene when the Son is in agony. Nor does the Father change his solidarity with man when his Son cried bitterly in desperation: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Mark 15,34).

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[192] Cf. Christopher Bryan, *The Resurrection of the Messiah*, 159.

[193] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 159.

Jesus is the visible presence of God. In the same direction we can say that Jesus' suffering and death is the visible suffering and death of God for man.[194] Chauvet brings in the recognition of the centurion at the foot of the cross: "truly this man was God's Son!" (Mark 15,39) as to introduce how 'God's divinity and omnipotence' have been surprisingly interpreted out of a disfigured man, Jesus Christ. It is here that the cross speaks for itself. It is here that suffering and death speak about God's solidarity in the language of the cross.[195]

The language of the cross speaks about the incarnation only as the beginning of one's journey "towards the 'act of death.'"[196] While one is alive the meaning of his life is suspense.

> "Only in death, through the divine judgment, does a man receive his definitive orientation. This is why Christ's redemption of mankind had its decisive completion not, strictly speaking, with the Incarnation or in the continuity of his mortal life, but in the hiatus of death. …. If God himself has lived out this ultimate experience of this world, a world which, through human freedom, has the possibility of withdrawing obedience from God and so of losing him, then he will no longer be a God who judges his creatures from above and from outside."[197]

Jesus' suffering and death therefore, verify the presence of the divinity of God in the world through a most human way, that is, even to the lowest and unimaginable extent. Now, God is all the more permeated within the reality of the world. God is within and not above or outside. It is here that St. John's theological reflection about the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, as the Spirit that blows where it chooses (cf. John 3,8), describes well the fullness divine presence of God in the world. God Trinity, who used to be seen walking, teaching people,

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[194] Cf. *Ibid*., 162.

[195] Cf. *Ibid*.

[196] Cf. Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *Mysterium Paschale (The mystery of Easter),* trans. Aidan Nichols (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1970), 13.

[197] Cf. *Ibid*.

working miracles through words and deeds of a man called Jesus Christ, still is presence in the world through different body and language.[198]

Christ' departure in Easter does not end God's solidarity with man in the world. On the contrary, this departure not only becomes the continuation of God's solidarity but also solidifies it through the Holy Spirit.[199] Jesus' bodily absence is replaced by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's illocutionary presence creates 'order' among the scattered disciples by dwelling in them, in their 'bodies,' and making them the temple of the living God (Cf. 1 Cor. 3,16; Rom. 8,9; Eph. 2,19-22; I Pet 2,5; I John 2,27; 3,24). The Holy Spirit enables the scared disciples to be extraordinarily brave and capable to preach the gospel to the world also by inhabiting their bodies (Acts 2, 1-12). The Holy Spirit generates wonderful power to persevere persecutions and other forms of punishments in and through the 'bodies' of the disciples (Acts 7,54-60), and triggers conversion and commission among people (Acts 9,1-19). Most of them all, the Holy Spirit has raised a new 'body' of order among believers, that is, the body of Christ, the church (Eph. 4,13), through which the Trinity is made visible in their most human expression:[200]

> "The Father's self-communication made through his Word in the Holy Spirit, remains present and active in the Church: 'God who spoke in the past, continues to converse with the Spouse of his beloved Son. And the Holy Spirit, through whom the living voice of the Gospel rings out in the Church –and through her in the world- leads believers to the full truth, and makes the Word of Christ dwell in them in all its richness.'"[201]

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[198] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 164-165.

[199] Cf. *Ibid*.

[200] Cf. *Ibid*., 166-167; Cardinal Giacomo Biffi, *Casta Meretrix, "The Chaste Whore": An Essay on the Ecclesiology of St. Ambrose* (London: The Saint Austin Press, 2000), 15-23; "the poor occupy a special place in the scriptures." Charles E. Curran, *A New Look at Christian Morality* (Notre Dame: Fides Publishers, 1970), 36-38; cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* nº113. Jesus' departure from the eyes of the church is not brought to perfection in the formula of baptism: 'in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' Gerarld O'Collins, *Christology: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study of Jesus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 151-152.

[201] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nº79.

The mystery of Easter did not leave the church formless and speechless. It is quite the opposite, that, with the 'embodiment' of the Holy Spirit in the bodies of the believing subjects and the church, the body of Christ is extended to the church and the believing subjects, appeared in different visible form and spoke through different language. This 'embodiment' in fact does not merely reflect the divine absence of Jesus Christ but also empowers the church to experience eschatology.[202] Eschatology, for Chauvet, is closely related with Easter, and the divine absence of Christ. Eschatology is a moment of truth about Easter. The resurrected Christ will come again to justify the truth of faith:

> "In a word, one too easily forgets that it is a moment constitutive of the Pasch of the Lord; it speaks the future of his resurrection in the world."[203]

As the fulfillment of Easter, eschatology realizes the spirit of Easter that is the salvation of all people. Eschatology brings the memory of Easter to the present time and space, and relives it as inspiration and motivation to better the present.[204] Here, eschatology is no longer understood as a mere apocalyptic event.

Apocalyptic event refers to a dualistic view of "last day" entails the destruction of the present world and the resurrection of the faithful to heaven. Hence, apocalyptic is a more narrow way of looking at eschatology, and therefore only pointing to a particular character of

[202] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, 160.

[203] Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, 239-240.

[204] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* 55-56.

eschatology.[205] Reversely, eschatology is always-already being celebrated in the church. This is what it means: when the church is putting into practice their love and care with and for each other, especially the marginalized and abandoned ones, the picture of eschatological union becomes real although still not in its fullness.

The Holy Spirit guides Christ's body, the church, in the experience of eschatology. This means that the symbolic language of Easter as divine absence of Christ does not mean emptiness, but 'advantage' because in the Holy Spirit the Trinity is present fully in the church through a 'speaking language,' that is, communicative and transformative love of the church. [206] Eschatology is experienced with the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, that is, in the church. Thus, eschatology is no longer a mere picture of 'immortality of soul' [207] but the experience of betterment, realized Easter in and through the body, the church, here and at present.

In the place of the absence of Christ, the Holy Spirit continues to become the most human and historical presence of the Father and the Son through the church and her language. At this point, the sacraments are "the symbolic expression of the eschatological embodiment of God through the Spirit, first in Christ (the 'source-sacrament' of God), then in the church (the 'fundamental sacrament' of the Christ of God)." [208] The Holy Spirit advocates, guides and sanctifies from within the body, the church, through sacraments.

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[205] Cf. Arland J. Hultgren, "Eschatology in the New Testament: the Current Debate," in *The Last Things: Biblical and Theological Perspectives on Eschatology*, eds. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William Eerdmans Publishing, 2002), 67-89, esp. 69.

[206] Cf. Anthony Kelly, "Eschatology and Hope," in *Theology in Global Perspective*, ed. Peter C. Phan (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2006), 64-65.

[207] Cf. Joseph Ratzinger, *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988), 104-105.

[208] Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* 166-167.

3.4. Sacraments and Grace

The articulation between the sacraments and grace is no longer presented from the perspective of the production or efficacy. The sacraments are related with grace because they are the symbolic expression of the human expression of the divine presence of God. They are the language of the church that speaks about the mediated presence of the divine Trinity in history of man, where the church becomes the locus and at the same time participant. Hence, for grace to be visible "the first function of the sacraments is to manifest the vacant place of Christ, his 'absence,' as at Emmaus."[209] Grace creates 'communication' between the 'absence' of Christ and the church.

