

ABSTRACT

Education in the Thought and Theology of Jorge Mario Bergoglio

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The election of Jorge Mario Bergoglio to the papacy was not expected either by those inside Catholic politics or by non-Catholic observers. Because of his former anonymity in the English-speaking world, there exists a paucity of resources available about his life and his thought. This thesis begins to examine his thought concerning education in Argentina, especially as it takes the form of a response to the excesses and corruption of Argentine populism and plays a role in defending his theological vision. This thesis provides a sketch of populism (as Bergoglio conceives it) and the types of socio-cultural challenges that political neoliberalism and cultural modernity pose in the Latin American context as the background to Bergoglio's theological vision. Further, this thesis then considers three specific works by Bergoglio in order to explain his theological vision of history and the human person which underlies his understanding of the relationship between education and the redemption of human beings by Christ.

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EDUCATION IN THE THOUGHT AND THEOLOGY OF
JORGE MARIO BERGOGLIO

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DEDICATION

A Carmen, quien, como madre, me enseñó esta lengua. Más importante, me enseñó amar,
la importancia de familia, y paciencia

CHAPTER ONE

Anuntio Vobis

The unprecedented election of Jorge Mario Bergoglio to the Papacy in March of 2013 was, to say the least, surprising to many, both outside and inside of the Church. Chief among these curiosities, perhaps, is the election of a non-European pontiff from the global south, specifically Latin America. But even then, there were other Latin American Cardinals among the papabile. A popular name tossed around as papabile was Francisco Robles Cardinal Ortega of Guadalajara, Mexico, a cardinal with plenty of experience dealing with intra-ecclesial politics among the Mexican Bishops. There was also Oscar Cardinal Rodriguez Maradiaga, located in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. He possessed the charismatic charm that caused Catholics to swoon over the likes of a Pope like Blessed John Paul II (as opposed to the academic introversion of Benedict XVI). Additionally, he served as president of CELAM, the Latin American Bishop's conference, potentially giving him the administrative capability that is a necessary part of the papal role. Even then, there were many who put their money on the seemingly obvious choice of Angelo Cardinal Scola. Scola seemed the safest choice, especially in light of anxieties of reform within the Catholic Church (hierarchically, liturgically etc.).

Yet, as we know, when Cardinal Tauran announced the *gaudium magnum* from the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica the name announced was *Georgium Marium Cardinalem Bergoglio*. Very few had spoken of him as papabile in this particular election – his name had been more popular during the 2005 papal election which led to Benedict XVI's papacy. He is fairly low key. He hadn't been invisible this time around, but not

even he expected to be elected. Argentinean journalist Elisabette Piqué claims to be the only who predicted Bergoglio's election to the papacy.¹ Upon arriving in Rome, the Buenos Aires-based paper for which Piqué writes, *La Nación*, questioned her prediction, asking her if it wasn't simply wishful thinking; she assured them it wasn't and published an article titled "Bergoglio might be the Conclave's surprise."² She was right, of course.

But the relative ignorance about this Cardinal in Europe and the rest of the Americas has led to a *malaise* concerning the new pontiff's relationship to the Church. Is he one of those Marxist theologians the rumors of whom haunt Catholic discourse in non-Latin American settings? (Definitely not). Do his austere dress and rejection of some of the finer things of the papal office constitute a criticism of Benedict XVI? (Probably not). Is he going to finally change the Church's "outdated" doctrines? (Don't be silly). Given his theological context, what is his relationship to the controversial and heterogeneous liberation theology, endemic to Latin America? Essentially – who is Jorge Mario Bergoglio?

It is this heterogeneous nature of liberation theology and the diversity of political regimes within Latin America itself which makes it hard to neatly define "liberation theology" or "liberation theologians"³. Further, the back-and-forth play between

¹ This author takes issue with the exclusivity of her claim.

² Elisabette Pique, *Francisco: Vida y Revolucion*, (Buenos Aires: Editorial El Ateneo, 2013), 27. All translations henceforth from the Spanish language to English are my own, unless otherwise noted.

³ Liberation theology, generally, refers to a grouping of theologians and their work who are usually, though not necessarily, of Roman Catholic origin and are attempting to frame the Gospel narratives and Christian message of salvation in terms of liberation from unjust structures, usually identified as economic, political and social structures. The attempt to speak about Christianity in this way originated in the experiences of the priests and Christians in Latin American political and economic situations. The most notable of these is perhaps Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez, a Peruvian priest, whose book *A Theology of Liberation* tends to be the most representative text of the movement. Other theologians include Oscar Romero, a Salvadoran priest, and Jon Sobrino, a Spanish Jesuit.

liberation theologians and the magisterium of the Catholic Church had made it hard to see liberation theology as an uniform movement either. The way that liberation theologians speak of salvation in Christ as a “liberation,” has had an impact on the way the magisterium speaks of liberation in its official documents. Yet, that very same magisterium has published “instructions” to certain forms of liberation theologies as a response to what it considers errors in the way that speaking of liberation can be construed.⁴ To understand the newly elected Pope Francis’ theology and his relationship to liberation theology it becomes necessary is to situate his thinking in the context of the Argentine political experience.

Understanding these formative realities provides a context in which Pope Francis’ theology and social thought can be contextualized, both within the larger scope of Catholic teaching, and in relation to other theological themes. As educator and Jesuit priest, as well as a person involved in the political life and concerned for the development of the Argentine nation, these themes overlap frequently in Bergoglio’s thought.

Though this thesis will be dealing with themes of Bergoglio’s social thought, particularly as regards education, I do not intend for this to be simply an exposition of what Bergoglio thinks about pedagogy and plans, nor about how Bergoglio himself theorizes about education. In fact, Bergoglio’s thought on education isn’t quite as definitive as that; these are neither curricula nor practical education theories. It is Bergoglio’s praxis of education and its theological aspects which I seek to elucidate. These results in a theological articulation of how Bergoglio’s thought may fit into the

⁴ For example, the Church is only critical of liberation theologies and theologians in so far as these theologies are seen as a departure from Catholic social teaching. Yet, speaking of the liberation of the poor is a valuable and useful means how the magisterium sees the Church functioning in the world.

locus of the elusive liberation theology. The purpose of chapter 2 is to explore the themes of specific documents pertinent to Bergoglio's reflection on these matters by specifically noting how Bergoglio frames education in relation to culture and society. Three documents will be expounded for insight into the relationship between Pope Francis' social teaching and theology of education. These are: *Educación en la cultura del encuentro*, from 1999, *Educación es elegir la vida*, from 2003, and *Educación: exigencia y pasión*, from 2005. It is here that the situation of Bergoglio within the Argentine political experience is most useful. Chapter 3 then explores how Bergoglio's framing of education in response to culture and society can be situated into that multifaceted grouping called "liberation theology." It is here that the situation of Bergoglio within the post- Vatican II, Latin American theological tradition is pertinent. Lastly, Chapter 4 applies his reflections on education to praxis, and how education guided by a Christian praxis of "encounter" (Bergoglio-ism explanations forthcoming), is a response to the actual situation of education crisis in Argentina and an expression of Bergoglio's theo-anthropology. After all, for Bergoglio, they are all interrelated, and, for Bergoglio, they all have as their base Christ.

The shortened goal of this paper, then, is to analyze the theology and social thought of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, especially during the periods of his archbishopric and cardinalate. I am trying specifically to avoid those pronouncements and homilies of Bergoglio's from Rome, as Catholic journalists have worked so hard already to interpret them in light of whatever theological preference be their publication. Further, I am trying to avoid the easy (but oftentimes obnoxiously American and intellectually dishonest) dichotomization of Catholic thought into "conservative," or "liberal." The temptation to

do such is especially tantalizing given the political undertones that discussions of liberation theology imply (and, to be fair, the overt political content of discussing Bergoglio's thought in terms of his Argentine context), and the typical association of these types of theologies with radical modern expressions of politics. It is simple to characterize liberation theologies and theologians as "liberal," or "leftists," as opposed to some sort of conservative expression of Christianity.

This type of characterization has been the treatment of Pope Francis by much of the blogosphere and news media, and, to be fair, the treatment of his predecessor Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger). To exemplify this, following the publication of an interview with Pope Francis by the Jesuit periodical *La Civiltà Cattolica* in which Pope Francis is quoted for his concern with the uneven insistence upon only certain parts of Catholic moral tradition (which he believes leads to the collapse of the moral teaching of the Church), the New York Times colloquialized this as a papal affront to the American Church's three main contentions: gays, abortion, and birth control. With a chagrined honesty, the New York Times admitted that Pope Francis "did not change church doctrine or policies, but it instantly changed its tone" and was also quick to note the "gratitude and hope from many liberal Catholics who had felt left out in the cold during the papacies of Benedict and his predecessor, John Paul II."⁵ The juxtaposition is especially unfortunate given that the New York Times is correct in saying that Pope Francis hasn't changed any doctrine. The differences between Pope Francis and his predecessors are observable and tangible, but not such that the doctrinal fidelity of the

⁵ Laurie Goodstein, *The New York Times*. "Pope Says Church Is 'Obsessed' With Gays, Abortion and Birth Control." 09 20, 2013. The use of the word "liberal" to designate certain types of Catholics, rather than certain strands of American political thought, within the New York Times article is the type of diction I am referring to here.

Popes can be divided along “conservative,” and “liberal,” lines – distinctions much more useful to the American political system than Catholic doctrine.

What these Popes unquestionably share is a post-Vatican II historic-theological locus which must grapple with the issues of a Church which exists in a variety of spectral extremes – from secularity, to literal slums, from postmodernity to clamors for a return to pre-modernity. Within the Argentine nation, and for Pope Francis, (lest I accidentally make this thesis about Pope Benedict XVI) this Church oftentimes exists in these spectral extremes concurrently. And despite the array of these differences, it is the reality of the Church’s sacramental life which unites them. Ultimately, even education is somehow related to grace and life.

But, perhaps I am getting ahead of myself. To begin, it is paramount to situate Bergoglio in his Argentine political context in order to provide a more accurate and just hermeneutic of Pope Francis’ thought. Thus, before any construction and analysis of Bergoglio’s thought *qua* theology, we must begin with this - a history.

1.1 Don’t Cry for Me, Argentina (Peronismo)

In an address given by Bergoglio for the VIII *Jornada de Pastoral Social*, Bergoglio assembles a metaphor for the social history of Argentina from theatre terminology, distinguishing tragedy from drama. Drama, he says, maintains the alternative possibilities of life and death, good and bad, triumph and failure etc. But Bergoglio writes that he is not referring only to theatrical gestures, but of a taking into focus the responsibility of being in community, and the historical awareness which such a

community entails. But the drama of the Argentine nation is lumped into the drama of Latin American history more broadly.⁶

Latin America as a term usually refers to the Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries in the American continent. Sharing a superficial history with the northern American continent, these countries also have as their foundation European colonization and settlement. But this takes on a drastically different form in Latin America than it does with either the U.S. or Canada.⁷ While these nations seem to have joined with facility the global dominance that was beginning in Western Europe with the political liberalism of post-enlightenment thought, Latin America, as a sector, was excluded. Speaking politically and economically, Latin America qualifies both as “the west,” and as “the global south.”

During the twentieth century – precisely when the United States was beginning to strengthen its economic development – the liberal democracies which had functioned so well for so many western nations were failing, generally, within Latin American nations. This is partly due to the conflict between industrialized economic elites and a growing urban working-class. In Argentina, for example, where the market, so-long dominated by a commitment to agricultural products, industrialized in the shadow of agribusiness exports. Conveniently, this provided Argentine workers with accessible prices to basic consumer goods, especially when compared to the economic accessibility and mobility of laborers in other Latin American nations. However this type of accessibility was

⁶ Jorge Mario Bergoglio, "La Nacion Por Construir: Utopia, Pensamiento, Compromiso," *Jornada de Pastoral Social*, VIII (2005).

⁷ Canada is an interesting foil for the Latin American situation in that they both are fairly homogeneously characterized as Catholic, despite the presence of other religious minorities.

generally defined in terms of only basic needs such as clothing, food and basic housing, without reference to the types of spending and economic ease of industrialized elites (as opposed to workers) would experience. Supplementing this standard of living, *el nivel de vida* as it was called by Argentine political administrations, was one of the foci that populist governments took in re-formulating liberal democracies into arenas of working-class improvement.⁸

The populist political scene is set in Argentina in 1943 when Juan Domingo Perón ascended to the Argentine presidency, bringing with him a “third option,” populist political view which has since been nominated Peronism, the political party accompanying it being the Peronistas.⁹ Criticized by some as being right-wing fascism similar to Mussolini’s Italy and by others as being an economically equalizing political movement, and thus much more in line with Marxist ideology, the Perón administration was a populist project to resist oligarchic economic centering in the major economic hubs (like Buenos Aires) and strengthen Argentina as an independent nation. Perón, like many other Latin American political figures of the period, was involved in a government project to reform liberalism without completely eschewing the capitalist structures that dominated the country’s economy.

At the inauguration of Perón’s government there existed intentional efforts to

⁸ Eduardo Elena, *Dignifying Argentina: Peronism, citizenship, and mass consumption*, (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011), 21

⁹ Perón’s “third option,” is a way of referring to *peronismo*’s reformulating of political liberalism in a way that resists the economic extremes of both capitalism and communism, but also comprehensively reduces class distinctions and maintains free-market liberalism. The attempt at comprehensive reduction in class distinctions over and above Argentine oligarchs is what classifies Perón’s government as a populist one. To this extent, Perón’s “third option,” has resonances with distributism, an economic theory actually espoused by various Catholic thinkers, such as G.K. Chesterton. Perón’s incorporation of Catholic social teaching benefitted him in this regard.

avoid the Marxist class-struggle and its oft-accompanied violence, in the new approach to government. To effect this, Perón's social reforms dealt more directly with already existing unions within Argentina and advocating populist measures for labor interests. The economic downturn of the 1930s had led to mass migration to Buenos Aires by workers to seek employment in the only city where work even seemed to exist. The agricultural market suffered, but so did industrial growth. The reason behind the persistence of industrial work as opposed to the agricultural market which had done well in exports was the inward turn that nationalistic Argentina had already begun to experience pre-Perón. Perón's political prowess allowed him to recognize this, and to try and develop that nationalism further. To effect this however, the Perón administration would need to deal with the injustice of urban work centers, or "the worker problem."¹⁰ Under the influence of members of Catholic hierarchy, Perón incorporated Catholic social teaching on the dignity of work and rights of workers into his political action, especially with the presence of socially-concerned encyclicals reflecting on burgeoning labor issues, such as the encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. For example, *Rerum Novarum*'s inclusion of specifically anti-class struggle concern for capital and labor was appropriated to Perón's use, as in: "Each needs the other: capital cannot do without labor, nor labor without capital. Mutual agreement results in the beauty of good order, while perpetual conflict necessarily produces confusion and savage barbarity."¹¹ Speaking generally, the encyclical written by Pope Leo XIII was concerned with worker's conditions and the

¹⁰ Elena, 34.

¹¹ Catholic Church and Pope Leo XIII. *Rights and Duties of Capital and Labor: Rerum Novarum, Encyclical Letter*. Vatican City, VA: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1891. I include this quote because it is indicative of just how much of Perón's rhetoric was adopted from Catholic encyclicals. The language of "capital" and "labor" is not idiosyncratic to Perón – nor original – even if not originally intended for Catholic appropriation.

betterment of the adverse existential and social situations faced by workers, especially with the new challenges urban workers faced.¹² A particularly poignant line from the encyclical insists that “that some opportune remedy must be found quickly for the misery and wretchedness pressing so unjustly on the majority of the working class: for the ancient workingmen's guilds were abolished in the last century, and no other protective organization took their place.”¹³ The rhetoric employed by *Rerum Novarum*, as quoted above, made the document ideal as a source to solidify and justify the types of reforms Perón was seeking to accomplish. Not only did the rhetoric of the document provide a means for Perón to express his commitment to social justice in the face of the disparity in Argentina, the Perón administration made politically powerful alignments with the fairly hegemonic Argentine Catholicism. Yet, despite this appropriation of Catholic social thought, Perón’s distributist ideals did not remain quite so lofty.

