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The Catholicity of the Churches, the imperialistic Globalization and Migration

The Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace. An Ongoing Conversation on Catholicity and Globalization

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1. Migration and flight in the wake of globalization

I would like to explain that Catholicity is able to offer a specific view for what migration is in the times of neoliberal globalization. The ecclesiological category „catholicity” is a key word for how the Church could react to the phenomena of migration in a globalized world. My aim is to show how Catholicity can be a theological resource for an ecclesial and ethical response to the challenges of globalization.

Twenty years ago the UN was celebrating the fall of Berlin’s wall as a victory of liberty. There was the hope that after the wall’s fall the Art. 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should finally gets a chance of universal recognition: “Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.” The freedom to go and to return is a human right. This hope failed. Only few years after the cold war there are new front lines. Inside Europe a regime was established with the freedom to travel within the European Union. But outside strictly guarded borders are surrounding Europe. New bastions were built in order to protect the country with its land and water borders – more effectively than ever before – and more deadly. More than 23.000 have died since the year 2000. The Mediterranean Sea has become a huge cemetery.

The newly elected Pope Francis visited the Italian island Lampedusa, situated in the middle between Africa and Italy, in his first official visit in 2013. Here he asked the people of Europe: "Where is your brother?" Then he accused:

“The culture of comfort, which makes us think only of ourselves, makes us insensitive to the cries of other people, makes us live in soap bubbles which, however lovely, are insubstantial; they offer a fleeting and empty illusion which results in indifference to others; indeed, it even leads to the globalization of indifference. In this globalized world, we have fallen into globalized indifference.”¹

The dead bodies at the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, refugees before steel wire, camps at the borders of the European Union, large groups of people walking along the motor ways:. The last annual report of the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), stated the record level of 65.3 million displaced. But the UNHCR counted only the refugees by war, but not from other causes. With these pictures a problem came into consciousness that had been suppressed for a long time. The Commission of the European Union estimates that more than 1.3 million people came to Europe. German officials said more than a million had been counted in Germany. But: The richest continent on this earth receives only 5 per cent of all refugees who are wandering around the world.

¹ http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130708_omelia-lampedusa.html

The worldwide largest group is the people who are forced to migrate by a mix from poverty, exploitation, violence, climate disaster and lack of opportunities for life. Their only aim is to have a place for living in peace. But now the worldwide normality is knocking at Europe's doors. For a long time Europe has been shielded from this situation. So it was possible to avoid seeing the worldwide normal misery of millions of people who were fleeing from war, hunger, poverty or climate change. All in all it can be assumed that 200 to 300 million are currently living far from their countries: refugees from war, climate refugees, refugees within their countries like the Lumad People in the Philippines, and last not least millions migrant workers seeking jobs anywhere.

Important is to distinguish between migration and flight. Migration is the general term and flight is a special kind of migration. Insofar each refugee is a migrant, but not every migrant is a refugee. All the migrants have one common concern: They are fleeing from violence, war, misery, hunger, unemployment, climate disaster. They have one reason: They cannot stay at home. And they have one purpose: To find a better place where they can stay and live in peace.

Pope Francis is right in saying in his apostolic letter "Evangelii Gaudium":

"In this context, some people continue to defend trickle-down theories which assume that economic growth, encouraged by a free market, will inevitably succeed in bringing about greater justice and inclusiveness in the world. This opinion, which has never been confirmed by the facts, expresses a crude and naïve trust in the goodness of those wielding economic power and in the sacralized workings of the prevailing economic system. Meanwhile, the excluded are still waiting."(54)²

Who has gained from globalization? In the report, entitled "Working For The Few. Political capture and economic inequality", the British helping organization Oxfam warned that the combined wealth of the richest top one percent will be richer than the rest of the world.³ And the 62 richest people are as wealthy as the poorest half of the world. A new study of one of the world's leading economists of inequality, Branko Milanović, proves that globalization is producing winners and losers.⁴ Real income gains the new global middle class, particularly in Asian countries like China, India or Indonesia. Among the big losers were those at the bottom worldwide and the middle and working classes in the advanced countries in Europe and in USA. These people belong to the lower middle class in the rich countries. They are obvious not the winner of globalization, but the loser. The economic development of the population of the old rich countries and the economic development of the emerging countries in Asia differs. The great winners are the poor and the middle class in Asia, the great loser the working class and lower middle class in the rich world. The half of the global one top percent are Americans. Hence follows that the gap between poor and rich in the rich countries has widened and the gains from globalization in the rich countries are those who were already rich. Among the big winners was the global one percent, the world's plutocrats, but also the middle class in newly emerging economies in Brazil, India or China. The richest one percent of the world's population is concentrated in the "old" rich countries in Europe and USA.