The sacraments can be presented from the perspective of the symbolic language of the divine God in the history of man. As symbolic language the sacraments belong to the domain of the symbol and not the one of the sign. If a sign is considered effective inasmuch it is useful as signifier, symbol on the contrary, does not belong to the discussion of useful or useless. Symbol is *always-already* an expression of the graciousness and gratuitousness of 'the other.' The sacraments as symbolical language mean that the sacraments are *always-already* the carrier of the gratuitous presence of God who takes initiative to be present in the history of man. In the same way the sacraments are *always-already* expressions of the gracious presence of God who demands nothing in return.[210]

For Chauvet, grace is another name for the revelation of a gratuitous and gracious 'ongoing relationship' between God and the church. We will emphasize it again that grace is not an 'it' or a quality. Grace is *always-already* the expression of a gracious God who takes initiative

[209] *Ibid.*, 85.

[210] Cf. *Ibid*., 86-88.

in the first place to relate and communicate with the church. Hence, grace is *always-already* given in and through the church.[211]

The church's liturgical celebrations are communication of grace where all believers are immersed into the mystery of Easter. Thus, they are graceful and 'gift' for the church in themselves. This is equivalent to say that it is a mistake to consider a liturgical celebration as useful and effective inasmuch it is accompanied by the quality of ornaments being exhibited during the celebration or inasmuch as it gives effect to the transformation of the world. Grace in itself is beyond the criteria of being useful and/or useless.[212]

Chauvet understands grace as the nature of symbolic order that, therefore, is related to the symbolic exchange. The articulation between grace and symbolic order is shown by the fact that the church is the place where God *always-already* give himself to the faithful. This self-giving of God happens through communication. In normal conversation, communication happens in two ways. Grace has been communicated all the time. The gift is *always-already* given all the time out of God's love through the sacraments. A believing subject is now in the position of symbolically exchanging greetings with God as the initiator of the conversation. The 'validity' of sacrament is dependent on God's initiative, while its fecundity lies at the mode of communication that each person uses in communicating with God.[213]

As the symbol of relationship, sacramental efficacy is assured by the Holy Spirit's action.[214] As the Holy Spirit blows wherever it wills, it is therefore impossible to deny the

[211] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body,* 87.

[212] Cf. *Ibid.*

[213] Cf. *Ibid.*, 123-125.

[214] Cf. *Ibid*., 167.

universality of the works of grace. It is true that some traditions have a documented history of being a particular group chosen to be the vessel of the Holy Spirit.[215] Nevertheless, salvation is not institutionalized. Salvation is God's gift and given gratuitously and graciously through the Spirit which blows wherever it wills.

This also means that as the Holy Spirit has taken flesh in the church, where the church now is present 'in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,' the sacraments are effective only within the Church as its symbolic order. This means that sacramental grace is for the 'ecclesial we' where the memory of Easter is recalled, celebrated and relived through the sacraments, the Scripture and consciousness of ethics.[216] In Christianity, it is only the church, as body of Christ, who is able to perform this mediation. Consequently, the individual is not a sound starting point for a sacramental theology in Christianity.[217]

Unless a person is in relationship with the 'ecclesial we,' the sacrament will not be effective. The sacrament becomes effective only through the mercy of the body, the church. Therefore, the more a Christian subject celebrates or participates in the church's action and speaks the church's language, the result of the ecclesial symbolic order, the more effective grace works. This way grace truly affects the church through the transformations of life as the fruits of unity with the Holy Spirit (cf. Gal. 5,22-23).

[215] Cf. *Ibid*., 169.

[216] Cf. *Ibid*., 31-34, it is where the past, the present and the eschatological hope is recalled, celebrated and longed for dearly..

[217] Cf. Tad Guzie, *The Book of Sacramental Basics*, 59-60.

Conclusion of Part 1

Chauvet's investigation into the meta-narrative of the Traditional understanding of sacraments reveals a great deal of new discoveries. Not only the sacramental 'ontotheology' is rejected, but the human dimension of the sacraments is also being promoted. The sacraments are human expressions of the relationship with God who, in Jesus Christ, assumed the body as major key in the mystery of the divine revelation in history. Although the corporeality of God might sound as a paradox, it is through the body of Jesus Christ, in its different dimensions, that God becomes intimate of man and allows man to partake the mystery of divine intimacy that the Trinity is. Ever since Jesus resurrected from the world of the dead, the Holy Spirit takes the continuation of Trinity's presence in the world. Sacraments are human symbolical expressions through which the past, present and future are merged into an event of language. Sacramental celebrations are moments of celebrating the gratuitous of God in the mercy of the body.

PART 2
CHAPTER 4 David Noel's Power Bio-Bibliography

The second part of this work will be discussing David Noel Power's conception of sacraments as language events. As a liturgist, Power attempts to provide a liturgical perspective to the study of the sacraments. The bibliography of this author is wide. We will focus on two of his twelve major works: *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving* and *Unsearchable Riches: The Symbolic Nature of Liturgy*, as they allow us to discuss the notion of sacrament that it is presupposed and developed within the theological research of David Power.

4.1. David Noel Power's Biography

David Noel Power was born on December 14, 1932, in Dublin, Ireland, in the family of David and Kathleen Davis Power. Power decided to join the Oblate Novitiate in Chermoyle, Ireland. He professed his first vows in 1950 and his perpetual vows in 1954 in Roviano, Italy. He was later ordained a priest on December 22, 1956 in Rome, Italy. He studied theology in Rome at the Pontifical Institute of Liturgy of St. Anselmo, where he obtained his doctorate in theology. After ordination, Power dedicated most of his life to academic ministry as professor. He served as teacher of theology at the Seminary of the Oblate as well as at the diocesan seminary in Ireland. He went to Rome where he taught at Gregorian University and St. Thomas Aquinas University. In 1977, he started teaching in the School of Theology and Religious Studies at Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, where he was given the title of the Shakespeare Caldwell Davel Distinguished Professor.

Power was chosen to be president of the North American Academy of Religion. Being the president of the North American Academy of Religion, a huge responsibility was shouldered

on him. He had to lecture in many other places throughout the United States. He also went to teach in other countries like Australia, Canada, the Philippines, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Zaire.

Other than the title of the Shakespeare Caldwell Davel Distinguished Professor, Fr. Power received many other awards for his versatility as professor. In 1992 Fr. Power was awarded the Berakah Award of the North American Academy of Liturgy. Several years after, in 1996 he received the John Courtney Murray award of the Catholic Theological Society of America for his excellent contributions to the progress of theological scholarship.

As he became physically weaker, Power decided to return to the Oblate's house at Washington D.C. His academic research and discoveries continue to support the development of the field of theology. Fr. Power passed from this world on June 19, 2014 at the age of 81 years old.

4.2. Power's Works

Power has authored 12 academic and pastoral books. He actively writes about his experiences and reflections on liturgical theology. Power was also famously known for having contributed many well-researched papers and articles to various theological publications. He was a member of *Concilium,* a post-Conciliar international journal of theology. Most works of Power become great help for the recent studies on liturgical theology. Some titles such as *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving*, *Unsearchable Richness: The Symbolic Nature of Liturgy*, *"The Word of the Lord": Liturgy Use of Scripture*, *The Eucharistic Mystery: Revitalizing the Tradition* are undoubtedly the backbone of recent research sources in the field of liturgical theology.