The initial Catholic response to the Perón government was one of both suspicion and sympathy, often times combined. While some Catholics were supportive of the social changes under Perón’s administration, even if disapproving of its authoritarian-nationalistic impulse, the nationalistic pulse began to beat stronger toward the beginning of the 1950s, making any sort of Catholic support a *malaise* at best. By this 1950s, Perón

¹² The encyclical, written in 1891, is a response to some of the social maltreatment faced by urban workers in the industrial revolution, which had begun in some parts of Europe as early as the 18th century. Speaking objectively, the time period between the publication of *Rerum Novarum* and the ascendancy of Perón to the presidency isn’t all that long – fifty years. Yet during these fifty years Argentina had piggybacked on U.S. forms of liberal democracies causing the extreme economic downturn of the 1930s, a depression particularly mild in Argentina because of the strength of the intra-national agricultural market. Strangely enough, it is the persistence of this agricultural market that made the Perón reforms seem so necessary: the process of industrialization in Argentina was so displaced from that of the rest of “the west,” that the specific kind of labor issues which *Rerum Novarum* addresses had no place in Argentina. It could be argued that Argentina’s agribusiness market actually benefitted the country, as the grain, beef and wine (to a lesser extent) exports were fundamental imports to other poorer nations in war and post-war periods.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 3. For example, Perón’s working with existing labor unions.

had begun to expound his concept of *justicialismo*, or the concept of the moral and ethical aspects of social development being predicated *solely* to the state.¹⁴ His appropriation of Catholic encyclicals ceased, and a certain anti-clericalism began to develop in his political action. Five years later in 1955, the Perón administration was overthrown.¹⁵

Most pertinent (in terms of Catholicism in Argentina at least) to this is the overthrow of the Peronista government in Argentina in 1955, often times attributed to *Acción Católica* and a conservative Catholic hierarchy. While hierarchical involvement certainly cannot be disproved, there is no direct connection between this overthrow of the Peronistas and Catholic socio-political action. There is also sufficient evidence that the Argentine *bourgeoisie*, a *bourgeoisie* also dominated by wealthy Catholics and Catholic hierarchs, were becoming ever more disenchanted with the unions associated with the Peronista movement. Further, beginning in November of 1954 Peron took what was perceived as direct action against the Catholic Church in Argentina through the attempt to pass a series of legislation on the scope and limits of the Catholic religious action within the country.¹⁶

¹⁴ The idea of *justicialismo* became so connected with the Perón government that *peronismo* is often times referred to as *justicialismo*. *Justicialismo* was the party on which Perón ran his second election, with the first having been run in a Labor Party. The political party attempted to develop a Peronist standard of living in which populist legislation was equated to a social justice to allow for an Argentine national liberation.

¹⁵ James MacGuire, *Peronism without Peron: Unions, Parties and Democracy in Argentina*, (St. Redwood City, CA: Stanford University UP, 1997), 50-67.

¹⁶ Exactly how this relationship between the Peronistas of the 1950s and the Catholic Church in Argentina became so tense is outside of both this background and this paper. However, the material here presented has been carefully analyzed by John J. Kennedy in his book *Catholicism, Nationalism and Democracy in Argentina*, who, writing more contemporary to the events occurring, shows how prior-so the general lack of conflict in Argentine Church-State relations created a situation in which the general schema of Catholic social thought were capable of being appropriated into the State without conflict between civil and religious authorities. Due to this relatively pacific past relationship, both the Peronistas and the Catholics in this conflict were apt to quickly polemicize the issue, to the detriment of comprehension and dialogue for both parties.

Regardless of how and by whom the overthrow was actually accomplished, it is this legislation that comes out of Perón's *justicialismo* that concerned Catholics in Argentina. Because Perón saw the socio-ethical development of the nation as tied directly to the Argentine populace, one of the means by which he tried to direct this socio-ethical development was through the implementation of a nationalist- Peronized education system in Latin America. Among other things, these programs increased access to education to more of the Argentine public. This access was part of the attempt to expand the administrations relation to the populace in resistance of oligarchic elites. Providing education to all Argentine citizens was theorized as a means to resist the type of sequestering that children of urban workers and rural children experienced. Additionally, and a boon to the Perón's Argentine nationalist vision, the expanded education system provided a convenient means of raising citizens founded in Peronists ideals – a pedagogical model not too different than ones Germany and Italy had been trying to develop contemporaneously.¹⁷

To effect this, Perón terminated the *Secretariado de Enseñaza Religiosa*, the administrative office in charge of consulting with Argentine bishops on matters of higher-level scholarship and educational appointments. The very existence of this *Secretariado* is indicative of the complete 180° that the Perón administration took in its stance towards Church-State relationship. While the *Secretariado* had existed prior to the Perón administration, the actual influence on religious education in the public model was

¹⁷ John Murray, "Peron and the Church," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, 44, no. 175 (1955): 260-268. John Murray, S.J. points out that sometime in 1954 the Peronist party had begun to support a relation between Church and State so separate that the party began to espouse the Nazi slogan that the domain of the Church was heaven and the domain of the government was earth, implying, of course, that the Church should have nothing to do with temporal affairs, especially pedagogical ones.

essentially non-existent, still Perón had not seen fit to discontinue the department at the beginning of his presidency when still using Catholic encyclicals to support his positions.¹⁸ More than just a discontinuation of the *Secretariado*, Perón also ceased moral and ethical course requirements in all fields within the secondary education level giving the reason that ethics should not be taught but inculcated by none other than the *Fundación Eva Perón*, the official Peronist citizenship faculty.

As might be assumed, Catholics within the hierarchy as well as members of *Acción Católica* did not take kindly to such type reforms. While the sensibilities of those within the western intellectual tradition might also be suspicious of direct Church involvement in public education, it is apt to note that these Argentine Catholics are reacting on one level to the retrograde reforms that the education system in Argentina underwent. While access to public education was extended to a greater number of citizens, the quality of that education was reduced, not just slightly, but so significantly such that critical skills taught in a classroom setting were transformed into a way on propagating the *peronismo dream*. Further, Catholic reaction was primarily a response to what seemed to be perceived threats to the Church's *very* existence in Argentina and that this does not immediately equate to support for a Church-State relationship that might follow the Christendom model. Instead, this is more of a reaction against a fear of restriction of the Church and of a mandatory state-formed conscience and nationalist ethic inspired by the educational reforms.

It is not exactly clear what led to the break in Catholic-Peronist relationships. In this, the analysis done by Austen Ivereigh, who has compiled information both from

¹⁸ Murray, 262.

Argentine Catholic journal *Criterio*, and Argentine political journal *Presencia* and other often-inaccessible primary sources, is invaluable. Ivereigh frames the conflict between the Catholic Church and the Perón administration as one which is, from a Catholic perspective, “a struggle between Christian civilization, however imperfectly adhered to, and atheistic communism.”¹⁹ The Argentine State, or at least its representative – Perón, had begun to show hostility towards organized forms of religion (at least the Catholic one), of which the Marxist horror tales had actually inculcated citizens. Further, by the mid 1950’s the Peronist third position political ideals had slowly morphed into a social collectivism marked by inflation, labor absenteeism, and political strikes. Even after Perón’s government had been overthrown, the effects of Perón’s policies on labor, and, for our sakes, education lingered until 1983 when the educational system was reworked.²⁰

Monica Estí Rein’s *Politics and Education in Argentina* demonstrates exactly what this “inculcation” consists of and how the effect of Perón’s changes to the education system in Argentina persisted so late into the century. Most interesting among these are analyses of the textbooks introduced during the Perón which blatantly state as their purpose to mold and create a nation through a unity of thought and action.²¹ At one point during the Perón period, the autobiography of Juan Domingo Perón’s wife – Eva Perón –

¹⁹ Austen Ivereigh, *Catholicism and Politics in Argentina*, (London: MacMillan Press LTD, 1995).

²⁰ Though the effects of Perón’s influence on Argentina’s educational system are seen as mixed, there is no denying that the intention – that is, a democratization of education such that the poorer classes need not compete with richer social classes for educational resources – actually ended up being thwarted by the means to achieve this end. A statistic in Ivereigh, 157 shows that for every three students from the highest social class, there was only one from the lowest social class, not counting those socioeconomic middles. Further, there was need for more educational reform by 1992 due to funding being transferred to the provincial level, as an even greater opposition to Perón.

²¹ Monica Esti Rein, *Politics and Education in Argentina*, (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharp Inc. , 1998), 39.

became required reading in primary and secondary schooling, replacing Spanish and Argentine classics such as *Don Quixote de la Mancha* and *Martin Torres*.²²

This discussion has attempted to serve as a cursory look at Argentine politics and changes to Argentine pedagogical systems in the years of the Perón administration, years that conveniently happen to coincide with Bergoglio's Jesuit priestly formation and years as an educator, as well as years that had a drastic effect on the development of educational ideas in Argentina well into the end of the 20th century. Most of what I discussed here could be expanded and be written as a book in its own right; regardless there are a few key ideas from the drama of this scene-setting that I will summarize to emphasize their importance.

Firstly, while the education system in Argentina had ties to the Church hierarchy, by the time the Perón administration came to power the Church's actual influence on public education was negligible. The formal act of expelling the Church from the education system was actually a symbolic act of relegating the Church's activity and reach to solely spiritual matters (and not those spiritual matters that have the annoying habit of interfering with the Christian's temporal and physical life). These changes persisted and inadvertently presented the opportunity for the Church to develop a response of systematic socio-ethical development from a distinctly Catholic perspective.

To contextualize this scene-setting in terms of Bergoglio, there are certain aspects of the Peronist politics that must be noted. Firstly is that the year of the overthrow of the Peronist government is the same year as Bergoglio's last year of seminary preparation. The Perón administration attempted to restrain and even close some of the Catholic

²² The significance of this switch is a change from a Spanish and Argentine cultural heritage and consciousness to a Peronist cultural heritage and consciousness, or at least in an effort to effect this change.

Educational Institutes, which would have directly impacted Bergoglio as he was finishing his education had he not been out of country, in Chile. Bergoglio's experience of the downward spiral of Argentina was from afar, from newspapers, stories, etc. Further, the political arena of Bergoglio's experience upon his being graduated from seminary is one in which he as both priest and educator is released into a somewhat begrudging environment. Secondly, Bergoglio did act as an educator in this system which was so highly devastated by Perón's legislative changes and was, thus, intimately familiar with how the inculcation model of education formed the conscience of Argentine citizens. Most interesting, however, is the relationship that develops between Bergoglio as a priest and an education and the continuation of peronist politics in Argentina.

2.2 Bergoglio's Argentine Context

One of the controversies that arose upon Bergoglio's election to the papacy was the accusation by some of Bergoglio's complicity in the Argentine Dirty Wars. Certain of these accusations were mild, saying that, simply, Bergoglio could have done more with his position of power as provincial of the Jesuits and Archbishop, but that he did not. Other accusations were more hostile, claiming that Bergoglio was involved in the kidnap and torture of certain citizens and priests.

The reality of the Church's complicity in the Argentine Dirty Wars makes Bergoglio, as head of the Argentine Episcopal Conference, the prime target of such antagonism.²³ Further, Bergoglio's association with some of the social-reforms of the

²³ The subject of Bergoglio's involvement in the Argentine Dirty Wars has been something that has resulted in much debate. The criticism of Bergoglio has been, generally, that his actions resulted in a complicity with the warring forces that led to two Jesuits priests – Franz Jalics and Orlando Yorio. The accusation against Bergoglio came from Yorio, saying that Bergoglio had done nothing to free them. Jalics, on the other hand, commented on Bergoglio's actions saying that Bergoglio indeed did not hand the two priests over for torture and interrogation, but also was not actively involved in working towards their

Perón administration make him at odds with some of the political currents in Argentina, though too close of an alignment would not have led to him surviving the dirty wars.

It is Alejandro Taruella who actually provides a written source that may link Bergoglio to *Guardia de Hierro*, a group that attempted to form a *peronismo* without Perón that was focused on continuing the social reforms of the peronist government.²⁴ It is *Guardia*'s presence in Argentina that led to some of the guerilla (and outright) warfare of the Argentine Dirty Wars. Interestingly, most of the references to Bergoglio in Taruella's books are about his role in trying to contact people and warn or protect them from military action that would directly inhibit their livelihoods.²⁵ A more comprehensive book dealing with Bergoglio's relation to the Argentine Dirty Wars is Nello Scavo's *La Lista de Bergoglio*, in which Scavo outlines a "list," of persons whom Bergoglio saved by direct intervention.²⁶

release either. Yorio, who died in 2000, was not able to comment on this. Bergoglio, in an interview with Sergio Rubín, published under the title of *El Jesuita*, makes claims to have been working covertly for the release of the priests, contacting governmental figures such as Videla to try and negotiating on behalf of the priests. This claim, however, is still controversial. If anything definitive can be said about Bergoglio's relationship to the Argentine dirty wars, it is that he was 1) not actively involved in the torture and oppression of the Argentine peoples but 2) he was also not actively involved in a visible way for their release and justice either. This could be likened, perhaps, unto the reticence of the Salvadoran priest Oscar Romero who didn't vocally and publically denounce the Salvadoran government's oppression until witnessing the death of Rutilo Grande. To see Bergoglio's account and interview of the Dirty wars see his interview Sergio Rubín in *El Jesuita*, full bibliographic information of which can be found on page twenty-seven in chapter two of this thesis. . Lastly, Jalics' absolution of Bergoglio can be compared to other Argentine priest's account, such as that of Jose Caravas who claims to have been able to escape the country with the aid of Bergoglio. His interview may be found at documented at *El Pais*.

²⁴ Alejandro C. Taruella, *Guardia de Hierro: de Perón a Kirchner*, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Sudamericana, 2005), 172.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 218, 225-227, 233.

²⁶ Nello Scavo, *La lista de Bergoglio: los salvados por Francisco durante la dictadura : una historia no contada*, (1a ed. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Editorial Claretiana, 2014).

Finally, in the present-day context, Bergoglio has been explicitly critical of how the Kirchner administration has affected Argentine political life in certain of his homilies. For example, in his *Te Deum* homily of 25 May 2004, Bergoglio's (in an address that does actually mention educational projects in Argentina) tongue-in-cheek criticism of the Kirchners was expressed as a devaluation of the Argentine nation:

“Not infrequently, the world watches stunned at a country like ours, full of possibilities, that is lost in postures and emerging crisis and delves into the social, cultural and spiritual grooves, not trying to understand the causes, which ignores the future. Faced with this reality, we may ask the second light on prophetic promise has come to give sight to the blind, and to consider the fact of our blindness.”²⁷

With more context than the vague criticism presented from Bergoglio's homily here, it becomes apparent that Bergoglio's conflict with the Kirchner administration extends beyond the question of same-sex marriage (a huge point of contention between the two). Bergoglio's alignment with *Guardia*, with a *peronismo* without Perón, is actually a criticism of the way Bergoglio perceives the administration as debarring persons from participation in societal functions, access to education being a major component of Bergoglio's criticism.

Understanding the way that Bergoglio can sympathize with the populist ideas without supporting neither that nationalistic impulse of *peronismo*, nor the methods of torture and violence, according to Scavo and Esquivel, of the Dirty Wars leads directly into Bergoglio's understanding of the play between education and culture.

²⁷ Bergoglio, *Te Deum*, 25 May 2004. Accessed: AICA.

