

THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE CATHOLIC WORKER MOVEMENT
THROUGH BIOREGIONALISM

By

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To mom, dad, Tammie, and everyone at the GCW

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	4
LIST OF TABLES.....	7
LIST OF FIGURES.....	8
ABSTRACT	10
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	12
Purpose	12
Theoretical Approach- Why Tweed?.....	13
Methodology- My Position.....	14
The Need for this Scholarship.....	17
Overview.....	18
2 HISTORY AND BIOREGIONALISM OF THE CATHOLIC WORKER	21
History.....	21
Dorothy Day	21
Peter Maurin.....	22
The Catholic Worker.....	24
Theological Foundations	26
Maurin’s Three Themes.....	27
Three Pillars: Cult, Culture, Cultivation.....	28
Growth and Trajectory of the Movement	29
“Aims and Means” of the Movement.....	30
Practice	32
Ecumenicity of the Movement	33
Pramond Parajuli’s “Ecological Ethnicity”	35
Sustainability.....	36
Bioregionalism	37
History	38
Anarchy	38
Catholic Workers and Bioregionalism.....	40
Bioregionalism and the Creation of Sustainability within the CW Movement	41
Houses Today	43
The Mustard Seed.....	44
Sheep Ranch.....	44
The Alderson Hospitality House	45
Silver Springs Catholic Worker.....	45
Su Casa.....	46

	Reflection	46
3	THREE HOUSES	48
	The L.A. Catholic Worker.....	48
	Gainesville Catholic Worker.....	52
	Resistance.....	63
	Lifestyle	64
	Local Food.....	65
	Houston Catholic Worker.....	66
	Nonprofit.....	67
	Reflections.....	68
4	RELIGION AND GEOGRAPHY	74
	Position.....	74
	Tweed on Position.....	74
	Resistance.....	76
	Movement and Relation among Regions	78
	Dwelling	80
	Fluidity	85
	Crossing.....	86
	Publications as Crossings	88
	Corporeal Crossing	90
	Cosmic Crossing	91
	Spiritual Activity as Crossings	92
5	CONCLUSIONS	97
	Blind Spots.....	97
	Gaps in Research	98
	Conclusion	99
	Future Discussion	101
	Benefits- Education.....	102
	Benefits-Organizational Sharing	102
	APPENDIX: NONPROFIT PERSPECTIVE	104
	LIST OF REFERENCES	106
	BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.....	110

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>page</u>
3-1 Comparison of three case studies.	73

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>		<u>page</u>
2-1	Founders of the Catholic Worker Movement	47
2-2	A picture expressing the Works of Mercy, labeled the “Works of Peace”.	47
3-1	The L.A. Catholic Worker’s Hippie Kitchen.....	69
3-2	One of the LACW’s shopping carts.....	69
3-3	The Gainesville Catholic Worker’s current location.	70
3-4	Paper Cranes	71
3-4	Our Lady of Guadalupe, the inspiration behind the name CJD.....	72
4-1	LACW’s newspaper, <i>Catholic Agitator</i>	94
4-2	CJD’s newspaper, <i>Houston Catholic Worker</i>	95
4-3	GCW’s newspaper, <i>ConSpire</i>	96

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CJD	Casa Juan Diego
CW	Catholic Worker
GCW	Gainesville Catholic Worker
LACW	Los Angeles Catholic Worker

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The purpose of this thesis is to explain the sustainability of the Catholic Worker Movement today through bioregionalism. The Catholic Worker Movement is made up of a variety of individually run houses of hospitality and farms that serve the underprivileged, poor, and oppressed. The founders and the main religious foundations of personalism and the Works of Mercy are important to its success. Personalism is the dignity and worth of each person. The Works of Mercy, which arise from the Gospel of Matthew, include feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, providing shelter for the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the imprisoned, visiting the sick, and burying the dead. Sustainability is the ability to meet today's needs without compromising those of the future. Bioregionalism is a place-based philosophy that supports a small-scaled, decentralized way of living. This thesis argues that the Catholic Worker Movement sustains itself through bioregionalism.

Thomas Tweed's spatial theory of religion helps to frame *how* bioregionalism connects to the Catholic Worker Movement through crossing, dwelling, and the establishment of relationships. Tweed's theoretical framework negotiates time and space, displaying how communities perpetuate the work of social justice into the future.