CHAPTER 5
David N. Power's Hermeneutical Background

Power's theological investigation on sacraments is substantially inspired by postmodern critiques of the tendency in Modern philosophy to put rationality and man at the heart of the universe.[218] Being respectful to the nature of human being as creatures with rationality and freewill is something utterly different from making man the center of the universe. The first goes without saying is a task for all disciplines. The latter is inadvisable because the price that Modern philosophy has to pay was a catastrophe.

Putting man at the core of all discourses was a catastrophe because the confidence in social organizations, traditions, heritage and symbolical expression which are principally built on the power of language and culture were experiencing disaffection and distrust.[219] Language and culture undergo a severe deterioration in relation with this affirmation of autonomy of human condition. Occasionally, language and culture are depicted as impediments for man to reach his self-fulfillment. Jean-Paul Sartre writes that if a father is found guilty of not being able to become a good father for his children, the problem is not on the man but the 'paternal bond which is rotten.'[220]

Alongside with the progress of a 'man-centered universe' is the growing confidence in man's ability to create meaning and identity.[221] Meaning and identity are no longer properties of socio-cultural communities but of the individual figure. Meaning of life and self-identity are to

[218] Cf. David Noel Power, *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1999), 12-13.

[219] Cf. *Ibid*.

[220] Cf. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Words*, trans. Irene Clephane (Madison Avenue, NY: Penguin Books, 1967), 14.

[221] Cf. David Noel Power, *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving,* 12-13.

be found nowhere but in individualism. Man has the full power to decide what is good and bad for himself.

Further down the street, this affects the way Modern philosophy portrays the relationship between man and 'the other.' 'The other' is undressed of its mysterious nature, because 'the other' is only needed to support man's knowledge, like to provide onto-theological explanations to man's philosophy, and to absolutize power and position. Theological language becomes poorly developed. Theological language turns to be a 'full explanation of God.' God appears clearly in the language through the systematic usage of language of immediacy. Absence is no longer part of the nature of God.[222]

Leaning on a critical reading of postmodernism, Power asserts that postmodern is a new era in philosophy and theology. This new era is marked fundamentally by a total recall and restoration of all elements of the world that had been forsaken by Modern philosophy. "It gives voice, expression, and inclusion to those left outside or on the margins…."[223] The revival of language becomes the benchmark among postmodern philosophers as well as Power's.

In the area of theology, these postmodern motivations work hand in hand in building up a coherent and reliable theological explanation of the sacraments as written in one of Power's works entitled: *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving*. For this purpose, we will provide a threefold summary of Power's motivations to propose of a new sacramental hermeneutics. The first motivation is the suspicious look at Modern's notion of narrative of the past. The second motivation is ignited by the Power's critical reading of the Scholastic concept of sacramental

[222] Cf. *Ibid*.

[223] Cf. *Ibid*.

causality. Finally, the third motivation is stimulated by seeing and hoping that the church can synergistically collaborate with cultures especially in the evangelization in post-modern world.[224] In their farther and wider descriptions, the three points are encapsulated in the terms of hermeneutics of tradition and mission.[225] While the hermeneutical inspiration is derived from Power's reading of the French philosopher Paul Ricoeur,"[226] the second and the third appear more as the practical applications. We are now going to study the three motivations more deeply.

5.1. Hermeneutics of the Past

Power's observation on Ricoeur's reflections formulates that the primary problem of modernity is the weakening of the power of language.[227] Language has been thinned out and considered merely as ornament.[228] Language has lost its primacy as the splendid mystery from where 'the other' speaks. Language has been undressed of its mysterious nature to be something more close to itself and only refers back to itself.[229] Language has been critically exploited of its richness of mystery and awe.

Behind the degradation of language is the modern tendency to treat language as an instrument to immortalize and to make absolute of what the modernists call the status of

[224] Cf. *Ibid*., 4-5.

[225] *Ibid*.

[226] Cf. Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005) was a French philosopher of the twentieth century. In addition to his academic position of philosopher, Ricoeur was also largely known for being a critical social and political commentator. He wrote more than 500 essays, many of which have been translated into English.

[227] *Ibid*., 4.

[228] Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language,* trans. Robert Czerny, Kathleen McLaughin and John Costello (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), 44-45.

[229] Cf. Domenico Jervolino, "Gadamer and Ricoeur on the Hermeneutics of Praxis," in *Paul Ricoeur: The Hermeneutics of Action*, ed. Richard Kearney (Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, 1996), 63-79, esp. 70-71.

'narrative of the past events.' Behind this proposal is the idea that past events are an absolute narrative that can be considered an imitation of life. As imitation, therefore, the narrative of the past is purely objective, unrepeatable and unchangeable.[230] The narrative of the past is not related with the human being, his actions and culture.[231] Language, in turn, is looked upon as nothing more than a figure of speech. Language loses its vitality to the extent that it only becomes one of the styles picked as vessel of the narrative of the past.[232]

Ricoeur, who breathed the air of a post-Reformation Christian sensitivity, greatly opposed the tendency to absolutize the narrative of the past due to the awareness of contradictions, conflicts and imperfections of the nature of human experience.[233] Human finitude affirms that the narrative of the past is colored with guilt and blame. Since the narrative of the past is the narrative of human existence, then it agrees with subjectivity by nature. It goes without saying that narrative of the past is the way to a self-understanding. It might be a narrative, and yet it is a narrative about a person, a human being's self-understanding.[234]

Power's reading of Ricoeur underscores the fact that every time we encounter a text or look at a piece of art or listen to a story-telling, "we are addressed by some person, tradition, or

[230] Cf. William C. Dowling, *Ricoeur on Time and Narrative: An Introduction to Temps et récit* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011), 1-2.

[231] Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, trans. Kathleen MacLaughin and David Pellauer, vol. I (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 98.

[232] Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language,* 47.

[233] Cf. Domenico Jervolino, "Gadamer and Ricoeur on the Hermeneutics of Praxis," in *Paul Ricoeur: The Hermeneutics of Action*, 71.

[234] Cf. Alexis Deodato S. Itao, "Paul Ricoeur's Hermeneutics of Symbols: A Critical Dialectic of Suspicion and Faith," in *Kritike*, 4/2 (2010): 1-17, esp. 2.

reality other than ourselves." [235] This means that the text or the piece of art or a story are 'speaking' and 'addressing' something to us. Hence, contemporary hermeneutics teaches that the primary disposition to be taken in front of the tradition and language of the text is to listen.[236] To stop and to listen to somebody when one is being spoken to or being addressed is the most appropriate manner.

Regarding the text or the narrative of the past as a 'human experience' that speaks to us, like other human speech, can mean anything to whomever it is addressed. Thus, we need interpretation. It is here that hermeneutics gains its importance. Hermeneutics awakes us to realize that in reading the narrative of the past sometimes we cannot help from being ourselves inevitably involved within the world of the text. This means that hermeneutics can also cause us to stand between the intersection of memory and expectation, "between l' *espace d'expérience* and *horizon d'attente*."[237]

For a certain degree, European philosophy has contributed to prepare a misconstruing concept of the narrative of the past. The narrative of the past used to be read as narrative of 'the other.' This concept goes all the way back to Edmund Husserl's *Fifth Meditation*.[238] Although stating that one can come to the experience of 'the other' only by analogy, Husserl was able to create an instrumentalist notion of language. [239] What is important for us now is that this

[235] Cf. David Noel Power, *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving*, 5.

[236] Cf. *Ibid*.