CHAPTER TWO

Education and Culture

Providing a political and historical context of Bergoglio's thoughts on education is of paramount importance. Moving from this context into a basic exposition of those documents of Bergoglio's considered here, it becomes apparent that the political and social situation of Argentina takes center stage in the exposition of why and how Bergoglio frames his views about education and culture as he does. Most of the materials being used to understand Bergoglio's approach to education are homiletic addresses to educational communities, though not exclusively. Here these sources will be expounded, but collectively, as the themes from the various documents are a cohesive bunch which develop upon one another, rather than act as independent testaments of Bergoglio's thoughts in a variety of approaches. Expounding upon them individually would be tedious to reader and writer alike, not to mention repetitive. Bergoglio begins his work with describing the situation which a proper pedagogy must face in order to be effective. Here we will begin as well.

2.1 La Cultura del Naufrago

This strange expression, *la cultura del naufrago*, which translates as "the shipwrecked culture," is a phrase that appears in a multitude of Bergoglio's writings and speeches concerning his assessment of culture. *La cultura del naufrago* refers to "we who live in these difficult times of disenchantment, postmodernity, and changes of the times, as the stage where the ambiguous human drama transpires."

¹ This term is what Bergoglio uses to refer to the cultural experience of human history in postmodernity, an experience which, at its basis, he characterizes by isolation. He calls this experience of *naúfragio* an existential crisis, one that is characterized by the rapid socio-cultural changes human history experiences, changes which, Bergoglio claims have left us isolated and alienated rather than individualized. In his 2001 address to educational communities Bergoglio uses the metaphor of a rural visitor to Buenos Aires, one with no prior experience in the city, to explain what this isolation looks like. In the metaphor, isolation is “the immense solitude amidst a multitude, it is a lack of communication, the not even knowing what to ask, where to seek help or what help to seek. Isolation.”² This isolation can turn into anxiety, Bergoglio says, and a desire for an encounter with a person possessing a hospitable heart.

Bergoglio continues on in the address to explain his purpose in using the metaphor. The traveler’s desire to encounter a hospitable heart is a reminder “to focus attention on the need to become, us Christians, us educators, ... that heart that receives, that opens doors, ... among the big city with their machines, its lights and its extensive orphanhood.”³ This isn’t an anti-industrial or anti-urban sentiment, rather the metaphor is being used to show the anthropological position of humans in the postlude of some of the ideological developments of modernity. This anthropological position is most important

¹ Jorge Mario Bergoglio, *Educación: Exigencia y pasión*, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Claretiana, 2006), 81. “...a quienes vivimos estos difíciles tiempos de desencanto, posmodernidad, y cambio de siglo, como el escenario donde transcurre el ambiguo drama humano”

² Ibid, 102. “...la soledad inmensa en medio de la multitud, la incomunicación, el no saber ni siquiera qué preguntar, dónde buscar ayuda o qué ayuda buscar. El aislamiento.”

³ Ibid, 103. “...a centrar nuestra atención en la necesidad de convertirnos, nosotros cristianos, nosotros educadores, nosotros miembros de comunidades educativas, en ese corazón que recibe, que abre puertas, que resguarda un jardín de humanidad y afecto en medio de la gran ciudad con sus máquinas, sus luces y su extendida orfandad.”

for Bergoglio in the context of the city, most likely due to his being Archbishop and Cardinal of Buenos Aires, the largest and capital city in Argentina. His own experiences as pastor with the human persons in Buenos Aires, Argentina leads Bergoglio to consider this anthropology as it human relate back to their surroundings in the city.

As Bergoglio experiences it, humans have been left isolated, shipwrecked, so to speak. “In this globalized culture, the remains of what someone titled "the shipwrecked culture," come to our shores, [these are] elements of modernity that are dismissed and whose posterity gains ground.”⁴

The characterization of this isolation leads Bergoglio to a generalized diagnosis of the ailments which stem from the isolation that humans experience in a fallen reality. Education must be directed towards the formation of the critical skills necessary to discern this cultural isolation. Developing these critical skills enables a person to meditate on the crises that this *naúfrago* entails, and also to counteract them. But developing these critical skills carries anthropological import as well. Wound up in the crisis of the *cultura del naufrago* is a depreciation of what it means for humans to have dignity, for humans to know anything about what it means to be human.

“To say that the crisis is a global [one], then, is to direct our attention towards the great cultural forces, the most strongly-rooted beliefs, the criteria by which people believe something to be good or bad, desirable or disposable. What is in crisis is a whole way of understanding reality and of understanding ourselves.”⁵

⁴ Jorge Bergoglio, *Educación en la cultura del encuentro*, (Buenos Aires: Arzobispado de Buenos Aires, 1999).. “En esta cultura globalizada, llegan a nuestras orillas restos de lo que alguien tituló "cultura del naufrago", elementos de la modernidad que se despide y de su posteridad que va ganando terreno.

⁵Bergoglio, *Exigencia y pasión*, 66. “Decir que la crisis es global, entonces, es dirigir la Mirada hacia las grandes vigencias culturales, las creencias más arraigadas, los criterios a través de los cuales la gente opina que algo es bueno o male, deseable o descartable. Lo que está en crisis es toda una forma de entender la realidad y de entendernos a nosotros mismos.”

This is the culture which a proper education seeks to encounter in order to challenge and enact change. Education, as an act, generates a culture not characterized by crisis.

“Christian educators are witnesses in postmodern times, inserted into...the “shipwrecked culture.”⁶ Bergoglio draws on the idea of a castaway in this idea of “the shipwrecked culture,” to metaphorically describe the interaction that the human person has with this *cultura* which has resulted in isolation, in crisis. A castaway is in a position such that she is capable of confronting by whatever means available to her the dire condition of being shipwrecked. As Bergoglio put it in an interview with Rubín Sergio in the book *El*

Jesuita:

“The castaway encounters the challenge to survive with creativity. Or [she] waits to be rescued or [she] herself begins that very rescue. In the island arrived upon, it is necessary to begin to build a shack for which the boards of the sunken ship, and, additionally, new elements found at the place can be used. The challenge of accepting responsibility for the past, even if [the boat] is no longer floating, and of using the tools offered by the present is forward-looking.”⁷

For Bergoglio, the *cultura del naufrago*, the experience of reality and human history, is not something to be completely eschewed in favor a completely, newly structured reality. Rather, like the shored remains of the sunken ship, it is something to be entered into to change in an intentional future direction.

There are certain concepts that challenge human persons which Bergoglio specifically identifies as *naufrago* in the postmodern experience of human history. In

⁶Ibid., 7.

⁷ Sergio, 60. Bergoglio continued on in the interview to provide a concrete historical example of what he means by this. He describes the institution of slavery as a historical *naufrago* from which the “castaways,” (abolitionists) were able to interact with their reality to effect change. “[E]l naufrago se enfrenta al desafío de sobrevivir con creatividad. O espera que lo vengán a rescatar o él mismo empieza su propio rescate. En la isla donde llega tiene que empezar a construir una choza para la que puede utilizar los tablones del barco hundido y, también, elementos nuevos que encuentra en el lugar. El desafío de asumir lo pasado, aunque ya no flote, y de utilizar las herramientas que ofrece el presente de cara al futuro.”

Bergoglio's analysis these concepts are conjunctural; it isn't possible to speak only of a philosophical crisis, a moral crisis, or an economic crisis etc. However, Bergoglio does delineate some of what are the most strongly-rooted sources of crisis is postmodernity, calling them collectively "*las deudas sociales*."

2.2 *Las Deudas Sociales* and the *Cultura Del Encuentro*

Las deudas sociales refers to the measure by which the deficit in human development and social integration is measured. As defined by the Pontifical Catholic University of Argentina, this can comprise economic, health and labor aspects, as well as psychosocial and community life considerations. These deficits are what Bergoglio refers to practically when he speaks of the *cultura del naufrago*. The Argentine Episcopal Conference in a 2008 document titled *Hacia un Bicentenario en justicia y solidaridad* engaged this theme of *deudas sociales* by claiming that the great Argentine deficit was the *deuda social* and the need of Argentineans to commit to "paying" them.⁸

Bergoglio takes up this theme again, and specifically enumerates them in a way that relates to his project on education. For Bergoglio it is the *deudas sociales* which specifically characterizes the *cultura del naufrago*. These are the challenges that Bergoglio outlines and before which Christians find themselves in the *cultura del naufrago*:

Technological advances

The social and cultural changes in the forms of production brought about the rapid occurrence of technological changes. Bergoglio notes that this has profound effects

⁸ *Las deudas sociales* literally means "the social debts," hence the use of monetary exchange language.

on the way that education can be conducted. In regards to education this has a double import: in that it can be used specifically for the benefit of improving educational methods and in that technology changes the role of human persons in society, with certain jobs and relationships changing with the introduction of machines to boost or replace workers, or technology used to increase communications.⁹ Technological advances also implicate a new relationship between production and consumption, a relationship that Bergoglio wishes to be less tenuous. To this extent, Bergoglio's association with *Guardia de Hierro* makes sense, in that it attempted to be Peronism without Perón and that one of the populist goals of the Perón regime was to improve the social situation of workers. Bergoglio, however, is taking up this concept again within the twenty-first century and the vast expanse of information technologies available, technologies which, should, ideally, also benefit pedagogical methods.

The globalization of the economy

In the 1940s the Perón administration in Argentina turned inward instead of outward economically. The attempts described in Chapter One by the Perón administration were focused on reducing imports and exports to transform the Argentine landscape. Perón tried cultivate an Argentine nationalism by means of legislation which granted economic injunctions to workers in order to form a *vida digna* – an Argentine standard of living. The premise behind this was to have Argentine citizens consuming Argentine goods because of and for the sake of Argentina. However, the economic downturn of the 1950s and the Argentine economic depression that followed this led to the 1990s having a more economic success than under the populist models which had

⁹ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y pasión*, 68.

dominated the latter half of the twentieth century.¹⁰ Despite this, and from the chronological perspective in which Bergoglio wrote/compiled *Educar: Exigencia y pasión* (2006), Argentina's prospects of economic recovery through blending into the global economy seem bleak.¹¹ For Bergoglio, this concern is multifaceted: there exists the problem of the political Argentine, impacting economic and legislative decisions in a neoliberal democracy, but also the much more practical problem of the labor market and the direct effect upon human persons in terms of Catholic understanding of human dignity, especially as effaced by situations of dire poverty. Bergoglio wants to insist, like Catholic encyclicals and thinkers before him, that work confers dignity, but this type of statement is easily conflated with the idea that productivity confers dignity, which Bergoglio cannot maintain. A concern about the globalised economy in Bergoglio's thought, stems more from a concern about a cultural prioritization of productivity, and thus a reduction of the human person's worth, than the interconnectedness of a globalized economy.¹² The type of exclusion of which Bergoglio speaks here is not just confined to a workplace sense; Bergoglio insists that technical education which is geared towards preparing a person for productivity only is the same type of logic which destroys the value of the human person.

¹⁰ Dani Rodrik, "Argentina: A Case of Globalisation Gone Too Far or Not Far Enough?," *The Crisis That Was Not Prevented: Lessons for Argentina, the IMF, and Globalisation*, ed. Jan Joost Teunissen and Age Akkerman (Noordeinde: Fondad, 2003), 21.

¹¹ Dani Rodrik, "After neoliberalism, what? ." (lecture., Harvard University, 2002), <http://www.sss.ias.edu/files/pdfs/Rodrik/Commentary/after-neoliberalism-what.pdf>.

¹² It is interesting to note that Bergoglio has made similar statements now as Pope Francis. For example, in his first Papal encyclical, *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis criticizes a "throw-away culture," which discards human persons. See: Francis, Pope. *Evangelii Gaudium*. Boston, MA: Pauline Books And Media, 2013, 53-55.

International and social disequilibria continue to worsen

Even though Argentina was one of the three Latin American nations that was able to return to a modicum of economic stability in the 1990s, the Argentine economy is based on somewhat exclusive goods (exports are still mainly all within the realm of agriculture and agriculture based goods, i.e. wine), disqualifying it from developing economic standing on a global scale while simultaneously grouping it into the Latin American complex of political-economic strife – a characterization which Argentina both fits and misses. Bergoglio expresses this with the clichéd, capitalist-critical aphorism of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. For Bergoglio this cliché takes on its fullest meaning on a continental scope, especially given that large percentages of the human population remain outside of the realm of the material and symbolic goods which ease and characterize the continental economic giants. This is most evident in the *unemployment* in Argentina, not simply the existence of joblessness, but that the “current economy does not consider the possibility of allowing for all to have work with dignity.”¹³.

What is notable here is how much what Bergoglio considers to be the *deudas sociales* are based in political experience. The *cultura del naufrago* of which Bergoglio speaks is characterized largely by the incertitude and social anxiety of existing in a society which is not centered in the care and concern for its members. Though this

¹³ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y pasión*, 69. Bergoglio also makes reference to ecological crises, something which was a concern of his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI, the changing social roles of women, and the new role of religion. I do not take up the former two in the context of this thesis (though the consideration of women and education and the comparison between Pope Francis statements on ecological crises in comparison to Pope Benedict XVI’s statements in *Caritas in veritate* could be an extremely interesting questions to pursue) though the changing role of religion will be considered in Chapter Three.

naufrago is framed mostly in political terms, Bergoglio's concern seems to be for the confusion and apprehension of the individual person amidst this political backdrop.

Bergoglio's description is reminiscent of another Argentine thinker's description of the social uncertainty faced by twentieth (and now, for Bergoglio, twenty-first) century persons. Jorge Luis Borges, the Argentine essay and short-story writer, in response to an attempt by a philosopher to propose a universal language, wrote an essay entitled *The Analytical Language of John Wilkins*.¹⁴ In this essay, Borges creates a fictitious and ancient Chinese categorization system entitled the "Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge," in which animals are grouped into categories that seem arbitrary, at best, and insane, at worst. Some of these categorizations include things like "animals which belong to the emperor," and "those drawn with a very fine camel hair brush," and "fabulous ones."¹⁵

The seeming semiotic arbitrariness that Borges is suggesting in his essay expresses the type of cognition that is related to a generation of culture which is confused. For Borges, this occurs in the realm of a language that is insufficient to accurately communicate that which is signified. There is a semiotic break.¹⁶

¹⁴ Spanish: *El idioma analítico de John Wilkins*

¹⁵ Jorge Luis Borges, *The Analytical Language of John Wilkins*, (Austin: University of Texas UP, 1964). Though Borges seems to credit this Chinese categorization system to an actual, historical document in the essay, there does not seem to be any basis for the reality of such a document. It is more likely that Borges made up the list to make a point.

¹⁶ Interestingly, Bergoglio, in the introduction to *Educar: Exigencia y pasión*, criticizes the "autonomy of semiotics which, slowly but surely, creates a world of fictions with the weight of reality." So while the reference to Borges' work serves as a good example of the perception of arbitrariness and confusion with Bergoglio is trying to explain, Bergoglio is certainly not arguing for the play of un-meaning. Part of what it means for Bergoglio to exist in a *cultura del naufrago* is a response to un-meaning by absolute meaning of the Incarnation.

Bergoglio speaks of this type of symbolic representation differently. Continuing on from the urban and political backdrop which Bergoglio builds up, Bergoglio identifies the semiotic break as a rupture which empties the life of the individual away from solid symbolic references, symbols, he says, which are present statically and in the many symbols of life and community in a city. With a modern turn, Bergoglio identifies the modern disposition of the city and its people as having a transcendence which is constantly being breached by a progress “as a process of emancipation mediated by human action.”¹⁷ For Bergoglio this break occurs in the individual person’s perception of reality. Every space that the human person encounters in the city (the locus which Bergoglio consistently makes reference to) becomes void of symbolic meaning, leading to a spiritual uprooting. It is the shipwrecked aspects that cause the confusion and anxiety which the individual experiences. Bergoglio’s response to this, as already hinted at, is an entrance into that shipwrecked culture with the intention of rebuilding it with the wreckage, something Bergoglio calls the *cultura del encuentro*. *Encuentro* has at its basis the experience of an individual reaching out, and having a response to this reaching. Encounter involves the connection of two others. It is in this connection and the interactions that occur in this connection that Bergoglio locates the process of the generation of culture.