In this thesis I find that current Catholic Workers Houses have sustained themselves through their adaptability and fluidness. Rather than adopting the same model in every location, each House and community fills its bioregional niche. The Movement is not only compatible with bioregionalism, it *is* bioregionalist. This is expressed through its use of resources, how it addresses social needs, in addition to its cultivation of community. Together, these have allowed the Catholic Worker Movement to continue since the death of its founders in 1949 and 1980.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The Catholic Worker Movement is made up of a variety of individually run houses of hospitality and farms that serve the underprivileged, poor, and oppressed. They present no set hierarchy of authority and hold no specific structural code to which they all abide. Fr. Mike Baxter of the Andre House of Hospitality in Phoenix, Arizona noted, “There’s no sign up sheet, no requisites. And yet in spite of that vagueness, there’s this tradition, this resilient web of beliefs and practices” (Baxter and Riegle Troester 1993, 481). Catholic Worker Houses are collective in mission and values as they seek to live out the teachings of Jesus. Their acts include but are not limited to feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, and visiting the imprisoned. These Houses enact similar values and missions, translating them in different ways according to the specific needs of the surrounding community. Each Catholic Worker House must be familiar with their area’s needs and resources. With this in mind, bioregionalism is a helpful philosophy in which to frame this kind of study.

Purpose

The purpose of this thesis is to explain the sustainability of the Catholic Worker Movement today through bioregionalism, a place-based philosophy that supports a small-scaled, decentralized way of living. In this study, I uncover how internal representations of Catholic Worker Houses are bioregionalist through their negotiation of time and space in their locale.

The founders based the Catholic Worker Movement in the Catholic foundations of personalism and the Works of Mercy. Personalism is the dignity and worth of each person. The Works of Mercy come from Matthew 25, including feeding the hungry,

giving drink to the thirsty, providing shelter for the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the imprisoned, visiting the sick, and burying the dead. While these concepts are important, the sustainability of Catholic Worker Houses is not solely limited to this principal groundwork. Rather, as this study argues, the Movement sustains itself by implementing these concepts with careful regard to both time and location.

Current Catholic Worker Houses sustain themselves through adaptability and fluidness. Rather than adopting the same model in every location, each House and community fills its niche for the region in which it operates. The Movement is not only compatible with bioregionalism, it *is* bioregionalist. This bioregionalism is expressed through its use of resources, how it addresses social needs, and most importantly, its cultivation of community. Together, these concepts of adaptability and fluidness have allowed Catholic Worker Houses to continue since the death of its founders in 1949 and 1980.

In this thesis, I draw from the modern notion of sustainability and the ecologically based philosophy of bioregionalism. Additionally, I use Thomas Tweed's spatial theory of religion. This study connects the social and the environmental to display the confluence of religion and nature.

Theoretical Approach- Why Tweed?

Thomas Tweed's spatial theory of religion shows how the Catholic Worker Movement draws from bioregionalism. Tweed views theories as travels as they are "journeys propelled by concepts and tropes that follow lines of argument and narration" (Tweed 2006, 9). By understanding theories in this manner he uses spatial metaphors to further elucidate activities, relationships, and areas. For Tweed, the tropes of movement, relation, and position help us understand religious phenomenon and

underlie the central concepts of crossing and dwelling. Crossing is moving across boundaries sometimes through both time and space. Dwelling is a place of being as it deals with “a confluence of organic-cultural flows that allows devotees to map, build, and inhabit worlds” (Tweed 2006, 82). It is with both crossing and dwelling that we receive an understanding of how religion negotiates space and time through a series of relationships. Similarly, Tweed pairs these ideas with the notion of aquatic flows acting as a metaphor for the vitality of motion within his theory. Water suggests the fluid nature of this movement and motion perpetuates and establishes the crossing and dwelling. Some Catholic Worker Houses speak more directly to the notions of crossing over dwelling, or movement rather than position. In these cases, I spotlight the case study that best aligns with the concept being described. While there are various spatial theories available, I found Tweed’s model to be unique because it speaks to both the social and environmental aspects at play within religion. Though he does not use the term bioregionalism, Tweed’s understandings of movement and dwelling illustrate *how* the Catholic Worker Movement can be considered bioregionalist.

Methodology- My Position

I first came to the Gainesville Catholic Worker (GCW) in February 2009 when I was looking for a Christian justice group to study for a class assignment. Additionally, I was looking to connect my faith with my daily actions. Upon completing my assignment, I stayed on as regular volunteer through my undergraduate career. In the Fall of 2011, as I started my Masters degree program, I began living and working full time at the GCW. In the Spring of 2013, I completed my second year of what they call the Metanoia semester, a discernment time for students and mostly young adults to live and work in the Gainesville Catholic Worker House. The core of the live-in community consists of

founders Johnny Zokovitch and Kelli Brew, and their two children. Each semester they accept one to four, usually, young people engaging in the Metanoia semester.¹ Other residents include formerly homeless individuals trying to get a fresh start. These are my friends and my Gainesville family.