[237] Cf. Domenico Jervolino, "Gadamer and Ricoeur on the Hermeneutics of Praxis," in *Paul Ricoeur: The Hermeneutics of Action*, 75.

[238] Cf. David Rasmussen, "Rethinking subjectivity: Narrative Identity and the Self," in *Paul Ricoeur: The Hermeneutics of Action*, ed. Richard Kearney (Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, 1996),159-172, esp. 160-161.

[239] Cf. David Noel Power, *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving,* 5.

philosophical dilemma Husserl assigned to language denotes a greater and deeper tendency for an idea of immediacy in knowledge where language is seen as a mere instrument.

While quoting Ricoeur's analysis on language and hermeneutics, Power rejects the instrumentalist notion of language and asserts that the reality of human being and language are inseparable by nature. Human being and language are contemporary of each other. They are constitutive of each other. This implies the fact that language is never an instrument for human being. As regards with Husserl's dilemma, Ricoeur refers back to language as the mediation of presence and absence.[240]

Through various linguistic expressions, such as culture, society, circumstances and experiences, 'the other' appears in a given context through a particular language; but since this presence is not a fullness of revelation, we learn about the language of other revelation in the different religious experiences of various religions and traditions. Furthermore, cultural creativity, inventiveness of art and awesomeness of literary expression which develop amazingly everyday reveal that through the language we also come to encounter 'the other.' From his being absence, 'the other' continues to inspire the world. These knowledge come to our awareness through 'language,' regardless their various sources and vernaculars. Hence, language is revealing and concealing 'the other' at the same time.[241] Thus, Power defends that hermeneutics means an appreciation of language. Hermeneutics does not work primarily with the skill of decoding a text or deciphering symbols of language, but to live within the limits of language. Hermeneutics

[240] Cf. *Ibid*., 5-6.

[241] Cf. *Ibid.* 7

teaches the very core of human relationship with 'the other' found in language as well as in experience.[242]

For Christians, the narratives of the past are to be found in scriptural texts, rituals, teachings and doctrines. Though taking a different point of departure, the Scripture, the rituals, the teachings and the doctrines communicate the same message: 'the other,' God, is present in the history since the beginning of time. [243] In many years elapsed, God communicates this presence through many ways dependent on the availability of the time. In a fuller sense, God speaks to the world through his Son Jesus Christ, through whom God actively and corporeally participate in the events of the world. With the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, this participation is made bodily eternal through the church as the corporeal temple of the Holy Spirit. This brings to our understanding an awareness that God will continue to communicate Himself to us through language. This is what constitutes the Christian Tradition.[244] Now, what is the role of hermeneutics for a Christian method of reading of the past?

As hermeneutics mean an appreciation of language, within Christianity hermeneutics means an appreciation of the Tradition. Tradition is appreciated and respected in order not to be distorted and manipulated as an instrument of power.[245] This is important because Tradition and traditions always speak to us in their particular given cultural language. For the church to be able to grasp the language of the past, the church needs hermeneutics. With hermeneutics, the Tradition and the traditions are kept off from any false ideology or misinterpretations.

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[242] Cf. *Ibid*.

[243] Cf. *Ibid*.

[244] Cf. *Ibid*., 40.

[245] Cf. *Ibid*., 8.

Through hermeneutics Tradition and traditions are present in the present time. Hence, present time, according to Power, becomes the *locus* where the meaning of the past comes to be practical and understandable. Present time is significant for its particular status: here and now. We look back to the past in order to understand ourselves here and now. By reflecting the past to the present, we reclaim the past, celebrate the present and create the future.[246] More than that, by inviting the past to the present, we do not only celebrate the triumph of the past in the festive atmosphere of the present but, because of the past, we celebrate present as present. It is at this very point of time that present is celebrated as an Event, or "event-ing," and gift or "gift-ing."[247] Celebrating the present as the present means to let everything that pertains to the present time speaks about God who was present in the past.

5.2. The concept of sacramental causality

Power's critics on the sacramental causality are mostly based on his reading and understanding of Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, the Reformers and some contemporary theologians. [248] According to Power's understanding, Thomas Aquinas emphasizes the sacramental signs on their relationship with signification of "something in the present, of what is done in the moment, it does so by signifying what is past, that is, the passion of Christ."[249] The problem raised by Power is what we can say the idea of a 'limited signification.' The sacraments celebrate the event of Jesus Christ, but this approach, according to Power, is lacking of attention to 'what is happening right now.' For instance, the representative role of the minister loses its

[246] Cf. *Ibid*., 39.

[247] Cf. *Ibid*., 9-11.

[248] Cf. *Ibid.*, 51-55.

[249] Cf. *Ibid*., 52.

symbolical power.[250] The minister becomes a mere instrument in the hand of the real actor, Jesus Christ. Only if a minister could act like Jesus did, the sacraments can be effective for assembly.

While Thomas Aquinas emphasizes the limited signification to Jesus Christ's Passion, Bonaventure presents the sacraments as remedies. The sacraments are more vessels of healing grace than instruments. There is no causal activity or instruments needed. What is left is that the recipient benefits from celebrating sacraments.[251] As remedies, the sacraments are the fruits of the incarnation of Jesus Christ, the Word of God became a man in order to restore grace and love to human life. Jesus Christ came to bring back what was lost, namely grace and love because of sin.[252]

After Bonaventure, the approach to the sacraments experiences a shift in its direction in the sixteenth century. The strong campaign for 'going back to Scripture' is undoubtedly a nutshell of giving a new way to look into the sacraments. Martin Luther retrieves the Scripture from a dusty bookshelf to make it being used in the ritual worships of the church. Sacraments begins to be looked at as an event of language, that is, as an event of celebration of the Scripture. What is lacking from Luther's reformative recovery is that Scripture is placed in the context of preaching and proclamation.[253] This way scripture is only looked upon as a source of information and knowledge. Likewise when John Calvin promotes the irreplaceable position of the Holy Spirit in the church as divine guarantee of Jesus Christ's life-giving presence, Calvin overvalues

[250] Cf. *Ibid*., 53.

[251] Cf. *Ibid*., 53-54.

[252] Cf. *Ibid.*

[253] Cf. *Ibid*., 54-55.

the role of the Spirit as a holy inspiration. This way, the role of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit that gathers everyone into the communion of Christ's body is overlooked.[254]

In contemporary time, the Protestant theologian Peter Brunner and the Catholic Karl Rahner initiate a seemingly more balanced approach to the theology of the sacraments. The celebration of the sacraments includes the usage and the celebration of the Scriptures. The sacraments are no longer perceived as remedies or vessel of graces but as symbol of the divine communication between God and man since the beginning of time.[255] Since the Creation, God never stops communicating himself to man which causes the sacraments to be events of grace.

These events of grace are proper to the historical condition of man. This means that since God communicates himself through all that pertains to the world then everything symbolizes the ongoing communication of God. God is present and communicating himself in everything, every time and everywhere. God's self-communication finds its historical perfection in Jesus Christ, the Word incarnated. Jesus Christ symbolizes a total self-presence and total communication.[256] As a total appearance of divine communication, Jesus Christ entry to history of man means that the event of grace, where God communicates with man, is now available everywhere in the world. Each person can come to attend the event of grace through self-openness and self-understanding, that is, in being perceptive and sensitive to God's full revelation in and through life experience.[257] By overvaluing the signification of spiritual sensitivity, Rahner, in Power's

[254] Cf. *Ibid*.