² https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html

³ <https://www.oxfam.de/system/files/bp-working-for-few-political-capture-economic-inequality-200114-en-oxfam.pdf>.

⁴ Branko Milanović, 2016: Global Inequality. A New Approach for the Age of Globalization. Cambridge, Massachusetts Harvard University Press, 10-45.

Migration is an unforeseen rendezvous with the dire impacts of globalization. Now the Migrants are bringing the message home to the advanced economies: The globalization did not work; the promises of globalization failed. Globalization is dividing the world. One of the consequences of the failed globalization is that people are forced into migration in order to survive. This not only separates families, but can be very risky physically. We read almost daily of migrants from Africa drowning in the Mediterranean, or migrants dying in the Mexican desert trying to leave Latin America and get into the United States. There is a man who flees from Syria from war; another flees from Nigeria from joblessness or hopelessness another one is a labor migrant from the Philippines and a Philipinian nurse migrates to Europe. Migration is survival strategy. Thousands of Philipinian nurses emigrated. At home for example they earn 146 US Dollars, in the Gulf States around 500 Dollars, in the US and Germany 3.000 Dollar. The families assure their own survival if one daughter is in the rich global North and is able to send remittances back home. According to a study of the World Bank the remittances sent home by migrants are three times the size of official development assistance and they provide an important lifeline for millions of poor households. Even so, the majority of migrant workers today are women, who are employed as domestic workers, in the computer industry, or forced into the sex trade. For the European countries the worldwide brain drain or care drain is very comfortably. Obispo Maximo Ramento put the question in his homily delivered at the Lambeth Conference in London in 1998. Let us listen what he said:

“But why is it that the country is undeveloped and children die of curable diseases like pneumonia and diarrhea? Because our skilled laborers are exported to the Middle East and our professionals like doctors and nurses are either in the US or in England. We spent million dollars to send to school but they serve here in England. Sometimes we think that the poor Filipinos subsidize your education here in England?”⁵

From a receiving angle migration is a chance having cheap labor from a worldwide labor market. Neo-liberal globalization has been a powerful creator of new wealth. But that new wealth has been going more to a few rather than helping the many. Globalization is not the only reason, but it is one of the main reasons. The neoliberal project of globalization has created a deep gap between the poor and the rich. It was a political strategy that did not pursue the aim to create a fair world for all but to expand the market and the financial investments.

The rich countries are outsourcing poverty and injustice. The losers are now knocking at the door. And the rich countries are defending their privileges by force. The very influential European Union Institute for Security published in 2009 a study under the title “What ambitions for European defense in 2020?”.⁶ There is to read in quite clear terms: “As the ratio of the world population living in misery and frustration will remain massive, the tensions and spillover between their world and that of the rich will continue to grow. As we are unlikely to have solved this problem at its root by 2020 – i.e. by curing dysfunctional societies – we will need to strengthen our barriers.” And the study adds: “It is a morally distasteful, losing strategy, but will be unavoidable if we cannot solve the problems at their root.”

The so called refugee crisis is no refugee crisis but a crisis of the current capitalism as Pope Francis impressively describes:

“It is the tip of an iceberg. These poor people are fleeing war, hunger, but that is the tip of the iceberg. Because underneath that is the cause; and the cause is a bad and unjust socioeconomic system, in everything, in the world – speaking of the environ-

⁵ In: Franz Segbers / Peter-Ben Smit (ed.), 2011: Catholicity in Times of Globalization. Remembering Alberto Ramento, Martyred Bishop of Workers and Peasants, Lucerne, 71.