As part of this community, I am an insider. I have the privilege of living and working alongside everyone at the House on a daily basis. The work is full time. It begins first thing in the morning and sometimes lasts into the night, with the occasional visitor ringing the doorbell well past dark. The House is open six days a week. We try to reserve Sunday as a day of rest, but every now and then we still have an unexpected visitor.

I am sympathetic towards the Catholic Worker Movement, and my insider perspective influences my tone and approach to this work. Offering an insider's perspective does not necessarily mean I am not going to be critical. Dorothy Day, one of the founders of the Catholic Worker Movement, is the best example of an insider who is also a critic. She was known to excommunicate Houses for their behavior. For example, one community used foul language in their newspaper. After reading the paper, Day confronted them. When they refused to alter the words to satisfy Day, she simply refused contact.

Though in this respect I am an insider, I am an outsider compared to the founders of the GCW House, Johnny and Kelli. The final responsibilities for the House rest in their hands. Financially, they manage the house budget, pay the bills, and hold

¹ Most young people engaging in the Metanoia semester are in their early to mid 20's.

the mortgage. They have established deeper relationships with those who come to the House, in addition to their friends and family. In these respects, I am an outsider.

As for the other Catholic Worker Houses, my data collection comes from recent literature as well as information gleaned from their websites. Due to time and resource constraints, I have not visited, either the Houston Catholic Worker, otherwise known as Casa Juan Diego (CJD), or the Los Angeles Catholic Worker (LACW). I analyze them through the above resources.

Additionally, I use an array of Catholic Worker secondary sources especially Dan McKanan's *The Catholic Worker after Dorothy: Practicing Works of Mercy in a New Generation* and Rosalie Riegle Troester's *Voices of the Catholic Worker*. For Catholic Worker history, I look to the resources listed above, in addition to other Catholic Worker books including Jim Forest's *All is Grace: A Biography of Dorothy Day* and Frank Sicius's *Peter Maurin, Apostle to the World*. I also draw from Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin's words through her books and his essays. Current newspaper articles and community publications help fill in various gaps.

The books, articles, and publications on the Catholic Worker Movement and various Houses are numerous. Most, like McKanan's and Riegle Troester's, are historical. Others, like Forest's and Sicius' in addition to William D. Miller's *Dorothy Day*, are biographical. Some are semi-autobiographical as Robert Ellsberg's *By Little and By Little* offers a collection of Day and Maurin's writings. Within the scholarship, there is also autobiographical work by co-founder Dorothy Day such as *Loaves and Fishes*. Both Day and co-founder Peter Maurin, offer firsthand accounts through their various essays, journal writings, and short poems. Firsthand accounts of other Catholic Workers

include Lawrence Holben's *All the Way to Heaven* and Mark and Louise Zwick's *The Catholic Worker Movement: Intellectual and Spiritual Origins*. Together these resources provide a historical background for the Movement, while offering insight into the similarities and differences presented by various Houses.

These writings have been written and compiled by both Catholic Workers and scholars of Catholic Workers. While the perspectives I gather also come from within the Catholic Worker (CW) Movement, my study is framed by outside theories. I draw from bioregionalism and Thomas Tweed's spatial understanding of religion. This is done intentionally to uncover internal representations within an academic framework. The surrounding community's perspective would aid a future study, but for the purpose of this thesis the interviews I gather come mainly from those doing the daily work. I analyze what they *do* and if it proves sustainable.

Within the publications, Catholic Workers and those associated with Catholic Worker Houses have used notions of bioregionalism to explain their stance on issues, without actually labeling their philosophy bioregionalist. Similarly, other CW scholars such as Rosalie Riegle Troester noted how CW Houses "adapt the social vision that is the Worker to meet the circumstance of time and place" (Riegle Troester 1993, 460). Within these discussions, I have yet to find anyone to describe the Movement as bioregionalist. I, therefore, show how the fairly modern term of bioregionalism applies to the Catholic Worker Movement. This scholarship helps us to better make sense of Catholic Worker Houses and their social presence.