[255] Cf. *Ibid*., 55-56.

[256] Cf. *Ibid*., 57.

[257] Cf. *Ibid*., 56-57; Burkhard Neunheuser, "Sacraments," in *Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology*, vol. V, eds. Karl Rahner, Cornelius Ernst and Kevin Smyth (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 378-387, esp. 378.

reading, opens up the possibility to a method of perceiving the sacraments as events that happen within the domain of the human. "The risk is that of replacing a metaphysical foundation with the foundation of self-consciousness, spelling out the power of sacrament in these terms."[258] Man has turned to be in the power to control the affectivity of sacraments through an overstressing personal piety. [259] This way, Rahner brings our attention back to one of the critiques of postmodernist reading of the sacraments, and that is the assumption that sacraments are only instruments of self-awareness. At this turn, the sacraments as language of symbol are betrayed at their very heart. Sacraments as symbols are read as mediation of presence and absence of God through a particular community called church. This betrayal also refers back especially to the doubt of the infallibility of language as an instrument in mediating a correct one's self-understanding.[260] The question remains: would it be possible that grace as presented in one's consciousness refer to the same grace as event through the church?

5.3. New Perspectives for Evangelization

One of the most important motivations for Power's proposing a new approach on the understanding of sacraments is the necessary articulation between the Evangelization and the need for new theological languages. This encounter opens up a possibility to hold a discussion on the need of renewal within the Tradition of the church. Power brings up the example of a long

[258] David Noel Power, *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving,* 58.

[259] Cf. Karl Rahner, *The Church and the Sacraments* (Freiburg: Herder, 1963), 74-75.

[260] Cf. *Ibid.,* 58-59.

discussion in the church regarding the issue of inculturation as it was developed with the issue of the 1994 *Instruction on the Inculturation* of the Liturgy.[261]

In the evangelization, especially in the context of the Asian and African continents, the church meets a great deal of indigenous languages and cultures which are different from the more conventional ways that are usually associated with the church. On her venture to the Asian milieu, for instance, the church witnesses the view of the veneration of the ancestors of Vietnam and the worship to the emperor in China.[262] Another case is found in Africa where the celebration of the Sacraments has not been a prominent feature of its individual churches even when some Christian missions had already been part of the society for a long time.[263] These new situations indubitably denote a renaissance of mission studies.[264]

All these points of encounter make the church think of some other ways through which she would appear more sensible and adaptable to new environments without losing its unique identity of mission, on the one hand, and exterminating the local cultures, which means waging war against the local people on the other hand. The 1994 *Roman Instruction on Inculturation*, which derived its spirit from *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, is considered the best formula to respond to these needs.[265] In the case of transmitting the sacraments, for example, the first step is to

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[261] Cf. *Ibid*., 21-22; Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Instruction: Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy* (Fourth Instruction for the right application of the Conciliar Constitution on the Liturgy, Issued on March 29, 1994) no. 3, http://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/CDWINCLT.htm, last accessed: April 24, 2017, 15: 48 pm).

[262] Cf. Peter C. Phan, *In Our Own tongue: Perspectives from Asia on Mission and Inculturation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003), 109-129.

[263] Cf. Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 115.

[264] Cf. *Ibid*., 147-149.

[265] Cf. Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Instruction: Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy,* no. 3.

realize how the church understands her sacraments as a linguistic and cultural heritage of the past. This means that the problem is not principally about what sacramental tradition implies, but what language and culture through which the sacramental tradition is spoken and transmitted.[266] Yves Congar underscores similar points in his analysis of the word Tradition which primarily means to transmit or to deliver.[267]

The church is aware of the fact that her sacramental tradition is spoken and delivered using the expressions of the Roman Rite, which means Roman language and culture.[268] This Roman character contrasts with Asian or African expressions and spiritual sensitivities. In addition to this is a hesitancy of accuracy of the church Roman narrative to attend the suffering and the tragedy of the non-Roman cultures and peoples.

There has been a great enthusiasm in the church's part to take into account the indigenous settings. Nonetheless, there are also reluctance and doubts from some persons. Most of objections are pertinent to the fear of the horror of the banality of language. Flanagan, for example, appears under the fear that changing the language will cause the downgrading of the divine, or 'erosion of the holy' in the language of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.[269]

Power's critical investigation on the above objections indicates mostly the oblivious tendency of immediacy, where something that is considered familiar is accepted to be truer, more

[266] Cf. David Noel Power, *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving*, 22.

[267] Cf. Yves Congar, *The Meaning of Tradition*, trans. A.N. Woodrow (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1964), 9.

[268] Cf. David Noel Power, *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving*, 22.

[269] Cf. *Ibid*., 28-29.

convincing, and primary.[270] When sacramental tradition falls under this tendency, it stagnates becoming itself, and turns to be a cultural or linguistic ideology. At this point, overcoming immediacy becomes more urgent and demanding.

5.4. Reconstructing language

5.4.1. The world of language

This title can sound misleading. To mention a phrase 'the world of language' gives us a sensation of standing outside the language while starring at the complexity of language. The language is at our disposal to study. Power' usage of the phrase 'language as reality' seems to be able to provide an alternative solution.

Language as reality is a frank recognition that it is constitutive and fundamental of our reality. Language explains what man is in the world. Language reflects the nature of man as reality of the past, of the present and of the future.[271] Imagine we hear somebody mentions a word 'prelinguistic.' Even words 'prelinguistic' makes sense to our hearing. We can relate ourselves to that situation. The question is that how do we find ourselves in such understanding? We can only relate ourselves to the word 'prelinguistic' through language, because even when we think, we think in language. Language reveals to us the word prelinguistic and its understanding. Thus, language is preliminarily constitutive of our thought.[272]

[270] Cf. *Ibid*., 36.

[271] Cf. *Ibid*., 64.

[272] Cf. *Ibid*., 61.

The most basic element of reality is daily experience. The same logic applies for language. The reality of man as a language event happens through everyday language. Language shows how daily experiences are passed. People say things. People go to work, and get thrown into their daily routine. People talk. People talk with themselves, with others, with the environment and with 'the Other.' Most of these talks and acts happen in and through language.

For Power, in viewing language as constitutive of the daily reality, it situates us at the edge of the mystery of language. For the purpose of our investigation, let us take language as an utterance as example. Utterance or saying is mostly controlled by the intention of the speaker. The intention is the reality which is sought. The intention in itself is an unspoken language. The intention, in Power's terminology, is called language of silence.[273] When the intention is uttered it becomes a spoken language. The flow of dynamism between intention and utterance expresses the nature of language as something that is beyond what is utterance. In other words, when one's concentration is focused on what he hears or listens, at the same time he is faced with the mystery of what is unheard, that is, the reality of the unspoken language. The unspoken language is an invitation to realize that language is at the same time a mediation of presence and absence.[274]

Power explains that poetry and art are the best examples of the reality of language as reality that invites to travel 'beyond' itself. Language of poetry and art are the spoken or written utterance that invites readers' imagination to be spoken by the absence. [275] Language as the interplay of absence and presence provides us with the notion that "this is not purely and simply

[273] Cf. *Ibid*., 73.

[274] Cf. *Ibid*., 64.

[275] Cf. *Ibid*., 72.

because humans cannot fully grasp what is said, but because the thing that is said is also in the saying unsaid."[276] The tradition and the myth can be added into this type of language. The tradition and the myth are not only a collection of happenings. They are a collection of spoken and unspoken, said and unsaid, utterance and intention.