⁶ http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/What_ambitions_for_European_defence_in_2020.pdf. 73.

mental problem –, in the socioeconomic society, in politics, the person always has to be in the center. That is the dominant economic system nowadays; it has removed the person from the center, placing the god money in its place, the idol of fashion. There are statistics ... that 17% of the world's population has 80% of the wealth.”⁷

This description corresponds with the statement of the ecumenical movement. In Busan the Assembly of the WCC in 2013 stated in the declaration “Together towards Life Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes”:

“This is a global system of mammon that protects the unlimited growth of wealth of only the rich and powerful through endless exploitation. This tower of greed is threatening the whole household of God. The reign of God is in direct opposition to the empire of mammon.”⁸

Globalization and migration turn out to be two sides of one coin. Migration is the dark or back side of globalization. In an unequal world migration is simply a rational response to the large differences in the standard of living. There is no globalization without migration.

Today's migration crisis is an issue of global economic inequality. The poorer part of the world is asking the richer part: Why is the one part of the world population poor and the other rich? The migrants are asking the question of justice as a global social question. Migrants and refugees are not only victims. Migration is a counter-globalization from below against the failed globalization from above. The refugees are appropriating their human right to life: Not only the financial investors or multinational corporations - also the people have the right to leave a place or to stay elsewhere looking for better life and justice. What the migrants and refugees are doing is the proclamation and appropriation of their human right to a decent life.

2. Imperium, empire and catholicity

I would like to ask if there is a theological approach to the challenges of migration in the age of globalization. As a catholic but non-Roman church, the Old Catholic Church has always attached importance to catholicity as a major component of its theological self-understanding. One of the main characteristics of Old Catholic Ecclesiology and Theology in general is its appeal to the Early Church. This appeal played a major role in the protest against the papal dogmas of the first Vatican Council. The term “Early Church” had been used a standard term for third-century Christianity, the Old Church.⁹ With its name the Old Catholic Church does not only remember the old undivided Church of the first millennium but also a kind of a none-imperialistic Catholicity. A quotation from Ignaz von Döllinger, the most famous German Theologian in the 19th century and one of the most known inspirers of the Old Catholic movement, may illustrate this. Döllinger stated, that he could not accept the new dogmas of papal infallibility and universal jurisdiction of the First Vatican Council with four arguments: not as a Christian, not as a theologian, not as a historian, and not as citizen. The reason he gave was that the Roman Church was going to establish the Empire of this world, an imperial Catholicity that Christ refused. Then he explicated: „Because I know that the unceasing striving to realize this theory of world dominion did cost Europe rivers of blood, turned entire

⁷ http://rr.sapo.pt/noticia/34088/pope_i_trust_the_young_politicians_corruption_is_a_global_problem

⁸ <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/mission-and-evangelism/together-towards-life-mission-and-evangelism-in-changing-landscapes>, para 31.

⁹ See Mattijs Ploeger, *Celebrating Church. Ecumenical Contributions to a Liturgical Ecclesiology*, Netherlands Studies in Ritual and Liturgy 7, Tilburg 2008, 168-170.

countries upside-down and ruined them.”¹⁰ - The world dominion or empire is for Döllinger the cause for “rivers of blood”. Historically was a strong relationship between catholicity and colonialization. So the Philippines were conquered by Spaniards and called they the archipelago after the Spanish King Philipp. Catholicity is in so far not only an innocent theological word. It is stained with the blood of colonialism by sword and Bible. The new dogmas of papal universal jurisdiction and primacy are forming an imperial catholicity like an empire within the Church. And exactly that is what Jesus refused.

The Old Catholic Churches remember in their name an anti-imperial resistance against an empire within the Church. In some extent the Iglesia Filipina Independiente (IFI) does it too. The IFI was born in the struggle against Spanish colonialism and American imperialism. The Old Catholic Churches and the IFI have a common heritage: Combat the empire – whether within the Church or within the society.

It was the process of globalization that led to a process of rediscovering of the catholicity within the ecumenical movement. For the first time the General Assembly in Uppsala in 1968 emphasizes the catholicity of the church and envisions the one church “as a conciliar fellowship of local churches which are themselves truly united”. The WCC Assembly in Harare stated in 1998:

*“The vision behind globalization includes a competing vision to the Christian commitment to the oikoumene, the unity of humankind and the whole inhabited earth.... Although globalization is an inescapable fact of life, we should not subject ourselves to the vision behind it, but strengthen our alternative ways towards visible unity in diversity, towards an oikoumene of faith and solidarity.”*¹¹

And then the Assembly continued:

“The logic of globalization needs to be challenged by an alternative way of life of community in diversity. Christians and churches should reflect on the challenge of globalization from a faith perspective and therefore resist the unilateral domination of economic and cultural globalization.”