The Need for this Scholarship

This work is merely a starting point for a more complete study of how Catholic Workers Houses are bioregionalist. This work contributes to knowledge about social

movements and their efforts to engage locally. Additionally, my research connects internally (within groups) and externally (group-to-group) on a larger level. Catholic Worker Houses are intentional as they try to live together with a central vision. This thesis is intended to spark a wider outlook and lead to a more comprehensive study of how community groups, organizations, nonprofits, and even individuals are using bioregionalism to make an impact on the larger society.

Bioregionalism helps us to account for a region's needs and resources. By understanding how one group is bioregionalist, perhaps other social groups, organizations, nonprofits, and individuals may learn how to better enact bioregionalism in their place of residence. Through place-based efforts, these groups can join Catholic Worker Houses, establishing their own locally centered collectives. If all social service groups² cared for the needs of their particular community, more people could be helped. Additionally, newly emerging efforts could focus on underserved areas. Keeping in mind the larger implications of this thesis, I now provide an overview of my thesis.

Overview

I make my argument through five chapters. To begin my argument Chapter 2 offers a history of the Catholic Worker Movement. Here I describe the founders, discuss the initial goals, and explain how the original framework was placed into action. This history leads into the next part of Chapter 2 where I look briefly at an overview of today's functioning Houses. I introduce bioregionalism as a fruitful way to understand this Movement. In this section, I draw upon notions associated with sustainability and bioregionalism in an effort to illustrate models of how the CW Movement continues to

² By social service groups, I do not limit this to government-established groups, but rather any group that is serving society's needs.

sustain itself primarily through its localized commitments. Catholic Worker Houses combine the work of leading by example and promoting involvement within society by basing their work at the local level. Their actions spotlight the tension between change in the larger social system and localized politics and actions. Following this historical account, I continue Chapter 2 by providing a working definition of the Movement's bioregionalism and sustainable efforts. Employing Pramod Parajuli's concept of "ecological identities," I situate the Catholic Worker Movement in a position between the ecological and the social.

Chapter 3 presents three case studies of how bioregionalism sustains Houses today. I spotlight the Los Angeles Catholic Worker (LACW), the Gainesville Catholic Worker (GCW) and the Houston Catholic Worker's Casa Juan Diego (CJD). The LACW and the GCW deal with issues of homelessness, while CJD concerns itself with caring for immigrants. Each House draws from the resources in its particular area to serve the region's needs. I provide an overview of what these Houses do and where they are situated. I draw heavily from my ethnographic work at the GCW. In the cases of the LACW and CJD, I rely upon their internet presence in addition to House publications such as their newspapers, blog posts, and literature. Previously published interviews offer words from the founders and those involved with the communities.

Chapter 4 draws from Thomas Tweed's theory of religion as a crossing and dwelling to frame how bioregionalism connects to the Catholic Worker Movement. Tweed's spatial understanding of religion helps connect bioregionalism to the Catholic Worker Movement, further emphasizing how, when joined, bioregionalism is used to sustain the Houses today. Through Tweed's theoretical perspective, I explain how the

three Houses exemplify a bioregionalist spirit that perpetuates their sustainability.

Chapter 5 is my conclusion. First, I identify major gaps in my study and the implications of my current understanding. Secondly, I provide a final overview of my thesis. Finally, I end by questioning the broader implications of my study, asking how it can act as a framework for understanding similar social movements. The first stop on this journey is Chapter 2, The History and Bioregionalism of the Catholic Worker.

CHAPTER 2 HISTORY AND BIOREGIONALISM OF THE CATHOLIC WORKER

The first part of Chapter 2 sketches the history of the Catholic Worker Movement. The second part links the Catholic Worker Movement to issues of bioregionalism and sustainability. I end the Chapter by looking at bioregionalism within various CW Houses.

History

Before explaining the terms sustainability and bioregionalism and discussing their interactions with various CW Houses, we need to understand what the CW Movement is and how it originated. The following addresses the founders, foundations, concepts and early history. Additionally, I provide the “Aims and Means” of the Movement, its practice, and the religious diversity of those involved.

Dorothy Day

In the early 20th century, a young agnostic socialist by the name of Dorothy Day found her way to Catholicism. Her father was a journalist and moved the family several times to find work. Although raised in a family that did not value religion, Day was exposed to various churches through neighbors and friends. Despite this exposure, she never became deeply involved in any religious practice at that time. Dorothy Day followed in her father’s footsteps and became an avid writer. Her last year of high school exposed her to writers and works from the American “Left.” These included the Socialist Party, the Industrial Workers of the World, Jack London, Peter Kropotkin and most of all Upton Sinclair. Sinclair’s novel, *The Jungle*, which highlighted issues of urban poverty, spoke to the notion of justice that later inspired her life work (Forest 2011, 18).