Still as the mediation of presence and absence, Power adds that language presents and communicates to us an event. This event can happen before us, which is called the language of tradition.[277] Language here conveys some events that happened in the past and still retains in some people's memory.

Each event contains a different message. Some dramas from the past communicate to us events where people were sad or happy, things were built or destroyed, someone collected or scattered. There are also languages of violence, discrimination, oppression, discrimination, betrayal, received and that come to us from the past. All these events are testimonies in language, and provide us various messages. One of the messages can be of an invitation for improvement or transformation of living condition, life situation or personal decision. This means that after encountering the experience of the past through language, one can be immersed into a self-transformative experience. Power sees this link as the concept of language as teacher of life. Language can trigger a new ethical awareness and commitment.[278]

Another dimension of language memory that needs to be paid attention is the myth. The tradition speaks as testimony, whereas myth speaks as dynamism of creative force.[279] Power's

[276] *Ibid*., 64.

[277] Cf. *Ibid.*, 62-63.

[278] Cf. *Ibid.*, 70-71.

[279] Cf. *Ibid*., 65-70.

central point here is that both tradition and myth convey some events to us through language. They 'bring tidings' to us who live in the present. In order to understand what the tradition and myth are speaking to readers at present time, Power proposes a method of hermeneutics.[280]

Hermeneutics take as its fundamental principle from the appreciation of language. Hence, hermeneutics, for Power, is more than a work of deciphering 'documented events' or 'happening's. More importantly, it is an initiative to live with the events and listen to the 'speaking events.' Thus, quoting Ricoeur, Power explicates that one of the three stages in remembering events is to remember the past events, to relate to the world of the people of the past, and the cultural language that shapes their events.[281]

5.4.2. Language as Moment of *Event-ing*

We have mentioned in previous points that language as event means language is the locus of a fusion of horizon. As a fusion of horizon, language presupposes encounter between what is familiar and what is unfamiliar, between what is old and what is new.

We have also seen that this fusion takes the form of an ongoing dialogue, a present continuous "event-ing."[282] An event is always in the mode of 'event-ing,' still is happening. Hence, language as event means the present continues "event-ing" of "what is said, what it means, what realities it engages, and how it refers to the ultimate truth of God."[283]

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[280] Cf. *Ibid*., 63.

[281] Cf. *Ibid*., 70.

[282] Cf. *Ibid*., 11.

[283] Cf. *Ibid*.

Perceiving language as something always on-going and happening provide us with a new awareness of the uniqueness of temporality. All events are unique. They are unrepeatable. Now, anytime the memories, tradition, stories are to be made remembered in present time, what happens is not the repetition of the events, because they are not repeatable. What happens is that language made the 'event' present and alive in its genuine "event-ing" but through its varied expressions that have to be interpreted.[284]

Regarding hermeneutics, Power's quoting Ricoeur, offers three distinctive elements of interpretation.[285] The first is explanation. Explanation refers to the responsibility to the "text."[286] Explanation unfolds the information about what we know of what is recalled or celebrated, how it happened or was celebrated, the context where it happened and was celebrated. The second is understanding. Understanding is related to the insight that comes along with the act of celebrating what is explained. In other word, explanation becomes the precondition for understanding. Third is appropriating. After having been clear about the explanation of the meaning of a past event, and be enlightened by the new insights that flow from the understanding of that past event, we are now ready to interpret and make the memory of the past be alive again in the present. It is here that language becomes the "event-ing" of the past in its spirit but through different expressions of temporality of the present. Hence, hermeneutics or interpretation does not mean repetition but to make an event an 'event-ing' again through language.[287]

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[284] Cf. *Ibid*., 41.

[285] Cf. *Ibid*., 41-43.

[286] Cf. *Ibid*.

[287] Cf. *Ibid*.

At this point of time, language can communicate the grace of the ‘event’ of the past to the present. This grace, however, needs to be liberated from misreading and misinterpretation. Here again, hermeneutics that concentrates at present time, becomes the power to free grace from being ideologized or corrupted.

CHAPTER 6
Language and Sacraments

The Christian sacraments are unique because they take the form of language of tradition. The sacraments are not an invention of the present. They are brought from the past by the language.

> "A ritual or sacramental event relates to an event within time past through the capacities and power of language to carry it forward and to allow it to enter afresh into lives, however they may have been disrupted and broken."[288]

Through language, the redemptive power of Christ event, which happened in the past, is brought back the present to our context and situation.

6.1. Sacraments as Relived Memory

The sacraments of the church are memorial of the Paschal event of Jesus Christ.[289] The Paschal event is constitutive of the sacraments for "what was visible in our Savior has passed over into his mysteries."[290] In short, Jesus instituted the sacraments not merely by his words and deeds, but with his entire life. These mysteries of our Savior now become memorial language, in which the sacraments are shaped. The emphasis here is given strongly on the part of sacraments as language of mediation of Christ events, which have as guarantor the Holy Spirit. As language, it is understandable that sacraments have taken various forms of expressions as they evolve in the course of time.[291]

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[288] Cf. *Ibid*., 75.

[289] Cf. *Ibid*., 82.

[290] *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nº 1115.

[291] Cf. David Noel Power, *Sacraments: The Language of God's Giving*, 82-83.

Power sees the sacraments as symbolical language of the events of Jesus Christ in two ways. Firstly, sacraments are depicted as language of the suffering of Jesus Christ (*Pascha/Passio*). This approach discloses the suffering of God himself in the suffering of the Son. Sacramental celebrations commemorate the ultimate solidarity of God who enters and experiences the suffering and darkness of the world. Secondly, sacraments are symbolizing the departure of Jesus Christ from his bodily existence to be replaced by the Holy Spirit through the body of the believing assembly (*Pascha/Transitus*).[292]

This method serves as reminder that Paschal event marked Jesus Christ's departure and absence physically from the world. This method at the same time is to emphasize the symbolical character of the sacraments as language. The sacraments as language are expressions in human language through which the believers can experience the unsearchable richness coming from God that generates inspiration for transformation.[293]

The sacraments as language of the Paschal event introduce the notion of 'transferring' the Christ event to the memory and celebration of the people of God in the present.[294] In other words, what is in the soul of Tradition of the church is going to be brought forth anew. To ensure the memory of Christ's event is properly re-inscribed onto the present celebration, Power writes that 'bodily memory' is very important.

[292] Cf. David Noel Power, *Unsearchable Riches: The Symbolic Nature of Liturgy* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 1984), 155.

[293] Cf. *Ibid*., 30.

[294] Cf. David Noel Power, *Sacraments: The Language of God's Giving,* 125.

Bodily memory in the context of the Christian sacraments is expressed in the sentence: "the anthropological comparison invites reflection on the bodily impact of Christian rites."[295] For instance, for a catechumen to relate to the narrative of Christ event, that is to experience the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ, through the liturgical rite of the sacrament of baptism, he has to be immersed into the water. This way, the memory takes a new bodily memory in the present through a mode of active participation on the catechumen's part.[296] Another place where the bodily memory can be verified is the community. The Christian community identity, for Power, is marked by interplay between celebrating the tradition in the form of its liturgical rites and the attitude of looking at her liturgical rites as separation from the tradition.[297] Therefore Power warns that inculturation is not the matter of:

> "finding out exactly what the rite was in the beginning but of relating what is done now to the way of discipleship and to the meaning that was attached to rites, which for all that we lack knowledge about particularities is passed on to us in ritual practice."[298]

Power epitomizes the role of Christian community as the strategic context where the Christ event can reach the world. There have been many discussions and debates on whether or not the church needs to adapt to the surrounding world. [299] Power offers a fundamental understanding of sacraments as language event through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not called by a particular gender or status due to its nature as the Spirit that blows wherever it wills. Through the divine and miraculous work of the Holy Spirit, adaptation is brought to assurance

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[295] *Ibid*., 126.