To respond to these *deudas sociales* and to the *cultura del naufrago* which they characterize, Bergoglio imagines a Church which is capable of carrying forth its mission in whatever society it may find itself. Speaking of Argentina specifically, Bergoglio suggests that a fault culpable for the decline of Argentina is the inability of Argentineans

¹⁷ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y Pasión*, 112.

to act communally as an articulated society.¹⁸ Bergoglio notes something fragmentary and disjointed about the way that Argentines conduct themselves, and as a response to counteract the *cultura del naufrago*, Bergoglio suggests the *cultura del encuentro* – or the culture of encounter. The routes by which the *cultura del encuentro* can practically encounter the *cultura del naufrago* Bergoglio identifies as memory, a transcendence which can resist the symbolic void, and the creation of instances and spaces of encounter. These latter two relate most specifically to Bergoglio’s experience of being in communion with the workers and the poor of Buenos Aires.

Memory has a specifically educational component for Bergoglio. In *Educación en la cultura del encuentro* he makes a direct connection between the education of the human person and the memorial aspect of the *cultura del encuentro*:

“The key is in not inhibiting the creative force of our own history, our memorious history. The educational arena, as permanent search for wisdom, is the space indicated for this exercise: the rediscovering of the principles which allow for the achievement of a desire, to rediscover there the hidden mission which struggles to continue unfolding.”¹⁹

Education, as it were, is the primary way by which Bergoglio suggests that the *cultura del encuentro* can be formed. Education as Bergoglio envisions is the basis from which any sort of recovery from the wreckage of confusion and symbolic void experienced culturally and in the everyday spaces of the city and life because education, in a Christian sense (yet not in the sense of catechesis) shifts perception away from the void, and into the transcendence which resists the symbolic void which leads to spiritual uprooting.

¹⁸ Sergio Rubín, *El jesuita: conversaciones con el cardenal Jorge Bergoglio, sj.* (Barcelona: Vergara, Grupo Zeta, 2010.), 109.

¹⁹ Jorge Bergoglio, *Educación en la cultura del encuentro*, (Buenos Aires: Arzobispado de Buenos Aires, 1999).

Simply put, the *cultura del encuentro*, is about the inter-participation of persons in places of encounter in such a way that the human person is dignified. This way of speaking of the *cultura del encuentro* is profoundly unsettling in the context of Bergoglio's criticisms of the current educational models in Argentina and of the failure of Peronist-type governments to dignify Argentine citizens.

2.3 Creativity

Educar: Exigencia y Pasión and *Educar en la cultura del encuentro*, though different, tend to use some of the same things. With the last major document that I have chosen in looking at Bergoglio's thought on education, something different occurs. Bergoglio's depiction of the two different *culturas* transforms and Bergoglio's argument continues. This document, which was delivered in April of 2003 Jorge Mario Bergoglio was addressed to educational communities, specifically to educators themselves (as opposed to being written works, like the previous two references), at the beginning of the Argentine academic year. This isn't entirely unusual, as many of his homilies and addresses center of the theme of education. For example, long before Bergoglio was Archbishop and then Cardinal, there was a tradition at the Metropolitan Cathedral of Buenos Aires of celebrating a yearly Mass prayer for the intentions of educational communities and educational goals in Argentina. Additionally, many Masses celebrated at the cathedral on days of *Te Deum* addresses as well as Masses prayed for Diocesan catechists have education as their theme. These homilies, like many of his others, have been documented by the *Agencia Informativa Católica Argentina* (AICA).

This homily, however, is particular in its length (for a homily) and for its structure and thematic development. Structurally, the transcript reads almost as some of

Bergoglio's more formal and ecclesial addresses – such as *La Nación Por Construir: Utopía, pensamiento y compromiso*, - or one of his pastoral documents, such as *Corrupción y Pecado*. The homily also contains similar themes, and, additionally, it shares themes with certain works of Latin American theologians, the Latin American Episcopal Conference's (CELAM) official documents from Medellín and Puebla, Argentine national history and thought, and larger post-Vatican II Catholic theological development. This occurs in the way that Bergoglio develops what he projects for post-*encuentro*.

Despite this document being about education (the theme at hand), Bergoglio begins the homily speaking of human history and the development of utopias, harkening to language employed in many of his other works. Elsewhere he speaks of these themes as the need of the people to be consistently analyzing their own actual reality and past in order to grasp towards a common good.²⁰ These words are also reminiscent of themes developed in other Latin American theologians. For example, in his eponymous work on liberation theology, Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez speaks of the development of human history by employing a dialectical approach saying that “the historical process will then appear as the genesis of consciousness and therefore of the gradual liberation of mankind,” and that “Thus, human nature gradually takes hold of its own destiny.”²¹ Both Bergoglio and Gutierrez speak of human history as having some sort of direction, a teleological end.

While the latter specifically uses the phrase “dialectical approach,” the concept of

²⁰ *La Nación Por Construir* 1.7; Here the word for “people,” used is “pueblo,” which means more than simply people who happen to all share the commonality of being conscious human beings, but people who are brought together, usually, by political history and ties.

²¹ Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A theology of liberation: history, politics, and salvation*, (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973), 19.

historical progress is not ideologically absent from Bergoglio's writing here either.²² However, this concept is distinct from a latent Hegelianism in that it involves an encounter with human history and that the causes of historical change are always intentional. The nuances of the word "dialectical," here are many, but any reading of Hegel which entails a dialectical determinism is an inaccurate descriptor of the types of historical direction which Bergoglio is here proposing. Instead of a future utopia which is a synthesis of two opposed socio-historical realities, he seems to value interaction, spontaneity and intention.

For example, Bergoglio begins the address by resisting this sense of historical determinism. Historical inevitability is not a reality. Analyzing the current social and political ideological trends in Argentina, Bergoglio comments that social assumptions seem to affirm this historical determinism. But, he then rejects this conclusion and attempts to redirect this idea to a focus on the current historical reality:

"We find conviction that we do not need to hope in any "savior," on any "magical" proposition which might take us forward or make us fulfill our "true destiny." There is no "true destiny," there is no magic. What there is is a people with their history full of questions and doubts, a people whose institutions barely support themselves..."²³

Bergoglio wants to resist this type of determinism in which a magical, political – or other type – figure appears in order to aid people to accomplish fate and accomplish a destiny that is predetermined and prewritten into the cosmos. Bergoglio calls this "secular messianism."²⁴ Instead, Bergoglio tends towards saying that the social malaise of these

²² Bergoglio is also not speaking of the conflict that typically accompanies these types of dialectical interpretations, as conflict would necessarily oppose the sense of Christian critical awareness.

²³ Bergoglio, *Educar es elegir la vida* 1.1; The savior reference here is not to Christ as savior.

²⁴ Bergoglio, *Educar en la cultura del encuentro*.

questions and doubts and crumbling institutions require a reflection and analysis of the current situation in order to redirect this malaise to a more humane future – a dialectical concept, even if not outrightly stated as such. For this to occur, humans must be intimately involved in the activity and direction of human history – something which he calls “historical creation.”²⁵ The human aspect of this historical creation he calls, somewhat obviously, creativity. However, for Bergoglio this isn’t a sense of creativity resigned solely to the fine arts – it is not only in the artistic, literary and poetic sense, but the total humanistic and artistic sense, in that it is involved in a societal creation. This sense of creativity is related to the theological virtue of hope, “but in particular about an essential component of hopes active dimension: creativity.”²⁶ Though he does not use these words, this type of speaking seems to be exactly the type of intentional *encuentro* that the entrance into the *cultura del encuentro* would require to restore meaning to the semiotic void and confusion that the individual experiences, such as Borges’ Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge.

It is possible also that this is a reference to CELAM’s Puebla conference in which creativity was specifically linked to a response to the current reality in Latin America, much like Bergoglio’s address. For example:

“For our social teaching may be believable and accepted by all, it must respond efficaciously to the challenges and serious problems which result from our Latin American reality...We cannot efficiently propose this teaching without being involved in it ourselves, in our personal and institutional acts. It demands of us a coherent, creativity, courage and dedication.”²⁷

²⁵ Spanish: “creación histórica”

²⁶ Bergoglio, *Educación es elegir la vida* 1.2

²⁷ *Puebla* 4.2.476

Bergoglio's thought bears a superficial resemblance and continuity to the documents of the Puebla conference, at least in terms of the role of human creativity and historical action. This is an anthropological statement: human creativity comes from being made in God the creator's image, the image of God who created *ex nihilo* and sustains this creation.²⁸ Humans interact with creation to give it direction much as God's creation *ex nihilo* was not random, but intentional, flowing from the love of God in the persons of the Trinity, not a spontaneous, divine generation. Human creativity, then, must be grounded in *encuentro*, because it mirrors God's creativity as an overflow of love among the hypostases. Once again, the larger narrative of historical end is resisted in Bergoglio's thought by the emphasis on encounter; it is the smaller narrative of human action in response to other human action in community which is central to future projections, not an absolute end.²⁹

Working from the above concept of historical creation, Bergoglio introduces the concept of "utopia." This concept is uniquely situated within Latin American theology as well, despite its origin in St. Thomas More's book of the same name. Bergoglio defines "utopia," within this message by making recourse to St. Augustine of Hippo and his massive *De Civitate Dei*.³⁰ In Augustine's defining of the two cities – an earthly city and a heavenly city – Bergoglio finds the ability to locate historical creativity theologically. Historical creativity must have at its basis a reflection "upon the meaning of history from

²⁸ Bergoglio, *Educar es elegir la vida* 2.1

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Bergoglio's reference to St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* helps Bergoglio's argument to also evade apocalyptic sense of "utopia," in that St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* tries to argue against the downfall of the world, or the lack of God's providence and love in the downfall of the Roman Empire.

the perspective of eschatological salvation fulfilled in Christ.”³¹ Bergoglio does not here try to conflate the two cities which Augustine dichotomized in *De Civitate Dei*, but instead is trying to show the interplay of divine grace and the persistence of sin.

Grace orients humans towards their total fulfillment in Christ, that is, salvation. This fulfillment requires the human activity of overcoming the temptations that result from the persistence of sin. What this means for Bergoglio is that participating actively to direct human history is part of responding creatively to this orienting grace within hope. Those who are members of the “heavenly city,” are constantly melded into the “earthly city” as well, and as such are participating with Christ in its salvation. The entire idea is thorough.. It is linked back to the belief (1) in God the creator, (2) that God’s creation was made with intention and direction, (3) that the worlds in which humans inhabit is able to be ameliorated, and (4) that humans may work actively towards a history which provides a more fulfilling terrestrial life. This belief, says Bergoglio, is what nourishes all utopian constructions and thought.³²

Utopian constructions always exist as an imaginary, as something which indicate a certain dissatisfaction with the current social reality and a conceptual proposal to challenge and change them. It is a thought to the future which must always return to and be grounded in the present reality in its attempts to search for “paths of possibility.”³³ “We make note of this point: it is something which does not exist yet, something new, but towards which we ourselves must be directed, beginning from what is.”³⁴ It is this

³¹ Ibid. 2.3

³² Ibid. 2.5

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

reflection, Bergoglio notes, that St. Augustine's distinction between the city of God and the early city seems a bit futuristic for the fourth century Bishop of Hippo. Augustine's scheme necessarily juxtaposes the desired city of God with the real earthly city at every critical juncture in history, making a Christian analysis of reality and a desire for a better one possible. As Bergoglio says:

“In effect: the City of God is, in the first place, a critique of the concept of sacralized political power and the *status quo*. All imperial power of antiquity was upheld on this type of belief... This was not only a question of the “pagans”: once Christianity was adopted as the religion of the Roman Empire, an “official theology” was developed which sustained that political reality as if the Kingdom of God were already consummated on earth.”³⁵

This mingling of the city of God and the earthly city by means of Christians isn't in order to consummate the Kingdom of God on earth, or to usher it in prematurely.³⁶ The direction of creativity is not towards an apotheosis of the earthly city, rather the formation of a more humane world which “awaits the eschatological action of God.”³⁷ Human activity in human history cannot usher in the city of God.³⁸ This notion resists

³⁵ Ibid. 2.8

³⁶ In this imperial example, one is reminded of the end of George Orwell's novel *Animal Farm* in which the animals, having overturned the past socio-historical reality of men, are now in control and have moved from being powerless to in power. Yet, in this overthrow in Orwell's novel, the animals fall into the exact same types of traps that the humans previous fell into. The last sentence of Orwell's novel is particularly telling: “The creatures outside looked from pig to man, and from man to pig, and from pig to man again; but already it was impossible to say which was which, (54).” It is this type of thing against which Bergoglio is warning when he states that any effort to intervene in the direction of history towards a better humanity which might try to actualize the kingdom of God on earth – that is to say, a power subversion followed by another power subversion followed by yet another power subversion. Those who finalize utopian ideal into the current reality inevitably become the social ills of the current reality.

³⁷ Ibid. 2.10

³⁸ This concept is reminiscent of the story of the Tower of Babel in which God foils human attempts to make a earthly city which likened God's heavenly city. As the story goes in Genesis 11:

“Then they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.” The Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which mortals had built. And the Lord said, “Look, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible

both determinism and perfectionism, and treats human history much like Christian theological trajectories have treated the human person as a psychosomatic whole. Reacting to grace now, salvation is looked forward to in the resurrection of the body and in life everlasting, despite not existing as a present reality. It is in this context that Bergoglio locates education. Education of the human person is what develops and refines this critical and active creativity, by keeping in mind both polar ends of human history – the utopian and the realist.³⁹ This is why the title of the address is *Educar es elegir la vida* – to educate is to choose life. This is not some conservative-party political address; education for Bergoglio is intimately tied to participating in the grace and life of God.

for them. Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech." So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth and they left off building the city.

For Bergoglio, human history, even when moving towards the direction of humaneness and goodness, even in history itself being saved, can never have "its top in the heavens."

³⁹ Ibid. 2.11

CHAPTER THREE

Miserando Atque Eligendo

Given Bergoglio's writings against "secular messianism," and determinism, it might seem difficult to locate his thought within any sort of inheritance of liberation theology since such theologies are usually implicated with political import. Yet, it would also seem that Bergoglio's talk of a *cultura del encuentro* from his actual experiences in Buenos Aires, and his thought of education as able to enter into and counteract the wreckage of the *cultura del naufrago* would implicate some sort of "liberative," concept. Further, it was stated as a goal above to try and wheedle some of Bergoglio's relationship to liberation theology.

To begin, in an interview with Sergio Rubín and Francesca Ambrogetti, Jorge Mario Bergoglio was asked his position and thoughts on liberation theology.¹ Though this interview can't qualify as a thorough exploration into Bergoglio's relationship to liberation theology, it is a good place to begin in trying to situate Bergoglio within a theological-locus which might include a relationship to themes of liberation from sin, and social and political situations.

To begin, Rubín and Ambrogetti asked Bergoglio his opinion of the "so-called liberation theology." In his answer to this series of questions, Bergoglio stated that the stance of Church on this question is varied and nuanced. He points to the typical distinction between the Marxist analysis of reality which has been employed by certain thinkers and the more positive aspects of liberation theology which have been embraced

¹ Full bibliographic information for the interview is as follows: Rubín, Sergio. *El jesuita: conversaciones con el cardenal Jorge Bergoglio, sj.*. 1ra ed. Barcelona: Vergara, Grupo Zeta, 2010.

in Magisterial thought (e.g. the “preferential option for the poor”).² He ends this short section of the interview by making a reference to the popular piety aspect evident in Pope Paul VI’s *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, indicating that this type of approach helps pastors to encounter “people and their problems with a real hermeneutic, one taken from that very people.”³ This, he says, helps theologians resist a politicization of theological discourse.