After attending college, Dorothy Day worked various freelance journalist jobs. Following an abortion, a divorce, and a couple of unhealthy relationships, Day found herself gradually moving toward Catholicism. Many of her radical friends, met through her work for various leftist newspapers, found her faith to be a “delusion.” To them, religion was the “opiate of the masses,” and had no place in their world of social change.¹ Day continued to support leftist causes, engaging in protests and offering her written words to speak out about injustice. Ultimately for Day, the spiritual meaning that came with religion only reinforced her activism. This emphasis became largely apparent after the birth of her daughter Tamar (Forest 2011, 76). Day was baptized in the Catholic Church and continued her spiritual journey by attending Mass and engaging in regular prayer.

With her newfound faith and without giving up her activist approach to life, Day continued to live out her spiritual and radical beliefs through her writing. She began working as a reporter on the Lower East Side of New York. At 35 years old, she continued to reconcile her faith with her strong beliefs of justice. During this time she met Peter Maurin, a French intellectual and essayist, deeply influenced by St. Francis of Assisi and his Catholic tradition (Coy 1988, 19-21). (Figure 2-1, A)

Peter Maurin

Born and raised into a French peasant family, Maurin was accustomed to simple, communal living. As a boy he attended Mass with his family, reaching adulthood as society’s struggles began conflicting with Catholic tradition.² Maurin learned about

¹ Quoting Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1843).

² “Maurin reached young adulthood at the time in France when Enlightenment sensibilities were clashing with Catholic tradition over the best way to ameliorate the social convolutions of the nineteenth century” (Sicius 2004, 10).

Catholic social teachings on poverty and economics. He soon became familiar with the 1891 publication of *Rerum Novarum*, a progressive papal encyclical that “sought to analyze the conditions of social justice” (Dolan 1958, 334). Written by Pope Leo XII, this encyclical condemned socialism and spoke against excessive capitalism and individualism. It aided the endorsement of the labor movement and promoted a social conscious. As a teenager, Maurin joined the Christian Brothers, a religious community within the Catholic Church concerned with caring for the poor and oppressed. With them, he stayed at various monasteries but never took vows. He left to join Le Sillon Movement, which is translated as “The Path.” It was created by Marc Sangier in an effort to “Christianize democracy.” Maurin remained in Le Sillon Movement until shortly before it dissolved in 1910. Subsequently, he became interested in homesteading in Canada. He later noted that he was “always interested in the land and man’s life on the land” (Sicuis 2004, 19). Maurin “chose one of the most difficult places in North America to make a success of farming” (Sicius 2004, 19). It is suspected he encountered extreme difficulties including low rainfall, harsh winters, and little food.³ After leaving Canada, Maurin found his way south to the United States where he worked various labor jobs. His impoverished lifestyle led to several arrests for “the crime of being poor” (Sicuis 2004, 29). For example, Maurin often recounted the time when he knocked on a woman’s door for water during the cold months. The winter’s frost had frozen the door shut. His efforts to help her open the door, led neighbors to believe he was breaking in. They called the police, leading to his arrest.

³ Little is known of Maurin’s time in Canada.

In subsequent years, Maurin continued to promote the connection between faith and justice. He participated in worker's rallies and community meetings.⁴ During this time, at the age of 55, Maurin met Day. She

Immediately saw that Peter's view of a socially and economically responsible Christianity provided an alternative to society as envisioned by both industrial capitalism and communism. His synthesis helped to remove a serious conflict, which has troubled Dorothy since her conversion (Sicius 2004, XX).

Maurin's blending of faith and action affirmed Day's spiritual inclinations.⁵ Day's faith lacked the action that was so prominent in Maurin's life. (Figure 2-1, B)

The Catholic Worker

Day's work as a journalist and Maurin's constant flow of ideas led them to start a newspaper in which they blended Catholic social teaching with socialist thought. *The Catholic Worker*⁶ was published, printed, and released to the public on May Day, 1933. The paper, which sold for a penny a copy, provided social commentary, drawing from current notions of Catholic social thought. Articles highlighted contemporary social ills and promoted union organizations, direct actions and strikes. In many ways Day and Maurin's values anticipated changes enacted by Vatican II. Today, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops lists seven themes of Catholic social teaching, all of which were and continue to be key aspects of the Catholic Worker Movement. These include: life and dignity of the human person; a call to family, community and participation; rights and

⁴ As detailed in Francis J. Sicius' compilation *Peter Maurin Apostle to the World* (2004).