The World Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Busan stated in the document “The Church: Towards a Common Vision”: “Visible unity requires that churches be able to recognize in one another the authentic presence of what the Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople calls the ‘one, holy, catholic, apostolic Church’. This recognition, in turn, may in some instances depend upon changes in doctrine, practice and ministry within any given community. This represents a significant challenge for churches in their journey towards unity.”¹² This is the first time that the catholicity of all member churches is confirmed in a document of the WCC.

Ignatius of Antioch was the first to use the term "catholic" in the second century. The term “catholic” is derived from the Greek word *katholikos*, which is the equivalent of global and universal. Ignatius used the term “catholic” to name the communities who are at the grassroots all over the Roman Empire.¹³ The Roman Empire was an early form of globalization and imperialism. Insofar the term is an expression of resistance against hegemony and political power in the Roman Empire that comes from above. Ignatius was accused of participation in an insurgency, arrested and taken to Rome. During his abduction

¹⁰ Ignaz von Döllinger [1871]in: Urs Küry, 3rd ed., 1982: Die altkatholische Kirche. Ihre Geschichte. Ihre Lehre. Ihr Anliegen, Frankfurt, 62.

¹¹ See Together on the way, the WCC assembly report, WCC 1999, pp. 183-184.

¹² The Church towards a common Vision. Faith and Order Paper No. 214, para 9.

¹³ Ignatius of Antioch, Ad Smyrnaeos 8,2: BEP 2,281 / PG 5,713 B.

to the center of the Empire, to Rome, he wrote some letters in order to encourage his communities. Were he found guilty; the court of the Empire would condemn him to death in a fight with animals in front of a bloodthirsty crowd. Ignatius spoke of the „catholic church“ in a double meaning to which from then on the Church Fathers refer: catholic is the whole church all over the world – the Roman Empire - and at the same time each single local church. Catholicity means solidarity and exchange of the local Church with the whole Church in the context of the Roman Empire. Ignatius used the term “catholic” in a further very important way that, unfortunately, is often forgotten. Referring to some heretical people he wrote in his Epistle to the Smyrnaeans: “They have no regard for love; no care for the widow, or the orphan, or the oppressed; of the bond, or of the free; of the hungry, or of the thirsty.”¹⁴ Attention to patristic usage shows that the fullness denoted by “katholou” referred to the fullness of faith as much to geographical universality. Catholic does not only connect the local Church with the universal. The heretic people can be seen in the fact that they do not have any care for the widow, the orphan, the hungry, or the thirsty. The true catholic faith is in the very beginning not only defined by dogmas of a true faith, but by the true practice for the poor. The compassion with the poor is a touchstone for the true catholic faith. Compassion, struggle for justice and freedom are not an application of the faith, it’s the practice of the catholic faith.

Jesus and the Christians of the Early Church were living in the context of an Empire. Bishops like Ignatius were accused of insurgency like Jesus himself, who lived, taught, and was crucified in and by an empire. Jesus’s life and ministry in the Roman Empire led to his crucifixion. After he was crucified as an opponent of the Roman Empire, Paul distributed the Gospel and founded communities all over the Roman Empire. Amidst the slave society, there began a form of universalism in the communities respecting everybody as equal: “There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28). Sharing bread and wine among poor and rich was the central symbol in the Supper of the Eucharist (1 Cor 11).

In opposition to the Roman Empire the Christians practiced solidarity in a network of catholic Churches. This was the reason why the Early Church was able to cross all national or religious barriers. In the eyes of the Roman Empire it was very suspect that people from different social classes or origins gathered in the same community. For the contemporaries the Christians were traitors and enemies of the state. Christian values and networking of catholicity can be understood as a hidden undermining and progressive overcoming of the structures of the Roman Empire without any insurgency. At the heart of the empire the Churches formed an alternative network of solidarity throughout the Roman Empire like grassroots organizations. The Christian communities were all but harmless gatherings. And this network of, with and for marginalized people at the grass roots level of the Empire is what Ignatius of Antioch as the first one called “catholic”. The term catholicity was formed in the context of the hegemony, domination, exploitation and power of the Imperialism of the Roman Empire. What does it mean to live amidst an empire? The answer of the Early Church was given by the term “catholicity”.