The issue with Bergoglio’s statement is that it seems, at first glance, to be revisionary in its approach to the development of liberation theology discourse. A question then emerges: just how does Bergoglio arrive at a non-politicized version of liberation theology within the theological and political context which forms his thinking and pastoral role? And further, how accurate is Bergoglio’s account, given the existence of documents such as the *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the “Theology of Liberation,”* or the *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation*, both published by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (henceforth CDF)? Lastly, and perhaps this line of theological questioning should have led with this – how on earth do these considerations of liberation theology relate to Bergoglio’s development of the *cultura del encuentro* and the *cultura del naufrago* within the context of education, especially as these are understood in relation to Argentine neoliberalism?

Useful to this line of thinking is a closer look at the theological documents surrounding this development, as well as the historical situation which led to the coining of “liberation theology.” Though much of the context and historical placement in Argentina has been provided above to situate Bergoglio’s thought, the historical

² Rubín and Ambrogetti, 81.

³ Ibid., 82.

spectrum and political realities which led to the emergence of liberation theology more broadly will be considered.

3.1 Liberation Theology : The Theological Trajectory

The term “liberation theology,” was made popular in 1971 by Fr. Gustavo Gutiérrez, a Peruvian Catholic priest whose eponymous work on the subject became one of the most famous and foundational texts in talking about a theology of liberation.⁴ Simply put, liberation theology is a way of speaking about humankind’s salvation in a model of liberation from sin/slavery. Frequently, it takes on the form of being a critique of a status quo which tends towards marginalizing certain members of society from the perspective of these marginalized persons. Given this characterization, it also has been frequently associated with political and sociological theories which tend to muddle or supplant the theological aspect of what it means to speak of liberation.⁵ It could even be argued that Bergoglio accuses certain thinkers of this type of muddling. In *Educar: Exigencia y Pasión*, Bergoglio makes a vague comment without a real referent about those who propose the “autonomy of semiotics which, slowly but surely, creates a world of fictions with the weight of reality.”⁶

Speaking within the realm of Catholic theology, it is fitting to speak of liberation theology as the application of what occurs at the Second Vatican Council. The Latin American Episcopal Conference (henceforth CELAM) convened a conference in Medellín, Colombia in order to discuss how the ecumenical council that was Vatican II

⁴ Full bibliographic information for Gutiérrez’ text is as follows: Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *A theology of liberation: history, politics, and salvation*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1973.

⁵ Or they are accused of such a muddling or supplanting, at any rate.

⁶ Jorge Bergoglio, *Educar: Exigencia y pasión*, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Claretiana, 2006),9.

applied to the Latin American context. The documents of the Medellín conference speak directly of liberation theology and the accompanying pastoral approach to the marginalization and poverty that was rampant in Latin America. The Introduction to the conclusive Medellín documents begin: “Our reflection began the search for a new and more intense presence of the Church in the current transformation of Latin America, in the light of Vatican II, in accordance with the theme set for this conference.”⁷ The Medellín conference was convened for the purpose of discussing and enumerating the reception of Vatican II within the Latin American context. For this reason, part of what can be affirmed about liberation theology more broadly is that it is a Catholic response to the challenges that Vatican II identified for the Church that exists in the modern world.

“Modernity” is a useful and vague term employed to refer to what motivated Vatican II. What it implies, generally, are the historical and cultural shifts that occurred post-Enlightenment. The shifts that took place on the European Continent were usually political with larger implications concerning how human beings related to one another and organized themselves socially. The French Revolution, for example, in its call for *liberté, égalité, et fraternité*, rejected the excesses of the French monarchy in favor of a government that was significantly more republican and significantly more democratic. Neatly put, the French Revolution helped usher modernity and political liberalism into the continent.⁸

⁷ *Medellín*, Introduction, 7.

⁸ The socio-political changes that accompanies modernity and the implementation of political liberalism are significantly more nuanced and complex than can be explained with a few short sentences about the French Revolution, or even the shift towards democratic and republican forms of government in Europe as a whole. And though these types of socio-political shifts had profound cultural and philosophical impact upon the European (and to a certain extent Latin American) continent, as well as the inhabitants (oftentimes predominantly Catholic) which eventually led to the need to call the Second Vatican Council, forms of pure liberalism had largely disappeared by the twentieth century (replaced by social parties, to a

Wrapped up in these socio-political revolutions which occurred with recourse to modern understandings of naturalism and reason were changes in the way that human persons related themselves to the Church. It is these changes that Vatican II was called to address. In Latin America, these types of changes differed slightly than what occurred in Europe. Latin America, for example, follows in the tradition of liberalism but, as already mentioned, it became inundated with populism, a political movement that was largely endemic to Latin America until the very end of the twentieth century. For Vatican II to speak to the effects of modernity and the socio-political changes which accompanied these shifts in a way that goes beyond the European experience, it needed to be specified. For our purposes, it needed to be Latin Americanized. Hence, the convocation of the Medellín conference.

What the theologians, priests and bishops at the Medellín conference hoped to accomplish, as listed by the documents of the conference, was a renovation of the Church in Latin America with special consideration for the poverty that dominated so much of the continent. The Medellín conference had the convenience of following the historical momentum of the Vatican II. It also had the challenge of applying Vatican II to a modern Latin American context. Therefore, it is at Medellín that the theme of liberation appears in an official Church document.

In Gutiérrez' writing there is a strong emphasis on what exactly it means to speak of salvation in terms of liberation. In an expanded introduction to his work published in

large extent), during which Vatican II was convened. It is still fair, however, to characterize much of what occurs at Vatican II as a response to modernity *and its inheritance*. A much more thorough relationship between the Church and culture during this historical period can be found in John O'Malley's treatment of the "long nineteenth century." See: John O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2008), chap. 2.

1988, Gutiérrez clarifies that liberation theology is intended primarily to be a soteriology.⁹ Liberation is a model which provides a way of speaking about how humans are liberated from sin. For Gutiérrez, this encompasses more than simply an individual's liberation from sin. He puts this in terms of a threefold liberation, one that is recapitulative and comprehensive of all aspects of creation affected by the fall. Gutiérrez' clarification frames the concept in this way:

First there is liberation from social situations of oppression and marginalization that force many ...to live in conditions contrary to God's will for their life. But it is not enough that we be liberated from oppressive socio-economic structures; also needed is a personal transformation by which we live with profound inner freedom in the face of every kind of servitude, and this is the second dimension or level of liberation. Finally, there is liberation from sin, which attacks the deepest root of all servitude; for sin is the breaking of friendship with God ... Theological analysis...leads to the position that only liberation from sin gets to the very source of social injustice and other forms of human oppression and reconciles us with God and our fellow human beings.¹⁰

In Gutiérrez' definition, liberation from sin is what is capable of confronting social injustices. The documents from Medellín follow in this line of thinking as well, stating that "[t]he unique nature of the Christian message does not consist directly in the affirmation of the necessity of structural change, but rather in the insistence on the conversion of man [and woman], which will then demand this change."¹¹ But, the

⁹ This 1988 introduction came, in part, as a result of the two instructions published by the CDF earlier in that decade. Ratzinger, later Pope Benedict XVI, who was head of the CDF, criticized the over politicization of this theological discourse, fearing that speaking of the Church for the poor in a political way could transform Christianity into Marxism. Gutiérrez' purpose in this expanded introduction is to a) reaffirm the value of speaking of the political within this type of theological discourse but also to b) define more clearly what it means to speak of human liberation from sin and Christ as liberator in a way that shows more directly how this concept is directly in line with what has been occurring in Catholic magisterial thought during the twentieth century.

¹⁰ Gutiérrez, *xxxviii*.

¹¹ *Medellín*, Justice, II.

document continues, this will not occur without the conversion of men and women who learn what it means to be truly free.

The above description resonates with the both of the CDF's instructions on liberation theology, especially, the first one, titled *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation,"* which claims liberation to be first and foremost the liberation from sin: "Christ, our Liberator, has freed us from sin and from slavery to the Law and to the flesh, which is the mark of the condition of sinful mankind [and womankind]." ¹² For Gutiérrez, and for the CDF, social liberation must always proceed as the consequence of salvific liberation. Magisterial criticism of liberation theology has arisen when it is reduced to the solely political aspect, especially when using Marxist analysis to portray a vision of reality which is appealing to the poor and oppressed. ¹³

The CDF frames this concern in terms of urgency: the urgency of concern for the poor makes it such that "[t]o some it even seems that the necessary struggle for human justice and freedom in the economic and political sense constitutes the whole essence of salvation. For them, the Gospel is reduced to a purely earthly gospel."¹⁴ The CDF's worry, then, seems to be a concern that the spiritual aspects of liberation as a salvation will be forgotten.

Developments in dialogue between Latin American theologians and the magisterium led to a refinement of what it meant to speak of salvation as liberation. Therefore, the CDF published a second *Instruction, entitled Instruction on Christian*

¹² *Instruction on Certain Forms of the "Theology of Liberation,"* IV.2.

¹³ The *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation,"* is actually quite explicit about this criticism of the Marxist portrayal of reality.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* VI.4

Freedom and Liberation, concerning how the concept of liberation functions within Christianity. The concern, as expressed by this document, is with the connection between liberation and modernity and how the developing concept of individual freedom led humans to believe that their futures were inevitably directed towards the development of more and more personal freedoms.¹⁵ The document associates the modern liberation movement with a “political and social objective,” one which is rooted in the post-enlightenment ideal of humankind overcoming nature and bending nature to humankind’s own ends.¹⁶ Therefore, instead of being particularly concerned with liberation theology *qua* Latin American theological trends, the *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation* is concerned with what are, in the document, called “ambiguities,” in the search for liberation. These “ambiguities” are whatever is being sought as a method of liberation which divorces, or at least lessens so as to dismiss, the reality of Christ incarnate in the process of liberation. In this sense the Magisterial concern with liberation theology as a whole is that it perpetuates the same types of challenges that modernity posed to the Church. That is to say, the uncritical application of certain political analyses (read: Marxism, which, in and of itself, is a product of modern thought) of the human quest for liberation forms a cultural reality which is at odds with Christianity and the Church. The way in which this cultural reality is at odds with Christianity in the Church is true in so far as any sort of political means are preferred as means to an end than the salvation offered in Christ. This fear is intimately related to the *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberations* identification of the quest for human freedom which results

¹⁵ *Instruction on Christian freedom and liberation*, I.6.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1.7.

from the cultural ¹⁷ideas of modernity, and ultimately this type of liberation is rejected. “The liberating capacities of science, technology, work, economics and political activity will only produce results if they find their inspiration...in the truth and love which are stronger than suffering...revealed...by Jesus Christ.”¹⁸

There are resonances in this document with what Ratzinger’s own theological work.¹⁹ In *Truth and Tolerance*, Ratzinger traces the relegation of religion’s perceived usefulness and role within western civilization to the realm of emotion and feeling. Much like in the second *Instruction*’s concern that liberation will be sought outside of the reality of Christ incarnate, Ratzinger identifies how the Enlightenment’s goal of religion guided and defined by pure reason led to a search “for a new sphere for religion, within which it might be able to continue to exist, beyond the assaults of the progress of rational knowledge.”²⁰ This example provides a useful contrast for the types of positions being argued within the two *Instructions*: a Christianity which is guided by the desire to achieve the eschaton via some political means that defines reality apart from its meaning in Christ incarnate ceases to be a Christianity which is true. Rather, this misguided Christianity is relegated, in one way or another, to merely one aspect that is not constitutive of the entirety of reality. To rephrase, Ratzinger’s (and more generally the CDF’s) fear is that the scope of modern developments, oftentimes achieved via socio-political and scientific

¹⁷ Joseph Ratzinger, *Truth and Tolerance: Christian Belief and World Religions*, (San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 2004).

¹⁸ *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation.*, I.24.

¹⁹ Ratzinger was president of the CDF when the two *Instructions* were published, thus, the resonances between Ratzinger’s own theological work and the CDF publications is not too surprising.

²⁰ Joseph Ratzinger, *Truth and Tolerance: Christian Belief and World Religions*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 142.

means, will simply become yet another way of preventing liberation, thereby leading to a suspicion of the political aspects which are wound up within the discourse of liberation theology.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Church's official teaching publication, actually makes a reference to this concept as well in paragraph 676. The concept of using political means to achieve the eschaton is phrased as the immanentization of the eschaton, which the catechism proceeds to reject:

“The Antichrist's deception already begins to take shape in the world every time the claim is made to realize within history that messianic hope which can only be realized beyond history through the eschatological judgment. The Church has rejected even modified forms of this falsification of the kingdom to come under the name of millenarianism, especially the "intrinsically perverse" political form of a secular messianism.”²¹

Bergoglio, as has been noted above, also makes reference to this type of “secular messianism,” a concept which he associates with the *cultura del naufrago*. As also noted above, Bergoglio's vague comment about the autonomy of semiotics seems also to be a reference to this type of ideology. In this sense, it would seem that Bergoglio's suspicion of certain political means is in direct line with official Catholic thinking.

That implies, however, that, upon further review, there does seem to be some tension here between the Gutiérrez version of liberation theology (which I'm taking to be a basic standard) and the CDF emphasis, which complicates place Bergoglio within a theological locus of liberation theology since the CDF fear of political means is at conflict with some of the political and sociological language and analysis.²² Certainly,

²¹ CCC, 676.

²² Certainly the real picture of what the CDF is addressing in the *Instruction* is significantly more nuanced than just Gutiérrez' version of liberation theology, though Gutiérrez was implicated, hence the existence of the expanded introduction. As ecclesial politics continued, the forms of liberation theology and

Gutiérrez does not advocate a rejection of the model of salvation which focuses solely on the individual's liberation from sin, nor for an embrace of the Marxist portrayal of reality. Still, liberation theology makes recourse to political discourse, the fear of the CDF. Yet, despite liberation theology's employment of this type of language, Gutiérrez, at least, recognizes this distinction. As already mentioned, Gutiérrez speaks in terms of a threefold liberation in which political liberation (i.e. liberation from oppressive structures and marginalization) can only be accomplished first by liberation from sin.

Further, Gutiérrez argues elsewhere that making reference to political and sociological language does not consist in an endorsement of these as the portrayal of reality above and beyond Christ incarnate. It is when the Marxist vision of reality is conflated with Christianity, or when it supersedes Christianity, that the issues raised by the *Instructions* and the CDF become veritable concerns. Gutiérrez states, "In the contemporary...world of theology, references are often made to Marx...but these facts do not, by themselves, mean an acceptance of Marxism, especially insofar as Marxism embodies an all-embracing view of life and...excludes the Christian faith and its requirements."²³ What Gutiérrez is arguing is that the use of political and sociological language is not necessarily an acceptance of Marxism dogmatically, especially not the atheistic and violent associations which it carries. Gutiérrez' argument even resonates with the *Instruction on Certain Forms of the "Theology of Liberation,"*'s introduction's

the theologians which were continually censored were those which continued to interpret reality in light of Marxist analysis, not liberation theology in the broader sense.

²³ Gustavo Gutierrez, and James Nickoloff, *Essential Writings*, (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 45 – 46.

fear that various concepts from currents of Marxist thought are applied in an insufficiently critical manner.

But, despite not embracing this Marxist vision, political language persists in liberation theology. Since liberation theology does not necessarily entail a desire to provide a view of history and reality apart from Christ, its political language comes from a view of the individual as an organic part of a society which suffers from the fall in much the same way that the soul does. Gutiérrez wants to say that the salvation offered by Christ is presented simultaneously as a “liberation from sin and from all its consequences: despoliation, injustice, hatred.”²⁴ This is accomplished by placing the salvation narrative within the context of a grace directed history.²⁵ “Theologically,” Gutiérrez says, “...we will consider temporal progress as a continuation of the work of creation and explore its connection with redemptive action.”²⁶

3.2 *The Signs of the Times*

One of the phrases associated with the Second Vatican Council is “the signs of the times.” The term is drawn from the Gospel of Matthew where Jesus criticizes the Pharisees and the Sadducees for attempting to demand some sort of miraculous sign from him. He responds, in turn, that they know how to interpret weather signs but have woefully failed to respond critically to the reality which surrounds them. The pericope of

²⁴ Gutiérrez, 90.