⁵ *Rerum Novarum*, the same encyclical that inspired Maurin, was welcomed in the United States around the time of its publication. Soon after, *Rerum Novarum* lost popularity, as American Catholics did not find social justice to be a pressing issue. Rather internal disputes were important for American Catholics, as they were faced with such issues as Americanism (Dolan 1985, 335). Additionally, they did not have the tools or methods in which to utilize the social justice resources of *Rerum Novarum*. Socialism was also opposed as the Church promoted the "sacredness behind private property" (Dolan 1985, 335).

⁶ Although Peter Maurin wanted to call it *The Catholic Radical*, they decided on *The Catholic Worker*.

responsibilities; option for the poor and vulnerable; the dignity of work and rights of workers; solidarity; and care for God's creation (US Conference of Catholic Bishops 2013).⁷

Day and Maurin's reflections promoted workers' rights, human dignity, the importance of community, care for the poor, and a sense of solidarity.⁸ While Day and Maurin drew from Catholic social teaching, in many ways they were ahead of their times.⁹ Their values reflected communistic thought which, given political antagonism towards Soviet Russia, was generally viewed negatively.¹⁰ Both recognized inequalities through the lens of their faith, discussing the social ills of the time through their writings and later through community gatherings known as Roundtable Discussions.

As *The Catholic Worker's* publications spread, people became interested in more than just newspapers. A steady stream of visitors came to Day and Maurin, looking for food, a bed for the night, and a place to be heard. Day soon focused on creating a Houses of Hospitality in New York, while Maurin took steps toward developing a rural connection to the land. In both cases, they sought to provide food, shelter, and comfort for others. They expanded from a one-room apartment to multiple apartment buildings and a farm on Staten Island. The foundations of the Catholic Worker Movement were being put into place.

⁷ For more information see: Jay P. Dolan's *The American Catholic Experience* (1985, 334-336).

⁸ Again foreshadowing values of Vatican II as expressed above.

⁹ As expressed above with the reference to Vatican II.

¹⁰ The first Red Scare following that of the Bolshevik Revolution (1917) included the Russian civil war in which an uprising of various workers groups made efforts to overthrow the government. Communist power ensued.

Theological Foundations

The CW Movement springs from two ideas 1) the Catholic idea of personalism and 2) the Works of Mercy as expressed in the Gospel of Matthew (25:31-46).

Personalism is “a social doctrine of the common good,” in which the goodness of Christ is apparent in every person (Day 1963, 21). Maurin described a personalist as someone who is a “go-giver not a go-getter,” and who “tries to give what he has instead of trying to get what the other fellow has” (Day 1963, 21).¹¹ Catholic Worker, Chuck Trapkus, simplified the term to “being personally responsible for everybody else’s problems” (Trapkus, n.d). For Maurin, personalism meant viewing everyone as a direct representation of Christ and responding to their needs. The Works of Mercy is the second main concept. As Matthew’s Gospel states:

‘For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’

The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me’ (Matt. 25:35-40, NIV).

Here, the seven acts of mercy include: feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, providing shelter for the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the imprisoned, visiting the sick, and burying the dead. Day and Maurin took these acts literally and based their actions upon them. (Figure 2-2)

¹¹ Maurin was also influenced by Emmanuel Mounier’s *Personalist Manifesto* (Sicius 2004, 35). He combined this with the notion of the Mystical Body of Christ, where all people are united as the body of Christ, as expressed through Paul’s letter to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 12:12-13).

Day and Maurin also believed strongly in the seven Spiritual Works of Mercy.¹²

These were listed by Day as:

To admonish the sinner, instruct the ignorant, to counsel the doubtful, to comfort the sorrowful, to bear wrongs patiently, to forgive all injuries, and to pray for the living and the dead (Zwick and Zwick 2005, 30).

These practices work with personalism. Day often said, “It is people who are important, not the masses.”¹³

Maurin’s Three Themes

The precepts of personalism and Works of Mercy gave direction to Maurin’s three main project themes: Roundtable Discussions, Houses of Hospitality and Farming Communes. Roundtable Discussions provided the opportunity to clarify thought by discussing issues. These conversations often took place over dinner and offered a space for a broad range of people to voice their opinions on society’s issues and current events, leading to a community dialogue. Houses of Hospitality offered space to those with “no place to rest his head.”¹⁴

The Roundtable Discussions and Houses of Hospitality enabled Day and Maurin to address social problems such as hunger and homelessness. To solve such large problems required an entirely new system of society. The Houses offered an open door, a comfortable place to stay, food to eat, and good company. The Discussions provided an opportunity to talk about the social issues.