As Octavius puts it in the second century, "We draw distinctions between nations and races, but to God the whole of this world is one household" (Minucius Felix 33). They saw themselves as the vanguard of a new humanity and trailblazers of a different globalization from that of the Roman Empire. In this horizon the “Letter to Diognetus” can be read:

“Christians are not distinguished from other men by country, language, nor by the customs which they observe. ... As citizens they participate in everything with others,

¹⁴ Ignatius of Antioch, Ad Smyrnaeos 6,2

yet they endure everything as if they were foreigners. Every foreign land is like their homeland to them, and every land of their birth is like a land of strangers.”¹⁵

The Christians within the Roman Empire were among those who did not collaborate with the imperialist system and its might-military-complex. So non-collaboration went hand in hand with an alternative approach, namely that of sharing and solidarity as among brothers and sisters. This then was the foundation which enabled the Early Church to overcome both national and religious barriers.

In the history, the church converted in the third and fourth century from a persecuted church in the Roman Empire to a church legitimizing the Roman Empire. Further on the church was part of the exploitation of the new conquered countries in the times of colonialization. Saying in a much shorter: the Roman Church adopted the structures of the Roman Empire and formed an imperial ecclesiology side by side with the Emperors of this world. The non-imperial catholicity of the Old Catholic Church and other non-roman Catholic Churches is able to offer their distinct understanding of catholicity to the ecumenical movement.

3. Enlarged understanding of catholicity in the wake of globalization

As in the Ecumenical movement a rediscovering of the new understanding of catholicity was in the Old Catholic Churches. The Old-Catholic Churches are challenged by their sister Church the IFI. In reaction to the awakening of the Third world a growing tide of repressive governments was sweeping throughout the whole Third World beginning in the seventies. Exactly at the time, when this period came to an end, a new phase of the relationship between the OCC and the IFI began. On the background of the People's Power Revolution of February 1986 Bishop Pasco expounded the aspirations of the Filipino people in his address to the International Conference of the Old Catholic Churches in Münster / Germany. He recommended to the conference to affirm its solidarity with the churches in the Philippines which are actively involved in the struggle for justice, freedom, democracy and peace. Bishop Pasco complained that the agreement was only on paper. He was the man who challenged the Old Catholic Church to fill the agreement with solidarity in the struggle for freedom, justice and peace. Only two years later the IFI-Bishop Roman Tipples was in Germany and he said: "To my German brothers and sisters, we urge you to be in support of those who struggle for life. We challenge you to be faithful to the demand of Christ." The IFI Bishop's plea for solidarity to the Conference was the starting point to fill the concordat not only with life, but with a new understanding of catholicity as well.

The three-year consultation on "catholicity and globalization" as undertaken by the IFI, the ECUSA, and the Union of Utrecht (with observers from the Church of Sweden), discovered ecclesiological common ground between the Old Catholic Churches of the Union of Utrecht and the IFI again.¹⁶ In this consultation Eleuterio J. Revollido explained: "Our catholicity then is an instrument for the transformation of the global village influenced at the moment by the venom of materialist globalization schemes. Through our common belief and 'recognition and respect for all human beings as children of God,' and 'subscribing to the faith handed over by the apostles' our catholicity can defeat the dehumanizing effects of economic globalization."¹⁷

¹⁵ <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/diognetus-roberts.html>, Chapter 5

¹⁶ See Catholicity and Globalization, 2010: Ecumenical conversations on God's abundance and the people's need. Beiheft zu Kirchliche Zeitschrift IKZ 100.

¹⁷ Eleuterio J. Revollido, 2010: IFI Response to the Saint martin's Statement, in: Catholicity and Globalization, Ecumenical conversations on God's abundance and the people's need. Beiheft zu Kirchliche Zeitschrift IKZ 100, 129.

The local struggle in the Philippines became a challenge for the catholicity of the Church. Through the globalization the genuine meaning of catholicity was rediscovered in the Filipino struggle for freedom and dignity and in the plea for solidarity in the struggle for life. The Church is global and local. This understanding of Catholicity corresponds with the ecumenical rediscovery of the catholicity of the church.