[296] Cf. *Ibid*., 126-127.

[297] Cf. *Ibid*., 129.

[298] *Ibid*., 130-131.

[299] Cf. *Ibid*., 140.

that the entire Creation are called to participate in different ways in the celebration of the Christ event through the sacraments. With this, we will discuss the sacrament as the event of Gift through the Spirit.

6.2. Sacraments as the Event of Gift

The sacraments as events of God's gift allows to see three essential elements of the economy of gift as proposed by David Power: the gift as symbol of Trinitarian love, the gift as event through the Holy Spirit, and lastly the gift as economy of salvation. The sacraments as symbols of the Trinitarian love encapsulate the notion of sacraments as, what we have mentioned in the previous part on sacraments as Jesus Christ's event, the fulfillment of God's self-giving to the world.

Since the creation of the world, God has provided and sustained the life of man with God's own self which reaches its climax in the Paschal event. God's self-giving to the world does not end with the ascension of Jesus Christ to heaven. On the contrary, through the Holy Spirit, who breathes and acts through the church, the absence of the mystery of the Father and the Son has been brought to its contentment.[300] The church is now always present "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

The mystery of God's self-giving to the church is as eternal as God's mystery, for what God has given to the church is his own self, namely, God's divine love (cf. 1 John 4,8-10). Power catches the eschatological significance of this statement. God's self-giving happens in the corporeal history of a man named Jesus. As this eternal love of God enters the finite world, it triggers the sense of hope that this love is going to last beyond time and space. This love breaks

[300] Cf. *Ibid*., 281.

away the limit of corporeality and temporality. Power's key idea here is that the Holy Spirit who inhabits the body of the church is the divine guarantee to this eschatological promise. The Holy Spirit's symbolical presence in the church, therefore, is in itself an 'event' of the gift of God. From this, it is also implied that the church also symbolizes the eschatological dimension of God's divine love through cultural experience and language expression.[301]

God's love through the church is sustaining the church's eschatological existence with the sacraments where the Trinitarian love is present and celebrated as 'event of gift.' Here, the sacraments are the language of the church to speak about the Trinity who is commemorated and celebrated within the celebration of the sacraments. In the side of the people, the sacraments are supposed to be seen as primarily God's initiative. God, through the church and the church's sacraments, has shown himself as the giver of the gift, the language that speaks.[302] Under this realization, the church is now at position to respond to the gift not primarily because she is in the same level with God, but because she is only the recipient of it.

Power concludes this flow of narrative of sacraments as gift of God with the Son and the Holy Spirit with his concept of identity. God's gift to the church also produces what he proposes to be the Christian identity. It is a relationship that assigns position, namely, identity as a Christian or a faithful.[303] The logic here, therefore, goes as: the more a Christian participates in the celebration of sacraments as the language of God's self-giving, the better he understands himself as Christian. Furthermore, the better one perceives himself as a Christian, the deeper he

[301] Cf. *Ibid*., 86.

[302] Cf. *Ibid*., 275.

[303] Cf. Power, *Unsearchable Riches: The Symbolic Nature of Liturgy*, 61.

goes into the awareness of what his identity assigns him to do. He is now in the middle of interplay among praise, thanksgiving and doxology.[304]

As God gives himself up to the whole church, praise, therefore, belongs to the entire Christian community.[305] Similarly, thanksgiving and doxology as expression of the sheer of wonder becomes undeniably part of the church's identity. The church offers praise, thanksgiving and doxology because of what God has done through the church. Power recalls the human and cultural face of the church. As God's self-giving happens through the language marked by cultures, the church's forms of praise, thanksgiving and doxology must happen within the language of culture. As somebody becomes utterly overwhelmed by a gift, he normally turns to become very generous himself. This is the human expression of saying 'owe somebody thanks.' If someone owes somebody thanks, he would be so light in giving away what is his to others. It is here that doxology begets a consciousness that being Christian means not attempting to desire an immediate encounter with God, but to begin to be sensitive of God's endless self-giving and multiply thankful feelings through sharing his gift with others especially the forgotten and unmentioned ones because "just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." (Mat. 25,40). It is at this point that church sacramental celebrations have impact in relating the Paschal event to the deeper level of the life of the church.

6.3. Sacrament as Language "event-ing"

The sacraments as "event-ing" is the conclusion of the discourse on sacrament as God' symbolical self-giving in the church through the Spirit. God's self-giving to the church makes

[304] Cf. *Ibid*., 86.

[305] Cf. A.M. Roguet, *The Liturgy of the Hours: The General Instruction with Commentary*, trans. Peter Coughlan and Peter Purdue (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Abbey Press, 1971), 95.

sacrament to be celebrated as the "event-ing" of language. [306] As language event, Power underlines that the sacrament is the interaction between God's giving in the one hand and man giving on the other hand.

As language event, we have said that "it is through the events of the use of language among people and communities that historical origins or new departures of mythical beginnings are themselves present as event."[307] In other words, Christ redemptive acts reached us through the Paschal event. Paschal event comes to our commemoration through language as carrier of the event of Tradition. Thus, Christ event comes to our knowledge through language.[308]

Language brought event to our domain of the present mostly through written text or documented memory. Until the event is read and proclaimed through oral performance, the event still belongs to the language of the past. On the contrary, when the written event becomes an oral performance then language becomes the place where the present actors can come to interact with the actors of the past.[309]

Oral performance implies a living communication between people of the present and the people of the event of the past. By reading what is written about other whose words are now being presented to the present Power convinces that a communication is happening. Power uses the example of a play. When somebody was re-enacting the words of a figure from the past, he is not merely repeating what is written in the text but making a communication with the owner of

[306] Cf. Power, *Unsearchable Riches: The Symbolic Nature of Liturgy*, 61-62.

[307] Cf. Power, *Sacraments: The Language of God's Giving,* 66.

[308] Cf. *Ibid*., 66-67.

[309] Cf. *Ibid*., 67.

those words. What is importance of oral performance is that it presumes the use of body.[310] Through bodily acts, the words appear to be alive and the past experience is truly relived.

This signification leads us on to the second aspect of oral performance. Oral performance presupposes the presence of assembly or community. "Sometimes it is said that the oral centers so much on the gathered community that it fails to affect the sense of communion beyond the gathering."[311] In the middle of a gathered and celebrating community, a sensation of immediacy, where the past event is encountered without mediation, is stimulated. This stimulated feeling would affect on a realization that there is something being passed down from the past event which is now present in our midst through the dynamism of language. Now let us apply this understanding to sacrament as language "event-ing."

Power stated that people enter into sacrament first through their bodies. Here we are dealing with the Scripture. According to Power logic, our only access to the event of sacrament is through reading the Scripture as the Word of God. Through an oral reading, one enters the event of the Scripture which is covered by different genres, narratives and settings. This means that all those various genres, narrative and settings are bearers of meaning. As bearer of meaning, they represent different messages; these messages are only possible to be recognized through participation of present bodily readings and re-enactment.[312]

As the Word of God, the reading of Scripture is formed to be the reading of the Word of God to in a liturgical celebration. Most of these liturgical celebrations are happening in the

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[310] Cf. *Ibid.*, 69.