²⁵ This type of language is not dissimilar from what Bergoglio is trying to accomplish in *Educar es elegir la vida*. Gutiérrez describes history as being one, not dualistic. Bergoglio adopts this idea in a different manner, instead building off the distinction between the earthly city and the heavenly city from Augustine’s *De Civitate Dei*. Bergoglio does not in the document try to conflate the two cities which Augustine dichotomized in *De Civitate Dei*, but instead tries to show the interplay of divine grace and the persistence of sin. For Bergoglio, history also has a directive and purpose because of history’s true reality as God’s creation. See: *Educar es elegir la vida*.

²⁶ Gutiérrez, 100.

this passage reads: “He answered them, ‘When it is evening, you say, ‘It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.’ And in the morning, ‘It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and threatening.’” You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.”²⁷

The phrase “the signs of the times” was also adopted by Pope John XVIII in his apostolic constitution *Humanae Salutis*, the document which officially convoked the Second Vatican Council. In the context of Vatican II, the phrase took on a new meaning within Catholic theological thought; “the signs of the times,” in contemporary Catholic theological discourse usually means something akin to awareness of the need for the Church to have the ability to respond to the challenges which modernity imposed. Medellín adopt this language as well, and, once again, apply it to the Latin American context. To confront the challenges which face the Church in Latin America, CELAM phrases the signs of the times in terms of the type of evangelization which must take place on that continent. “This type of evangelization should consider the ‘signs of the times.’ It cannot be timeless or ahistorical. In reality, the ‘signs of the times,’ expressed on our continent in the social order, constitute a ‘theological locus’ and the questioning of God.”²⁸

This type of evangelization, the Medellín document continues, needs a Church which is a sign in and of itself. Bergoglio employs this language of “the signs of the times,” as well. Speaking in these terms in relation to education, Bergoglio criticizes those who abide by a strictly structural analysis of reality instead of the signs of incarnate

²⁷ Mt 16:2-3 NRSV

²⁸ *Medellín*, Pastoral de Elites, 7.2.

Word. He exclaims, “How many there are who reduce politics to rhetoric or who chose to tangle themselves in conjunctural analyses instead of finding themselves drawn in by the signs of the times!”²⁹ Bergoglio continues his criticism by saying that this type of distraction from the signs of the times completely uproots human persons from their created ends. His solution is articulated in terms of education. For Medellín, the resonances are with an evangelization which is capable of explaining the importance of justice and solidarity which are eschatologically contained in the aspirations of the Latin American peoples.³⁰ The type of evangelization that CELAM encourages is one that is able to confront the crises that the various peoples face and renew them with justice in Christ.

Perhaps an example from another model of salvation may help to illustrate what it means for justice and solidarity to be expressed eschatologically. A soteriological model rooted in antiquity, is that of recapitulation and it is usually associated with early Church thinkers, especially St. Irenaeus of Lyons. Irenaeus was attempting to defend Christianity from Gnostic sects which suggested that Christ’s humanity and divinity might not be united into personhood, especially physical personhood. In defending the incarnation of Christ, Irenaeus emphasized Christ’s physicality in the Incarnation and how Christ truly assumed human flesh in creation. In speaking of Christ as the Word incarnate, Irenaeus says that Christ is “united to and mingled with his own creation.”³¹ Christ is incarnate for

²⁹ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y pasión*, 10. Conjunctural analysis (*análisis de coyuntura*) is a methodological approach to analyzing social agents and their relationships in a given time-space. It has as its basis the Marxist division of cultural, political and economic formation which divides class analysis.

³⁰ *Ibid.* The Medellín conference had much to say on the subject of education as well, but this will not be examined as this particular chapter.

³¹ *Adv. Haer.* III.16.6; A Latin translation of Irenaeus’ *Against Heresies* is the best extant manuscript available. Because of the tricky language and translation of “mingling,” I have reproduced, and

the sake of the salvation of created beings: “the impassible becoming capable of suffering, and the Word being made man, thus summing up all things in Himself...so also in things visible and corporeal He might possess the supremacy, and...He might draw all things to Himself at the proper time.”³² In becoming incarnate, Irenaeus is pointing to Christ’s incarnation as the means for redeeming the entire human person and summing all of creation in Christ’s self as head. Liberation theology’s emphasis on social realities suffering from sin in the same way that human person’s do is another way of speaking recapitulatively of salvation. This isn’t to the neglect of the human person, but rather it takes the human person as its foundational base and, from the salvation given humans, all of creation is summed in Christ as head.

Granted, it is a bit disingenuous to equate these two salvific models with one another univocally. With the latter, one of the more important implications of its formulation are the insights into the Christological concepts of the second century Church; with the former it is the insight into the social situation of a Latin American continent which has already inherited Christianity but, as a sector, marginalized from the economic globalization which has, more or less, benefitted western society. Theologically, however, it remains true that each speaks first to the human condition as a result from sin and then considers the redemption of humankind in light of the rest of creation.

slightly contextualized, the Latin here: “. . .nescientes quoniam huius Verbum unigenitus, qui semper humano generi adest, unitus et conspersus suo plasmati secundum palacitum Patris ad resuscitandam universam carnem...” See: W.W. Harvey, *Sancti Irenaei Libros quinque Adversus Haereses* (Cambridge, 1857), vol. 1, p. 87.

³² Ibid.

Recapitulation sees Christ as the “new Adam” or the “Adam” who has come incarnate to reverse the curse of the fall. Christ fulfills everything that the first Adam has failed to do in God’s creation; likewise Mary fulfills everything in which Eve has failed. Christ’s incarnation becomes important in this model because of the particularly *human* aspect that salvation encompasses. In this sense, recapitulation, though more broadly concerned with the re-ordering of the fallen creative order, is founded in a theological anthropology which states something very specific about how the sin of humans is related to sin in the rest of society. In this way, it has resonances with liberation theology. Given that liberation theology stresses that any sort of social injustice can only be overcome through first liberation humankind from sin, it is also rooted in a theological anthropology which has humankind’s right relationship with God as its basis.

This is the type of language I would like to employ in speaking of Bergoglio within the tradition of liberation theology: recapitulative liberation. The reason is straightforward: in Bergoglio’s desire to form a *cultura del encuentro*, the one which a Christian education properly rooted in facing the challenges which modernism presents to the human person, is also rooted in this type of anthropology. The entire premise of the *cultura del encuentro* is that the *naúfragos* enter into the fallen *cultura* in a way that is able to salvage what remains and use what is available to rebuild from the ruins, from the wreckage. Bergoglio’s metaphor here builds upon the idea of the encounter of the incarnate Christ, who, as much as he liberates, does so in the incarnation in a way that is not dismissive of the fallen creation, but rather *encounters* it and salvages it recapitulatively. Bergoglio’s documents on education can, then, be classified as within the heritage of liberation theology, a theology which places at its basis and starting point

a guiding anthropology. “It is the image of God in man which underlies the freedom and dignity of the human person.”³³ This statement from the second CDF Instruction resonates with Bergoglio’s fear of the “Gnostic man [woman],” the person who is educated without the means for this education to reflect any sort of reality; “anthropology must be liberated from the confinement of nominalisms.”³⁴

The entire introduction to Bergoglio’s work *Educación: Exigencia y pasión* is concerned with the anthropological question of the human person in the Christian tradition in light of what is occurring socio-culturally and socio-politically within the Latin American context. This is why the distinctions Bergoglio makes between the *cultura del naufrago* and the *cultura del encuentro* are put into terms of those two conjunctures. What Bergoglio is saying about a Christian concept of education is that it is capable of responding to and then liberating human persons against the meaninglessness which modernity has thrust upon them.

Further, in Bergoglio’s conception of a formation of a *cultura del encuentro*, the underlying premise that guides his search is the question “What is man [woman]? What are we humans?”³⁵ These questions are the basis of what education within a Christian context means for Bergoglio. Specifically, education is not simply the rote memorization and transmission of objective facts, it directly forms the human person in a way that is

³³ *Instruction, Freedom*, II.27.

³⁴ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y Pasión*, 10. I have translated the Spanish word “enjaulamiento,” here as “confinement.” Another useful translation, especially in light of the liberative language, is “chains.” “Hay que liberar la antropología del enjaulamiento de los nominalismos.” Further, within context, the “gnostic,” person to whom Bergoglio is referring is one whose education has been based solely on the need to fulfill some sort of utilitarian role within in a society. He refers to this in an earlier passage as a *tecnista* approach to the education of the person, rather than the anthropological approach I outline here. “*La mentalidad tecnicista*,” which he speaks of in this type of education is most likely a reference to *pedagogía tecnicista*, in which education is tailored to meet the needs of business and technical society.

³⁵ Bergoglio, *Educación en la cultura del encuentro*, 1.

revelatory of what it means for a human person to have dignity as part of God's creation. Bergoglio refers to the process that education initiates and sustains a "humanization," a process that resonates with the re-formation of the human person as summed up in Christ (i.e. a "recapitulative liberation"). In education, anthropology is given its fullest meaning as redeemed in Christ. "Christ fully reveals to man man himself [to woman woman herself] and shows him [her] dignity."³⁶ For Bergoglio, it is impossible to speak of the formation of a properly structured society that doesn't have at its basis properly liberated persons. But, in order to accomplish this, education is necessary because of education's transformative effect on the way that the human person relates to self, others, and God. Being aware of the situation in which human persons find themselves through a transformative education is the only way to properly effect any sort of cultural change which could remedy a society ill-disposed to Christ. He continues, "Man [and woman], together with other humans, puts into practice his [her] potential and, while achieving self-realization, generates culture. Within culture, the subject is a community, a people, which generates a style of life. Education implies a process of transmission of culture."³⁷

Further, Bergoglio claims that the Church, in speaking of ethical action in response to this type of transmission of culture, reminds us of the human condition which is beyond both culture and situation. The goal, Bergoglio says, is to have an ultimate end, a Word, to which we as people refer ourselves, a Word which liberates us from *condicionamiento* and ultimately refers us back to our own essence.³⁸ "This is true

³⁶ Ibid., 1.

³⁷ Bergoglio, *Educación en la cultura del encuentro*, 2.

³⁸ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y Pasión*, 15.

symbolic actualization: that of desire united to the one whom we cannot explain but whom we have seen because He has allowed us to encounter him and we have loved Him. And the symbol, as we well know, creates culture.”³⁹

What Bergoglio envisions then, for the process of education, is theological and political. Theologically, Bergoglio envisions an education which is able to give the human person a true knowledge of who s/he is and a certainty in the value of the human person. Politically, Bergoglio envisions a culture and a nation which are transformed into a sustainable society which incorporates all of its members in all aspects. Education performed properly serves as a panacea to the malaise which resulted in Latin Americanized modernity and the political liberalism which discarded human persons. Bergoglio intends education to be the aspect of human society and culture which re-humanizes persons, in all cases and situations, and liberates them from the socio-cultural and socio-political symptoms of the present. This is what he means by “liberation theology,” beyond what is usually caught up in the term. Even more than this, Bergoglio’s theological project—expounding on a theological anthropology of education—results in his coherent placement within the theological-locus of the heritage of the Second Vatican Council.

3.3 Personalism

Because of the aforementioned Vatican II inheritance, Bergoglio’s view of the *cultura del encuentro* also makes sense within the theological-locus of Latin American theological trends. It is Bergoglio’s characterization of education as a fundamentally theological concept concerned with how humans operate, especially persons who are part

³⁹ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y Pasión*, 16.

of the Church, that responds to these “signs of the times.” Further, the way that Bergoglio hopes for this type of *cultura* reflects what Thomas Kelly calls the “pastoral strain of liberation theology.” Writing about Rutilo Grande, the martyred Jesuit priest in El Salvador, Kelly distinguishes between the pastoral strain and the Marxist, or generally-stated political, strains. In clarifying this distinction Kelly says:

The major difference between the pastoral and the Marxist version is their starting points. The pastoral version of liberation begins in evangelization called for by the church, which has significant social and political consequences. The Marxist or “political” version of liberation begins from an analysis of social structures and a call for their transformation in light of the faith. Both approaches have been used throughout Latin American in the pastoral work of the church...⁴⁰

Kelly’s distinction is incredibly useful here. Not only does it provide a lens through which the ecclesial political debate between liberation theology and Magisterial thought can be focused, it can also help characterize Bergoglio’s somewhat odd location within the spectrum of Latin American theology.

In the above-mentioned Rubín interview, Bergoglio’s section on liberation theology is rather short and his thought is usually not discussed in the context of some of the more prominent Latin American theologians. For these reasons, it may seem odd to consider Bergoglio as a liberation theologian. Yet, his language employs words like *liberar*, *libertad* and *liberación*, an unlikely choice of words if one wishes to avoid any sort of association whatsoever with liberation theology. Further, given that how Bergoglio frames the need of education to be the generator of a culture, and not just any culture, but the restorative *cultura del encuentro* which is formulated in response to some of the political failings that he has documented and criticized, it seems very appropriate

⁴⁰ Thomas Kelly, *When the Gospel Grows Feet; Rutilo Grande and the church of El Salvador: an ecclesiology in context*, (Collegeville, MN: Michael Glazier, 2013), 153.

to call what Bergoglio is doing a type of “liberation,” theology. It follows in the same type of inspiration and reflection (as a priest and pastor, the reflection and experiences with his parishioners in Buenos Aires) upon the current *status quo* which characterized liberation theology generally. To this extent, I would like to modify slightly Kelly’s categorization of the “pastoral strain of liberation theology,” in a way that is more nuanced in light of Bergoglio’s example – a personalist pastoral strain of liberation theology. This modification is necessary, first, because of Bergoglio’s emphasis on popular piety and, second, because of the way he expounds his theology from the perspective of the human person.

The first inkling of this is found in Bergoglio’s basis of education in an idea of history and future as theological categories based in the need to recapitulate anthropology. That the human person is the starting point from which Bergoglio’s theology develops also evidences Bergoglio’s personalist approach. Speaking more directly, Bergoglio’s praxis as archbishop and cardinal in Argentina reflect this. For example, in describing Bergoglio’s selection as a cardinal, the journalist Elisabetta Piqué describes him as “austere” in his actions in order to show solidarity with the poor: “In the same line of austerity...he asks those who wish[ed] to accompany him to Rome to celebrate the event to not travel and to give the money to the poor.”⁴¹ This focus on the poor is re-iterated by Piqué when she summarizes Bergoglio’s desire for priests “to go out to encounter the existential peripheries, to the rescue of the least, the marginalized, of

⁴¹ Elisabetta Piqué, *Francisco: Vida y Revolucion*, (Buenos Aires: Editorial El Ateneo, 2013), 123. This story sounds like a story as summarized in Piqué’s account of Pope Francis and some of his history sounds very similar to a story which circulated upon his election to the papacy – one in which he asked those who might be traveling from Argentina to his inaugural Mass to not travel and donate the money to the poor. They are actually two different, very similar accounts and the one to which Piqué and I (by quotation) am referring here is to the inauguration of his cardenalate.

those which an ‘anesthetized’ society considers ‘disposable’.”⁴² The terms which Piqué use portray Bergoglio as this type of personalist pastor, but, even more practically, they demonstrate the type of ethic Bergoglio has in mind when he speaks of encounter as the basis of generating culture. Another example of this is the way in which Bergoglio especially supported the village priests and their works in the poorest suburbs of Buenos Aires where popular piety flourishes.⁴³

Bergoglio’s theological project is similar, then, to many of the other Catholic theologians from the twentieth century, both European and Latin American. Like the European theologians, such as Von Balthasar, Blondel, and de Lubac (all of whom, it might be noted, are utilized by the Latin American theologians in speaking of the way that culture has been constructed) Bergoglio is responding to a western modernity which has forged a shared psyche contra to Christianity; like the Latin American theologians, such as Gutiérrez and Sobrino, Bergoglio is responding to the specific way in which this modernity has politically and culturally spawned in Latin America.