I want to emphasize this gift of the IFI to the Old Catholic Churches. The base of the agreements between the Old Catholic Church and the IFI was primarily the mutual recognition as sister Churches with a common catholic faith. Through the globalization the genuine meaning of catholicity was rediscovered in the Filipino struggle for their freedom and dignity. That is the vision of the catholicity of the Church seeking for solidarity and for respect of the dignity of difference and diversity. The poor Churches offer this understanding of catholicity as gift to the ecumenical movement. Catholicity is about solidarity within the worldwide churches and beyond the churches. The formerly oppressed, colonized and evangelized poor opened up to a new enlarged understanding of catholicity. Catholicity is a communion of churches who are connected in the struggle for life and dignity, a communion that cares for the poor and fight against the structure of sin in the global world to build the Kingdom of God on earth. The church is not a global player but a network player. Catholicity is able to be a source for an alternative vision of globalization against the imperialistic globalization that is going to unite the world by the enlargement of the capitalism. Catholicity is a way to unite the world by through solidarity. The catholicity of the Church is an instrument for the Kingdom of God. The vision of a non-imperialistic, alternative globalization is rooted in the ecclesiology of the Early Church.

4. Being Church of, for and with migrants in a globalized world

The mark of catholicity provides both measures and means: First to an ideal of unity as a harmony of differences and second a call to fullness and respect of diversities. With Robert Schreier I would like to distinguish likewise two forms of catholicity which have both a different focus.¹⁸ While the starting point of first one is unity, the second one asks in which way diversity can be part of the unity. Both types of catholicity are part of the tradition of catholicity. According to Schreier's distinction I may distinguish two different types of Catholicity representing two different ways connecting the global with the local. The crucial question is how they are doing it. The one is the imperial way; the other one is non-imperial way. The imperial way superimposes a single way on a plural world and is pushing for unity that includes some aspects of diversity. The first one is to impose a single way of life on a plural world. The other one is respecting diversity as a part of unity. In a world that is characterized by globalization, migration and diversities we need respect for diversity. The British Jewish theologian Jonathan Sacks, former Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregation of the commonwealth, stated: "We will learn to live with diversity once we understand the God-given, world-enhancing dignity of difference".¹⁹ What Sacks says about the theological background for the "dignity of difference" is relevant for the ecclesiology. If catholicity complements the mark of unity with diversity the local church provides a place where this fullness is made concrete. The primary goal for the first one understanding catholicity is taken in its geographical expansion and the second one refers to the gift of fullness of faith. Diversities are not annulled; on the contrary, they are kept and valued as tangible expressions of the diversities enriching the unity. Catholicity gives two different

¹⁸ See: Robert Schreier, 2008: *Katholizität als Rahmen für das Nachdenken über Migration*, in: *Concilium. Internationale Zeitschrift für Theologie*, 44. Jahrgang, vol. 12, 537-550.

¹⁹ Jonathan Sacks, 2006: *The Dignity of Difference. How to avoid the Clash of Civilizations*, London – New York, 209.

answers connecting the local with the global. The non-imperial catholicity is a liberating catholicity and contradicts the power of the imperial way imposing a single way in a plural world. It allows space for diversities. The liberating non-imperial catholicity is about the dignity of difference and diversity. Exactly that is the essence of the non-imperial and liberating catholicity of the Old Catholic Church with its refusal of the papal dogma of primacy and the connection between catholicity and conciliarity or synodality. The liberating catholicity is a gift to the entire ecumenical movement.

What makes the non-imperial form of a liberating catholicity a concept for migration in times of globalization is the dignity of difference and diversity? Liberating catholicity is able to create communion and partnership without any dominance or submission. It is about the mutual universal recognition of all human beings as sisters and brothers respecting the “dignity of difference” (Sacks). The imperial catholicity however is designed to obtain unity by power.

What is the ethical answer we can give in the perspective of catholicity to the challenges of migration? The current conception of nation-state citizenship is as a category that in principle confers all the benefits of citizenship to anyone who happens to be physically present within a country’s borders and excludes all others. But that seems to be is no longer adequate in a globalized world and is a contradiction to a universal ethic. The task is to redefine “citizenship” in a universal perspective of justice. Catholicity is exactly about that challenge because it is about the mutual recognition of all human beings and it connects the local with the global. And with the migrants, the global is coming to the local. Migration is a way in which the global world is becoming locally experienced. Unjust worldwide economic structures and disregard for the universal dignity of human beings are undermining the catholicity of the churches. Reflections on globalization and catholicity show the intrinsic link between the unity of the church and the unity of humankind as it finds its expression in human rights.