The simple lifestyle of Farming Communes linked a craft-based economy to the Movement. Catholic Worker Farms drew from surrounding practices and resources, to

¹² According to *The Catholic Worker Movement: Intellectual and Spiritual Origins*.

¹³ See Dorothy Day’s autobiography *The Long Loneliness* (1952).

¹⁴ Luke 9:58. This language reinforces the call of Catholic personalism, viewing all with a sense of Christ.

create a craft-based economy outside mainstream culture.¹⁵ By encouraging craft based skills, like baking bread, soap making, and carpentry, CW Farms promoted the exchange of goods and services for goods and services. This localized economy drew upon local strengths and talents. Maurin believed farming provided a humane alternative system to the degradation of industrialization. From these thoughts came his idea of the Agronomic University, a place to nurture his alternative economic and farming systems.

Implementing Maurin's themes proved to be a challenge. Repeatedly, Day and Maurin encountered bills that needed to be paid, usually finding just enough to suffice. As Day described it, "our lives are made up of little miracles day by day" (Day 1934, 59).¹⁶ As a group, Day, Maurin, and those who stayed to join the work focused on the present in order to keep the community going.

Three Pillars: Cult, Culture, Cultivation

Maurin often spoke of three pillars: cult, culture, and cultivation. He saw these pillars as springing forth from the concepts of personalism and the Works of Mercy. Cult referred to the importance of religion. Cult was "the recognition of the Catholic Church and what it taught, especially the social encyclicals" through worship and scripture (Miller 1984, 257).¹⁷ Equally important, culture, understood by Maurin as "gentle

¹⁵ For the remainder of this thesis, I equate the "mainstream" with that of the American capitalist way.

¹⁶ Found in Day's book *Loaves and Fishes*. She related the daily struggle of living day to day with the biblical stories of Jesus' miraculous provisions through loaves and fishes. The most notable biblical passages are the stories found in Matt. 15:34-38 as well as John 6:10-13.

¹⁷ It is important to note that Maurin's use of the word cult is expressed in a positive connotation, rather than the negative light that most uses of the term today hold.

personalism,” was manifest through the Roundtable Discussions, which helped create alternative streams of thought and culture.

The final pillar of cultivation focused on the land. Maurin firmly believed in “harmony with the natural environment” (Sicius 2004, 126). The CW Farms provided both a holistic experience of body and spirit, while providing a sustainable economy for future generations.

Growth and Trajectory of the Movement

Following these three pillars, Maurin began the first Catholic Worker Farm on Staten Island, New York. Eventually, this farm spawned the establishment of more Catholic Worker communities. “Communists, socialists, anarchists, and an assortment of unbelievers and Protestants,” came to visit (Day 1970).¹⁸ The topics of discussion and services offered also attracted unlikely characters. Some visitors became inspired and remained, learning from the community and later starting their own CW communities. Catholic Worker Houses began opening in cities across the country. The diverse responses of CW Houses to WWII, slowed the Movement, as some supported and others opposed the war effort.¹⁹

After the ending of the war, various CW communities soon rebounded as the number of Houses began to steadily increase. Communities flourished once again in the 1960s, as alternative lifestyles and a strong opposition to the war in Vietnam helped

¹⁸ Found in Day’s essay “Ammon Hennacy: ‘Non Church’ Christian,” published in *The Catholic Worker*, February 1970. Also found here: <http://www.catholicworker.org/dorothyday/daytext.cfm?TextID=192>.

¹⁹ Many Houses folded due to the country’s heightened role in WWII. The closing of Houses was due to mixed feelings on the war effort. The early communities include those of the Midwest. Many community members left the Movement, serving overseas or working on the home front in an effort to support the country’s war effort. This caused a good deal of controversy with Day, a strict pacifist.

promote this growth. Throughout the course of this time, Day continually visited other CW communities and Houses, encouraging the work and promoting the cause.²⁰

The death of Peter Maurin in 1949 and Dorothy Day in 1980 did not slow the development of the Movement. Together the founders had provided a foundation on which to build. Their values live on through the communities and their writings. Since each House is individually run, it is difficult to ascertain exactly how many CW Houses exist today. Nevertheless, the various House websites and word of mouth suggests there are currently over 200 Catholic Worker Houses around the world.²¹