His loose association with *Guardia*, then, can be seen as Bergoglio’s personalist conceptualization of a politic which doesn’t function to limit human freedom, but to provide the means of access to the general populace to systems that might be liberative, like access to education. That Bergoglio’s desire for students to have access to better educational methods and an education which can actually serve to meet the challenges that person’s, especially Argentine citizens, experience is oftentimes phrased as a criticism of those same government forms which Bergoglio theoretically associates with

⁴² Piqué, 125.

⁴³ Ibid.

is evidence of the difficulty of imagining a functional Catholic politics. Criticisms seems to go hand and hand with complicity, a reason, more than anything, for why Bergoglio insists dialogue to be the aspect which continues the formation of a *cultura del encuentro* in the face of wreckage. A constant and critical re-evaluation of the current historical situation is necessary for such type of dialogue to function. More importantly for Bergoglio's thought, education must form that type of critical evaluation.

CHAPTER FOUR

Education and Anamnesis

In the introduction to Bergoglio's collective work *Educar: exigencia y pasión*, he speaks of the disunity among the human community which has resulted in Argentina.¹ Using the cultural categories that he designated earlier, Bergoglio speaks of the individual *naúfrago*'s need to enter into the *cultura del naúfrago* in order to effect change, to use what is currently present to reform, to rebuild.

One of the ways that Bergoglio describes this is in terms of *anamnesis* – arguing that this type of memory is necessary for how education functions in the development of history as a theological category. It may seem strange that education would be the means by which this type of theological memory is achieved, especially when *anamnesis* is a word that, when used in Christian theology, generally refers to how the Eucharist is understood as a memorial (re)presentation of Christ as paschal sacrifice. Further, given what Bergoglio is trying to accomplish in terms of liberating the human person from the “nominalisms” of non-meaning, uncertainty, and disvalue of Argentine populism, it seems odd that education would be the means by which Bergoglio approaches this.²

So, the pressing question: Why education? Bergoglio's documents on education also seem to go hundreds of different ways and include different approaches and foci; they focus on the experience of workers in Buenos Aires and, more broadly, on “the

¹ Jorge Mario Bergoglio, *Educar: Exigencia y pasión*, (Buenos Aires: Editorial Claretiana, 2006)

² I am making reference here to Bergoglio's statement in *Educar: Exigencia y pasión*, where Bergoglio states that education must be liberated from the chains of nominalisms, referring to the symbolic voids which Bergoglio makes reference to above.

human person.” Yet, for all of these approaches and foci, Bergoglio continues to group these observations into documents that are titled relating to education, and consistently make references back to education. Certainly education is what this thesis is concerned with more generally, but why specifically is education the means by which Bergoglio expounds his theological project? Further, it seems strange, at least initially, that connecting education and *anamnesis* with the idea of the human person in community—specifically the national community—would have anything to do with the reform of the education system in Argentina. And what about the Eucharistic aspects of *anamnesis*?

4.1 Medellín and Education: Educación Liberadora

Bergoglio’s recourse to education, on the practical level, makes sense within the heritage of liberation theology as a Latin American theological grouping.³ One of the decisive documents from the Medellín conference specifically addressed education and how education was important within the Latin American context as a post-Vatican II necessity. In this vein, it makes sense for Bergoglio to refer to education as beneficial and necessary of reform.

The decisive Medellín document on education begins by declaring that “This [Conference]..., which has been proposed to commit the Church in the process of transformation of the Latin American peoples, especially fixed [its] attention on education as a basic and critical factor in the development of the continent.”⁴ The reason for this attention, Catholic doctrine aside, was that the reality of the deficient education

³ The discussion of Bergoglio’s heritage of liberation theology can be found in section three of chapter three, entitled *Personalism*.

⁴ Medellín, *Educación*, 1.

system was supremely evident in Latin America, and especially, from Bergoglio's perspective at least, in Argentina. This, despite Argentina's position as a Latin American nation which enjoys some of the reputation of more developed western nations; this, despite Argentina's inclusion of some of the more influential thinkers and writers of the twentieth century (such as Jorge Luis Borges, Eduarda Mansilla and Eduardo Sabato in literature and César Milstein – a Nobel prize laureate in the sciences). Borges is a testament to what at a superficial level would seem to be the sophistication and efficacy of the Argentine education system, with many of his non-fictions and fictions alike being translated into a variety of different languages and becoming standard reading in most literature programs in non-Latin American nations.

Evidences for the deficiencies are everywhere. Recalling the final section of chapter one in which Bergoglio's criticisms of the current administration are quoted, the question of the state of education in Argentina while Bergoglio is writing and thinking (especially the three documents continually mentioned in this work) arises. Luckily, an assessment of Argentina's public school education system was conducted during the same period.

For example, a standardized testing measurement used to assess and compare education systems internationally in reading, the sciences, and mathematics—the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) conducted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)—ranked Argentine students fifty-ninth of sixty-five in mathematics, fifty-eighth of sixty-five in the sciences and sixtieth of sixty-five in reading in its 2012 assessment (no more recent analysis is available as of this

writing).⁵ Internationally this places Argentina in the bottom quartile of education systems.⁶ Compared to the other Latin American nations which were also part of the PISA assessment, Argentina was worse than Chile, Mexico, Uruguay, Costa Rica and Brazil but better than the still FARQ ravaged Colombia and Peru, which ranked sixty-fifth in all three areas of assessment.⁷ In a 2006 PISA assessment, Argentina ranked fifty-second, fifty-first, and fifty-third in the three areas, respectively, of fifty-seven (save reading, which included fifty-six countries due to the United States data being disqualified from analysis) assessed countries, placing it, once again, in the bottom quartile internationally.⁸

The Latin America Bureau sector of UNESCO also performed an intra-continental assessment of education systems in Latin America in 2006—the Second

⁵ Also, note: PISA measures the applicability of mathematic, scientific and reading skills that fifteen-year-old students have learned within their schools while simultaneously collecting family background data, such as income, parent's education level and occupation and school conditions. However, a drawback to the PISA study is that it shows no sort of critical development. What this means is that there is no way to compare student's performances from one point of analytical development to the other. I have not performed an analysis of the methodological validity of the PISA investigation, as it is not pertinent to the general impression of the failing Argentine education system. For such an analysis see: *Inter-American Development Bank, The Quality of Education in Argentina* which investigates not only the PISA methodology but other educational methodologies as well.

⁶ Incidentally, OECD was established in order to stimulate the global economy after World War II, which led to the second half of the twentieth century having many political disturbances and irregularities in Argentina, starting with Peronist populism, moving into *Guardia* and the dirty wars and eventually the 90's political – but not economic – stabilization with the Kirchners. It should be noted that of the countries represented in the PISA analysis, only two – Chile and Mexico – Latin American countries are actually part of OECD, as OECD countries are typically seen as high-income, economically stable nations.

⁷ In a 2009 assessment, Argentina ranked sixty-first, sixty-third and sixty-third in the three areas, respectively, of seventy four countries in the three areas of assessment. As it is not the most recent data, nor the year which corresponds with UNESCO's LAB data, I have not included it in the main body of the text. The score change in the PISA measurement from 2009 to 2012 is 0 and thus the standard error measurement is not applicable. However, it helps to show the general consistency in Argentina's assessment in the three-year period.

⁸ See: <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2008/2008016.pdf> Note: With an average score of 381 in 2006 and 388 in 2012, the seven point increase results in a standard error of 7.5. Also see: http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/pisa2012/pisa2012highlights_6a.asp

Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (SERCE)—which sought to measure student performance in the same three academic areas that the PISA investigated. As opposed to PISA, SERCE tested third and sixth grade students and qualified the assessment in terms of levels. Students were grouped into Levels I-IV, with I being the lowest acceptable demonstration of a given skill and anything not acceptable being designated “below Level I.” Argentine students consistently had a majority of students in the below level I and level I categories when compared with the other levels.⁹

All of this to say that the education system that Bergoglio witnessed failed to meet even most basic level of the educational needs of Argentine children. Coupled with this is a high rate of students not seeking advanced studies of any kind. For example, in Bergoglio’s Argentina, the education system suffers from high drop-out rates and large disparities between the quality of private and public education. All of this data suggests reasons why the Medellín conference considers the aspect of education in Latin America so much that it published a decisive document on the subject of education in Latin America. Towards the beginning of the document, the conference put education in terms of this type of liberation:

There exists, in the first place, the vast sector of persons "marginalized," from the culture, those illiterate, and especially indigenous illiterate persons, deprived sometimes even of the benefit of communication by means of a common language. This type of ignorance is an inhuman slavery. Their liberation is a responsibility of all Latin American persons. They should be liberated from their prejudices and superstitions, from their complexes and inhibitions, from their

⁹ See: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001610/161045E.pdf> Though, it is worth noting, that in the SERCE study this places Argentina in the mean or just above mean in a normal distribution of scores, as opposed to PISA. Regardless, Argentina also consistently had higher percentages of students in the below level I category, primarily because of the pronounced shift in urban-rural differences that were worse in Argentina results than in other Latin American nations.

fanaticisms, from the fatalistic senses, from their fearful incomprehension of the world in which they live, and from their lack of confidence and passivity.¹⁰

The Medellín documents make education one of the primary methods in which liberation theology is to be enacted in Latin America. Education is connected to the concept of liberation because of the kinesthetic way in which the types of dialogues that occur in the academic setting form a person's spirit from the oppressive realities of social, political and economic injustices which have given a sense of reality to the existence of superstitious persons that are marginalized and enslaved by the natural aspects of this world. In this sense, what the Medellín documents are suggesting is imminently practical and Catholic: education helps the human person be freed from the types of error which result in this type of fear. It also accomplishes freedom from slavery which interferes with the knowledge of the good God and the goodness of creation. Medellín calls this "*educación liberadora*" – liberating education.¹¹

The rest of the Medellín documents comment on certain pedagogical theories which might be employed to achieve this type of *educación liberadora*. In this education-centered part of the document, the bishops at Medellín are primarily capitulating the theories of the Brazilian social theorist Paulo Freire whose book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* describes education as a dialogical process between the student and the teacher which allows the student to come to an awareness of his or her own socio-historical situation as well as an awareness of the ways in which true learning occurs. For Freire, the dialogical aspect is important to this type of learning because "no man is an island (to use Donne's famous words) and it is coming together in solidarity and in

¹⁰ Medellín, *Education*, I.3.

¹¹ Medellín, *Education*, II.8.

dialogue that learning and liberation simultaneously occur.¹² Freire's theories are posited in opposition to what Freire calls the "banking," theory of education in which "education...becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor."¹³ This theory, Freire continues, discourages reflection and a critical approach to the historical realities of oppression in which students find themselves and, thus, disables the liberation of the oppressed by preventing their involvement in their own liberation. Freire fears that this could lead to a cycle of oppressor/oppressed reversals which ultimately would restrict liberation from ever occurring. "Since it is a concrete situation that the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is established, the resolution of this contradiction must be *objectively*[sic]verifiable. Hence, the radical requirement [the radical stance of solidarity] – both for...oppressor and for the oppressed – that the concrete situation which begets oppression must be transformed."¹⁴

The Medellín documents adopt this stance as well for the purpose of focusing on the flourishing of the Latin American people, especially Latin American students, from the purview of Latin America. This is a crucial point because it underscores both the goal of education from the Freire pedagogical method and also what the Medellín documents hope to accomplish in focusing on the need for education, that is, not the imposition of some sort of extra-continental aid to save Latin American persons and thereby continue the structures of power and dominance and submission, but the true development of Latin

¹² I think that it is interesting to note that Freire's use of dialogue and of the oppressor's gaining awareness of his or her oppression in dialogue with the oppressed has rhetorical similarities to Bergoglio's language of encounter.

¹³ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, (30th anniversary ed. New York: Continuum, 2000),, 53.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 32.

American persons by means of their own resources and abilities (as *naúfragos*, to use Bergoglio's metaphorical terminology of the types of interaction with culture necessary to effect change) in order to contribute effectively to the global dialogue. The solution that both Freire and the Medellín documents) propose is that of ecclesial-educational base communities.¹⁵

4.2 *Anámnesis*

It may seem strange to frame a section about *anamnesis* within [...] Yet it is beginning with *anamnesis* that Bergoglio frames the rest of his discussion about education. What make this theological concept so important to how Bergoglio is adhering and yet adapting to what the discussions of what is occurring within education in Latin America at Medellín?

To begin, *anamnesis* in Christian theology is understood within the context of Christ's words at the last supper to "do this in memory of me." The Greek term for memory is *ἀνάμνησιν*. Though it has been adopted by Christian theology to refer to the type of presence made in the liturgical memory of Christ in the Eucharist, it has other theological and philosophical connotations as well.¹⁶ This *anamnesis* type memorial has been practiced in the Church's worship and liturgy in the Eucharist which, as source and summit of the Christian faith, tangibly reminds Christians of God's freely given salvation in Christ on the cross. Bergoglio explains this concept uniquely:

¹⁵ Base communities are small groups in geographic proximity who gather together to participate in the type of dialogue which Freire describes, usually at the direction of a priest or lay leader.

¹⁶ For example, in Plato's work, the term *anamnesis* refers to the pantheistic notion of a knowledge which human's possess from past lives. This is not the connotation of *anamnesis* being used in this chapter, nor by Bergoglio in his employment of the word.

The memory needed is *anamnesis*, a reactualization and reencounter, like in the Eucharistic celebration, where we encounter, with our own flesh, and with that of our brothers [and sisters], the flesh of Christ. A memory which goes to the sources and, while giving this memory sense, moves it forward with direction. Because of this it concerns being and destiny. We see so much sick memory...All of those fragments [of memory] try to distract, obscure and negate this history: *The Lord is alive and is among us*. He calls us. He sustains us. He reunites us. And He sends us. In him we are children, in Him we find the heights to which we are called.¹⁷

From Bergoglio's account of *anamnesis*— which sets up his desire to have education recuperate the pertinence of memory to the people of God — emerges a nuanced expression of *anamnesis*. First, his account makes reference to the type of memorial and sacramental act that occurs in the Christian celebration of the Eucharist. Second, it describes the Eucharist as the participation of our flesh with the mystical body of Christ and the Churchly body. Third, it attempts to speak of a memory which is complete and unitive and has God at its end. Bergoglio's integrated concept of memory must take into account, then, all of human history.

To elucidate how memory and history relate in their theological context, it is helpful to turn to the work of William Cavanaugh on Chilean expressions of liberation theology. In *Torture and Eucharist*, Cavanaugh makes the connection between Eucharist, *anamnesis*, and liberation theologies as well.¹⁸ In that context, he considers the types of Eucharistic theologies that have been used in the Church to describe how the Eucharistic presence of Christ is made real or actual. Cavanaugh emphasizes that the memorial, or *anamnesis*, aspect of the Eucharist is truly present when it isn't simply confined to the temporal aspects of Christ's life, as if to say that making Christ's presence in the

¹⁷ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y Pasion*, 8.

¹⁸ William T. Cavanaugh., *Torture and Eucharist: theology, politics, and the body of Christ*, (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1998).

Eucharist only a memory is almost a type of Gnosticism. Cavanaugh puts it this way: “If we understand this command properly, however, the Eucharist is much more than a ritual repetition of the past. It is a literal re-membering of Christ’s body...”¹⁹ This type of memory doesn’t simply act as a time-machine of sorts in which the historical Christ is brought to the present. Or, to put it another way, those who receive the Eucharist are merely brought into the past. Eucharistic theologies based on the concept of memorial function in their most salvific sense when the concept of Eucharistic presence is one that defines the way in which Christ’s Eucharistic presence transcends all of history. History in this sense becomes a theological category.