[311] *Ibid.*

[312] Cf. *Ibid*., 149.

gathering community of faithful. What happens now is that the message of the event from the past is to be read and interpreted in the context of the present-gathering community. Power's reflective question goes: "Can we trust God's Word when it is put out of context any more than we trust quotations from persons given to us out of context?"[313]

Power writes about the meeting of horizon through the process of reading the past event and finding its relevancy in the complexity of present context. [314] Language "event-ing" occurs right here: when the horizon of the past event is conversing or interacting with the actual horizon. At this moment, time stops evolving. What is left is the language which presents us with an ongoing event.

Conclusion of Second Parts

Power's proposal of the sacraments as language events takes us to the importance of the liturgical celebration as proper place to understand them. On the one hand, it emphasizes a temporal dimension: the present liturgical celebration is the actualization of what happens in the past. The past is presented and enacted through whatever is available in the present celebration. It is firstly and principally found in the Scriptural reading of the present liturgical celebration. Thus, for Power what is important is not the language in which the Words of God is communicated but in the "event-ing" of the Word of God through reading and listening. Other than the reading of the Scripture, this interplay also occurs through the use of liturgical colors, types of songs, music, prayer, bodily performance and participation.

[313] Power, *The Word of the Lord: Liturgy's Use of Scripture*, 3.

[314] Cf. *Ibid*., 80-81.

On the other hand, the present liturgical celebration is the place where the interpretation of the past is located. This means that while interaction between horizon of the memory of the past and the language of the present is happening or "event-ing," the celebration is at the same time interpreting the language of the past according to the needs of the present. The present liturgical celebration becomes the hermeneutics of the tradition.

Conclusion

In parts 1 and 2 we have singled out the characters of Chauvet's and Power's approaches to the sacraments from a slightly different point of departure. Although both Chauvet and Power come to study the notion of sacrament from a similar starting point, namely, being liturgists as they are in the first place, there are still some elements that are peculiar for each theologian.

Chauvet based his works mostly on Heidegger, criticizes the misleading understanding of language in the Western theological tradition. Chauvet rejects all attitudes that narrow down the nature of language to a mere instrument of communication. Looking at language this way can be very dangerous because it implies a notion of immediacy where man can come to encounter God without mediation. It is clear for Chauvet that relationship between God and mankind cannot be immediate. It is only through mediation that the relationship is possible and authentic. It is in this perspective that language is going to proposed as mediation, in which man is perceived as subject in the world.

Chauvet's second critique that comes hand in hand with the previous rebuke of the devaluation of language is the affirmation of God's position as the Other. God is not who the Western philosophy or Scholastic theology explained and described in their philosophical and theological premises. The Western philosophy has made God the final cause and the final answer for their philosophical questions. The Scholastics have named God a divine object which can be "controlled" through the usage of the sacraments as channels, remedies, and instruments. [315] Quite different from what is proposed by the Western philosophy, Chauvet states that Christian theological language *always-already* speaks about the absence of God. Language takes us to the notion of absence. The absence is underscored not merely as the reminder of the greatness of God, but also and more importantly to authenticate Christian experience as subject.

[315] Cf. Chauvet, *The Sacraments: the Word of God at the Mercy of the Body*, xiv-xv.

Liturgy marks the openness to God's salvific work through the church. In the listening to the Scripture, for example, Chauvet writes that the Judeo-Christian notion of bringing the memory of the past to the present as lived experience also happens in our liturgy of the sacraments. Chauvet goes on to explain how the symbolical self-giving of God in the church finds its counterpart in man's openness and self-giving to God. God's great deeds in the past are all the reasons why the present is celebrated as victory. Every time this past victory is celebrated in the present time, it is celebrated with thanksgiving prayer and offering. It is in the offering of token of thanksgiving that man's self-giving is explained. Man's participation is read as thanksgiving offering from man for God's initiative to save mankind in the first place. Along this path, Chauvet denies the Christomonism of the traditional theology that hampers the understanding of the Spirit, and especially the Trinitarian face of the church.

Power, on the other hand, brings in the concerns of liturgical studies to approach the sacraments. One of the backgrounds of Power's research is the current crisis in the liturgy. Power suggests that a way out of this crisis is to renew and refresh our understanding of the sacrament as symbol. Similar to Chauvet, Power also underlines the primary understanding of the sacraments as symbol through which the presence of God is returned to its position as Other "that will endure until the eschaton." [316]

Power pays extra attention to the fact that the sacraments are expression of the language of worship that belongs to the narrative of the past. In order to celebrate what had occurred in the past in the present celebrations, Power underscores the position of the liturgical celebration of the present as the strategic locus for hermeneutical investigation to take place. Liturgical celebrations are the privileged place to interpret the narrative of the past.

[316] Power, *Sacrament: The Language of God's Giving*, 72.

Viewing the sacraments as symbolical expressions through language of the church can benefit the Christians in many ways. Firstly, the concept of mediation that lies at the heart of symbolical expression has given a lot of appreciations to the concept of corporeality in Christian theology.[317]

Going deeper to the heart of the concept of symbol where symbol first and foremost becomes the mediation, the explanation of sacraments as mediation in human cultural and linguistic expression can be considered a theological motion that frees God from the tyranny of concepts.[318] This way, God's supremacy is given a due credit in our theological language. The hope here is that the tendency of immediacy can be lessen to the degree that all theological 'sayings' about God are mediated through human expressions in the scripture and tradition.[319]

Related to this anthropological concern is a precious realization that theology is in itself a language that 'speaks.' As a language that speaks, theology is found convincing in that it takes into account all pieces of human experience into consideration. This means that the reality of 'God communicates himself' since the beginning of time must become the foundation of theological investigation. God is in the history speaking to us. What if theology becomes an attitude of listening more than clarifying or verifying the truth of the divine? Power suggests a theology that aligns attentiveness of sensitivity to the always-already present and speaking God. God has made himself a gift.[320] What theology is supposed to propose is a help rather than a

[317] Cf. Susan A. Ross, *Anthropology: Engaging Theology, A Catholic Perspectives* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2012), 99-101.

[318] Cf. Kevin W. Hector, *Theology without Metaphysics: God, Language, and the Spirit of Recognition, Current Issues in Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 49-52.

[319] Cf. Marianne Servaas, "Focusing Our Eyes on the Sacraments: An Interaction with David Power," in *Questions Liturgiques,* 88 (2007), 157-169, esp. 169.

[320] Cf. Power, *Sacraments: The Language of God' Giving,* 44.

hindrance. To expand our horizon in theology, we need to dialogue. Theology needs to dialogue with different 'current' faces of the world. Thus, theology needs to communicate with different voice of other perspectives.[321]

Power's concerns that draw their inspirations from the liturgical study can be of great motivation for believers to celebrate sacraments as a continuous 'hermeneutics of the event of gift.' We saw earlier how theological propositions are expected to bring people further to a consciousness that God always-already gives himself in the church as gratuitous and graceful gift. This notion can contribute positively in a massive way to new liturgical reflection that each time a sacrament is celebrated, a new gift is discovered.[322]

[321] Susan A. Ross, *Extravagant Affections: A Feminist Sacramental Theology* (New York: Continuum, 2001), 41.

[322] Cf. *Ibid*., 65-70.

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