Migration in a globalized world raises questions about inter-faith relations, identity, justice, racism, and living together. Migration is spreading religions around the world. This is the first challenge. The second is that migrants are bringing the global situation of unemployment, misery, poverty, hunger and war in the rich European countries.

Migrants are bringing their religion with them in the new countries. But besides the Christian immigrations other religions are coming to Europa and western countries like the growing number of Muslims. But not only need these religious or cultural aspects to be noted. The majority of the migrants are poor and living in precarious conditions. This the second challenge for catholicity. The greatest part of them have worse jobs, earn less money, stay in cheap flats, or some of them live in an irregular status. Faced with this situation the true catholic faith is the prophetic commitment to the poor people and their right to have a place where to stay.

The migrants are like ambassadors. The refugees are bringing the message of a worldwide disaster. They bring the message of war, misery, poverty and injustices from foreign countries. The former NATO General Secretary Rasmussen described the situation of Europe: “Surrounded by an arc of crises, our Alliance, our transatlantic community, represents an island of security, stability and prosperity.”²⁰ The inhabitants of this “island of security, stability and prosperity” are willing to protect themselves against the masses coming from the global south. But Europe cannot be an island; Europe is part of a global normality of misery and – that is important - has its part in this global situation. The migrants have one crucial message: Everybody is entitled to human rights. Human rights are the way to assure equal

²⁰ http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_112479.htm

right to everybody in a plural world. There is nobody who should be strange or without rights on this planet.

From a perspective of equal rights exists the right to stay and the right to leave without the risk to lose one's life in search of a place where to stay. The migrants complete the economic globalization. First it was made as a globalization of capital and goods in favor of the rich countries. Now the migrants insist that not only the capital has the right to stay and to leave wherever it wants but the people too. What is expressed with the theological term "catholicity" that can be translated into the secular language of universal human rights. So catholicity and human rights are able to give a similar normative answer to the same challenge in a globalized world. The human rights are an expression of the mutual recognition of all people as equal. The concept of catholicity does not know any border and extends the sphere of solidaristic community as far as the whole human family.

The World Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Busan stated in the document "The Church: Towards a Common Vision" that the Catholic Church "transcends all barriers".²¹ That constitutes a cosmopolitan and universal ethic. And human rights are doing the same. For the context of migration and flight this means: all people are inhabitants of this one planet created by God. Only if nobody is forced to go because of war, destruction, unemployment, poverty, or misery, is the right to free movement realized. Therefore the migrants have the double right to stay and to go. Both rights can be realized only together. Neither the flight nor migration is the aim, but free movement as expression of the greatest freedom we have: the freedom to stay where you like to stay as children of God on God's own planet. But this right is unfair distributed. So us-American citizens can travel in 90 states and German citizens in 93 states without having a visa. But citizens from Iraq can travel without any problems only in six states or citizens from Somalia or Afghanistan only in one state. The unfair distribution of free movement seems to be an expression of the unfair distribution of wealth. The richer the more freedom of movement exists. The freedom for free movement depends on the decision of the rich states. They can select who is allowed to enter the rich countries. The primary goal is that of preventing refugees from migrating to Europe. Therefore refugees are refused and permit migrant workers are welcomed if they are usefully for the need of the rich countries. So citizens of the rich states have the right to go or to stay everywhere they like. But all other inhabitants of the common planet can only stay or go whenever they meet the need of the rich states. That contradicts fundamentally any universal ethic and cosmopolitan understanding of the universal rights of everybody. The migrants' problems affect the fundamental existence of the members of the one human family. Why should a young African man not seek his fortune outside his country if he is without any perspective for his life within his country?

The capitalism unified the world by globalizing the market. The migration calls for a different response than the homogenization account. Liberating Catholicity is a way to resist the unilateral domination of economic and cultural globalization and is able to unify the plural world with all its diversities by globalizing the mutual recognition of everybody as brother and sister living together on God's own planet and. Catholicity provides an idea of the universal that embraces global diversity, an imperative of unity where fullness is made concrete, and an idea of fullness that embraces differences. The world needs to be challenged by an alternative way of life of community in diversity.

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²¹ The Church towards a common Vision. Faith and Order Paper No. 214, Geneva 2013, para 22.