Cavanaugh also provides a useful summary of the difference between a sacramentally motivated view of history and a secular one. The secular imagination of history, “is a uniform sequence of cause and effect, measured not by the divine plan, but by clock and calendar. The past is the guarantee of the future.”²⁰ This view of history is in tension with the view of history which is in the Christian imagination, and especially in the way that Bergoglio quantifies history. For example, in Bergoglio’s description of history in *Educar es elegir la vida*, there is in a conscientious fidiary connection: “For us, talking about ‘creation’ has an immediate connotation with believing. Faith in God the Creator tells us that the history of mankind is not empty and without end.”²¹ Bergoglio also draws on Augustine’s reflections upon history as eschatological salvation realized in Christ. Augustine’s description of history in *The City of God*, Bergoglio says, is

¹⁹ Cavanaugh, 229.

²⁰ Cavanaugh, 223.

²¹ Bergoglio, *Elegir La Vida*, II.

exemplified in his writings against the Donatists. According to Bergoglio, the Donatists – an early Christian sect who believed in a Church that existed only by the pure, or those who has not committed major sins that would socially oust them from the Christian community – erred not in their denial of the mercy of God but in the way that the Donatists sought to exclude those who were not of the utmost purity from the sacramental action of God in history.

To explain this point, Bergoglio makes recourse to the parable of the wheat and the weeds found in Matthew 13. He argues that this Donatist mentality seeks to too soon separate the wheat from the weeds. In this parable Christ is describing the kingdom of heaven as the field of someone who has planted good seed but whose field grows weeds as well due to the interference of a nefarious enemy. The servants of the master of the field ask their master if he would like them to pull up the weeds but the master declines saying that the wheat (the good seed) will be lost alongside the weeds. The Matthean text has the master saying, “No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with them. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.”²² Bergoglio uses this parable to make a point which parallels some of the language that liberation theology employs. “The structures of this world aren’t only sinful. This is a Manichaeism.”²³ The use of the word “structures,” rings similar to other liberation theologians, such as Gutiérrez’ talk of fallen structures or, for example,

²² Mt. 13:29,30

²³ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y pasión*, 41.

Marciano Vidal's insistence that "the importance of Christian salvation [is] understood and brought to fruition as integral liberation."²⁴

In Bergoglio's account of memory everything and everyone is included- he calls this a "spontaneous eclosion of collective memory."²⁵ Within this eclosion are the human and non-human historical realities of creation and their interactions can fall into Freire's categories of oppressor and oppressed.²⁶ In this collective memory – that of the wheat and the weeds – the oppressor and the oppressed grow together. It is the Christian's mission, Bergoglio says, to "moreso protect as fathers and mothers the wheat, leaving to the angels the harvesting of the weeds."²⁷ This seems to be a strange interpretation of the parable, especially in light of what Bergoglio is saying about the ills of a fallen culture and the need for education which corresponds to a Christian vision of reality to meet these ills. The implication seems to be that Bergoglio, in relating this parable to sinful structures, is taking a defeatist approach to how the structures of the world can be approached. Yet, the ecclesiastical interpretation of this parable has always been that the Church as a body is a *corpus mixtum*. This is also the approach to history that Augustine takes in *City of God*, as it has been noted.

²⁴ Marciano Vidal, *Moral Fundamental 1: Moral de Actitudes* (Madrid: Editorial Covarrubias), 185. It should be noted that the CDF released a notification regarding "certain writings," of Fr. Vidal on what appeared to be errors and ambiguities. However, given that this is a very basic, non-contentious and even elegant quotation from Vidal only being used to explain the importance of seeing liberation in light of Christian salvation, I feel no qualms including it here.

²⁵ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y Pasión*, 34.

²⁶ Bergoglio specifically mentions "the Spaniar and the native, the missionary and the conquistador, the Spanish peoples and the mestizos." *Exigencia y passion*, 34.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 41.

What Bergoglio seems to be suggesting, therefore, in his interpretation of the parable is that the Church's existence in history as the "wheat," continues on among the weeds (perhaps in a Freire way of speaking, among the oppressors) until the eschaton. Perhaps, what Bergoglio is suggesting is that in the same way that individuals who are sick with sin respond in a variety of ways in the *corpus mixtum*, that structures which are marred by sin can be mixed as well. By cultivating those structures within the world which are a wheat, Christians can partake of the *cultura del encuentro* by interacting with the metaphorical field as a whole. The imagery of a harvester finding both wheat and weed extends beyond just individual Christians in Bergoglio's interpretation of the parable. The harvester is the person involved in the life of the Church, not the wheat or the weeds; the wheat and the weeds in Bergoglio's interpretation are the economic and political structures that either include or exclude, dignify or degrade. In this way, the entire basis of Bergoglio's *cultura del encuentro* isn't discounted, nor, however, does Bergoglio have to succumb to the Donatist sense which he worries is present in the confinement of the Church. The *cultura del encuentro* extends beyond just the interaction with others, with individuals, but into societal workings as well. What Bergoglio is suggesting here has decisive social implications: in a Donatist-type argument for a purity of Church there is a noted exclusion of certain persons from the sacraments. Beyond the exclusion from the sacraments, however, a Donatist view of the Church also assumes a bifurcation in the way that this image of God's relationship to humans is formulated.

If the Church is to exist as Bergoglio imagines, that is, as a current *corpus mixtum* which is a sign of how history will be until it is summed up in the eschaton, then certainly God's action can't be confined solely to a sacramental theology *qua* the seven

sacraments. On the converse, if there isn't anything particularly special about the seven sacraments, there is nothing particularly necessary to Christian worship in liturgy and in community. Cavanaugh makes a relevant point here by describing Leonardo Boff's sacramentality as "anything on earth can be a sacrament for a particular individual."²⁸ Using ludicrous titles from chapters of Boff's books which describe coffee mugs and cigarette butts as sacraments, Cavanaugh characterizes this as an "attempt to re-enchant the secular world [that] only leaves the world more bereft of God."²⁹ If anything is a sign, then that which is signified is easily able to be replaced with another random sign. "God never saturates anything."³⁰

Cavanaugh's response to this problem is the Eucharist as a "counter-politics." It seems strange to speak of the Eucharist and of the liturgical processes in which the Eucharist is located as political acts. Cavanaugh suggests that this comes about in the way that Christians suffer and die for the Eucharist³¹. For Bergoglio this is the struggle of suffering that comes by means of regaining the human person, both in the political context (as in the restoration of Argentina as a nation after the dirty wars), but also in the salvific context that comes in the restoration of the human person by the cross of Christ – a liberating Christ.

²⁸ Cavanaugh, 13.

²⁹ Ibid., 13.

³⁰ Ibid., 13. It is also useful to remember here the above-mentioned reference to Bergoglio's criticisms of semiotic voids that have occurred as part of the *cultura del naufrago*.

³¹ Cavanaugh, *Dying for the Eucharist or being killed by it?*, 14.

In Bergoglio's text it is stated very decisively: "The Christian triumph is not always a cross, but the cross is the flag of victory."³² This is why memory is functioning in much the same way as what Cavanaugh describes as a counter-politic; education is the struggle for liberation which is really just the humanization that is restored in Christian salvation freely given at the cross. Every difficulty that liberation from sin – in all aspects – encounters is because of the reality of suffering which must be *remembered* in Christian salvation. History, in this sense, is the memory of the sacramental experience of God. According to Bergoglio, "Our faith has a hierophanic dimension: *the contact with the holy*[sic]. It is distinguished from a magical sacramentality. It is the profound confidence in the power of God who makes history through sacramental signs."³³ Therefore, a sacramentalized history is not one in which every sign is simply another sacrament of the same presence of God. Bergoglio's use of the word "hierophanic" to describe the *contact* of God's holiness with human creation is a kiss of God's grace with that which is natural in human history. It is not a consumption of it or a transformation of it such that creation and history lose their natural directive. Bergoglio's concept is in contradiction to other theologians such as John Milbank who would make of Christ's incarnation an attempt of God to "supernaturalize the natural."³⁴ Such a concept cannot mesh with Catholic

³²Bergoglio, *Exigencia y Pasión*, 40.

³³³³ Ibid., 46.

³⁴ John Milbank discusses this concept in his book *Theology and Social Theory* where he is trying to discern where the "where does the ecclesiastical end and the political begin," in Latin America. He argues that the French theologians from whom he (and many Latin American theologians, e.g. Gutiérrez and even Bergoglio) draw develop a theology in which the natural is supernaturalized. This type of supernaturalization can not truly function within any sort of Latin Catholic theology, due to the strength of natural law traditions and theologies. I argue here, that Bergoglio is resisting this type of supernaturalization as well, in his interpretation of the parable of the wheat and the weeds. However, it seems that Bergoglio's earlier criticisms of "secular messianism," could be used to argue the same point. Further, natural law considerations continue in officially promulgated Church documents. An example of this is the Second Vatican Council's *Dignitatis humanae*, in which the rights of persons in the modernistic

theology and it does not exist in Bergoglio's concept of a hierophanic experience of history.

To exemplify how Bergoglio resists the above concept, it might be useful to draw on an example he employs in *Educar: Exigencia y Pasión*. Like other Latin American theologians, Bergoglio uses the imagery of the Israelites being freed from slavery in Egypt to describe the process of liberation.³⁵ Memory plays a crucial role for the Israelites here because it is the memory of their slavery which is intended to spur them onward in pursuit of the promised land. Much like Bergoglio's description of a utopian vision which takes into account memory of past political realities, Memory is an important part of liberation because the memory of "slavery,"- whether in the Exodus account, or in the socio-economic and cultural aspect – is part of what allows the continuing process of liberation because it makes present Christ's salvific act.

It is also in this imagery of the Exodus that Bergoglio is able to make the connection to education: a critical pedagogy comes through dialogue and critical awareness of one's status as one who oppresses or is oppressed. A critical sacramental memory brings the reality of our salvation as children of God. In the same ways that Bergoglio focuses on a pedagogy which is aware of the cultural challenged of modernity to the human person, a critical pedagogy (as presented in the Medellín document's

sense are discussed from a Catholic perspective. This adherence to natural law complicates any sort of Catholic politic because of the necessity of maintaining that persons in history are participating in an ecclesiastical and political life that oftentimes overlap, instead of beginning and ending and Milbank phrased it. Full bibliographic information for Milbank is as follows: Milbank, John. *Theology and social theory: beyond secular reason*. 2nd ed. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Pub., 2006, 207.

³⁵ The use of this imagery from Exodus to describe the process of liberation is not idiosyncratic to Bergoglio.

appropriation of Freire) always requires a critical potentiality. For Bergoglio this is called *anamnesis* because of the reality of God working through memory and education. This takes place uniquely in the Argentine context and Bergoglio identifies, as I have described above, the need of the Argentine education system to meet the needs of this type of humanizing liberation which flows from the salvation offered by Christ.

In short, this is to say that education and *anamnesis* relate to one another theological concept through a counter-politic, and this is how Bergoglio theologially frames his understanding of education. The entire basis of the two *culturas* is that education is the means by which challenges to the *status quo* are effected. And it is by education that the human person becomes equipped to encounter and effect change in a fallen society. In fact, “encounter” is the root to which Bergoglio’s thought can be traced.: it is in God’s encounter with humanity that salvation is begun; it is in Christ’s encounter with death that sin is conquered; it is in the encounter with Christ’s resurrected body that the men on the road to Emmaus came to believe in this conquering of sin; it is in the encounter with the sacraments – with the waters of Baptism, the bread and wine of the Eucharist, the chrism of Confirmation - that the transforming of the human person occurs; it is in the encounter of God’s sacramental action in memory that a humanizing and recapitulative liberation transpires; and, finally, it is the encounter in the eschaton that the problem of structural weeds is resolved, in the final sacramentalizing of history where a recapitulative liberation unites the incarnation of Christ fully to creation in the words “this is my body.” Education is a theological concept to Bergoglio because it participates in that humanization which is defined by the Incarnation.

4.3 Conclusion

As the eschaton is still a not yet, the memory that the Church celebrates in the Eucharist is the declaration that “once we were slaves in Egypt.” Bergoglio’s metaphorical application of these words differs slightly: once we were slaves to socio-economic marginalization, once we were slaves to nihilism, once we were slaves to misdirected government, once we were slaves to misguided nationalism etc. Slaves, or *naúfragos* who, for freedom, have been set free.³⁶ It is an *educación liberadora* which frees people from the types of cultural slavery—that is, structural slavery—which are remnants of a history in-transit, a history in which “thy will be done,” is still being accomplished. Further, an *educación liberadora* mirrors the liberation from sin which occurs at the beginning of all liberation – Christ’s work of salvation.

To this extent, the decisive Medellín documents and Freire’s pedagogical methods are useful in that they make central a critical awareness of the various types of oppression and slavery which are cultural realities to which a critical pedagogy would be opposed. Bergoglio’s thought differs, of course, from these two in that for Bergoglio this critical awareness is expressed most simply and most accurately in the mariological image. For Bergoglio, it is impossible to speak of an education which is separated from memory because it is in memory that the ability to perceive both current reality and the word of God becomes possible.³⁷ “The peoples, like Mary, guard these things in their hearts.”³⁸ Bergoglio even goes so far as to identify the little Virgin as the symbol of unity of the

³⁶ Pericope and paraphrase of Galatians 5:1.

³⁷Bergoglio, *Exigencia y Pasion*, 33.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 34.

Latin American peoples.³⁹ “Humanity has its common memory.”⁴⁰ The celebration of a common memory is precisely what the Church does in the celebration of the Eucharist, which brings the memory of the past together with the future eschaton in the hierophanic reality. For education, it is the natural, social reality which serves this liberating purpose.

³⁹ Ibid., 35. I have translated as “little Virgin” Bergoglio’s word “Virgencita,” which takes the Spanish word “virgin,” and adds the diminutive ending *-ita*. These types of constructions are usually intended to express “smallness,” as their appellation of diminutive might suggest, but also that of endearment and care. Bergoglio in his expression “Virgencita,” is showing a loving relationship with Christ’s mother, something that is not expressed in the English “little Virgin.”

⁴⁰ Bergoglio, *Exigencia y Pasion*, 34.

AFTERWORD

A Reflection on this Project

In doing research on Jorge Bergoglio I did my best to look into both the English and Spanish resources available on him, his life and his thought. It is to be expected that not many resources would exist in English, given his relative non-existence in the English speaking world until his election to the papacy. But in addition to this paucity the resources that were available were, by and large, basic.

This is not meant to disparage the authors of these books by any means. It seems to me that there was a large push to publish things, and quickly, about the new Pope after he was elected and that lack of time, language skills, theological knowledge, and research access usually resulted in these publications being about the first few days of Bergoglio's papacy – his actions and his words as pope rather than information about Bergoglio himself. Additionally, most of the information that was published in these types of books was also available on-line.

A small amount of redemption came in the release of a book titled *On Heaven and Earth: Pope Francis on Faith, Family, and the Church in the Twenty-First Century* by Image Publishers. This book is actually an English translation of the book *El Jesuita*, which I have referenced a handful of times throughout this thesis. *El Jesuita* was an interview that took place before Bergoglio was actually elected to the papacy, so the issue of the paucity of English language resources persists. Further, the English translation cuts the interview slightly for what I can only assume are reasons related to publishing rights.

Another fairly good resource on Pope Francis, which I have also referenced in this thesis, concerns his involvement in the Argentine dirty wars. It was first released in Italian as *La Lista di Bergoglio*, and translated later into Spanish as *La Lista de Bergoglio*, which is the edition that I have used. To my knowledge, there is no English translation.

I am also aware of a translation occurring with Ignatius Press to translate some of Bergoglio's works as Cardinal into English. For example, a small book written by Bergoglio entitled *Corrupción y Pecado* has been translated into English and published, with another shorter work, by Ignatius Press under the title *The Way of Humility*. I can only hope that these translations will continue.

I am very interested to see how theological work about Bergoglio will continue. It seems to me that for all the growing interest in Latin American theologies and theologians that Bergoglio's election to the papacy as Pope Francis will spur some interest in understanding the specific situation of Argentina in regards to the Church and Catholic theology, especially. I am looking forward to continuing in this scholarship and seeing how Bergoglio's writings and actions as Pope can be understood in relation to his thought and actions as Cardinal and Archbishop.

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