“Aims and Means” of the Movement

Currently the main Catholic Worker website details the “Aims and Means” of the Movement. The primary aim of the Catholic Worker is to “live in accordance with the justice and charity of Jesus Christ” (*The Catholic Worker* 2012). This is not taken lightly, as they strive to place the justice and charity of Christ, above all else, even government laws. In this sense, some Catholic Workers consider themselves Christian anarchists. An anarchist is someone who rebels against authority, abiding by personal rules and power. Christian anarchists adhere to the spiritual structures provided by the Gospels. They find anarchy to be the “best available option” of living in this world because anarchy “opens up a space for Christians to engage without selling out their primary allegiances and core commitments, especially to peacemaking and nonviolence” (Jesus Radicals 2013). The source of authority comes from God’s scriptures. Though most

²⁰ For more information see Dan McKanan’s *The Catholic Worker after Dorothy: Practicing Works of Mercy in a New Generation*, specifically Chapter 3, “The Flowering of the Sixties” (McKanan 2008, 71-96).

²¹ A majority of these communities are in the US. Still, a website that hosts a directory of Catholic Worker Houses lists 21 communities in other countries, including: Belgium, Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden, The Netherlands and Uganda (The Catholic Worker Movement 2013).

religious Catholic Workers adhere to the Bible, like most Christian anarchists, their views often conflict with those of the Church. For many Christian anarchists, the means to achieving the aim of living Christ's justice and charity is through lifestyle, rather than doctrine. As Day stated, "God meant things to be much easier than we have made them." Similarly, Maurin also advocated the construction of a society in which it is "easier for people to be good" (*The Catholic Worker* 2012).

"The Aims and Means of the Catholic Worker," questions mainstream views of economics, labor, politics, morals, and the arms race. Echoing Maurin, many within the Catholic Worker Movement advocate for personalism, a decentralized society, and a "green revolution." Each notion parallels Maurin's three projects and three corresponding C's. The cult of worship and the importance of scripture appear in personalism, that is, Christ is seen in every person. This stance promotes not only the reality of scripture and biblical virtues, but also the nearness of the values of Christ as they are enacted daily through sharing meals and caring for those in need. The promotion of a small-scale society appears through culture, as the current mainstream society is called into question. A decentralized society echoes the stream of bioregionalism through an emphasis on the local. Community efforts support family farms, land trusts, worker ownership, homesteading projects, food and housing cooperatives, among other initiatives. All of these projects suggest a simpler more personalist lifestyle. Face-to-face interactions are valued and technology is placed secondary. Similarly, the "green revolution" speaks directly to Maurin's notion of cultivation, as both are meant to "rediscover the proper meaning of our labor and/or true bonds with the land." This is contrary to its later use, as technology created an

agricultural system of abundance. Agriculture yields increased, causing the price of food to decrease, thereby aiding the economy. Rather, Maurin's "green revolution" was meant to create a "distributist communitarianism" promoting self-sufficiency and simplicity" (*The Catholic Worker* 2012).²²

Practice

Collectively, these notions of personalism, a decentralized society, and a "green revolution" are supported through the values of nonviolence, manual labor, and voluntary poverty (*The Catholic Worker* 2012). Nonviolence came directly from the teachings of Jesus as he stated, "Blessed as the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God" (Matt. 5:9).²³ Though the "Aims and Means," listed on the Catholic Worker website, does not specifically state the biblical notions behind labor, it drew from Day understandings of Catholic values. As she stated,

Besides inducing cooperation, besides overcoming barriers and establishing the spirit of sister and brotherhood (besides just getting things done), manual labor enables us to use our bodies as well as our hands, our minds (*The Catholic Worker* 2012).

In addition to nonviolence and manual labor, Day also viewed voluntary poverty as a way to "increase our knowledge and belief in love." By experiencing the life of the oppressed, people may gather a greater sense of empathy. The pain felt becomes a greater reality and the push for solidarity and justice usually ensues (*The Catholic Worker* newspaper, 2012).

Though not officially related to the Roman Catholic Church, and in some ways very much opposed to the hierarchical nature and orders given, Catholicism played and

²² For more information see "The Aims and Means of the Catholic Worker," found on the Catholic Worker Movement's website (<http://www.catholicworker.org/aimsandmeanstext.cfm?Number=5>).

²³ Similarly the Works of Mercy expounded upon nonviolence aid in Matt. 25:31-46.

continues to play a large role for some Catholic Workers. Day, Maurin, and some of those in the Movement today have been spiritually enriched by the sacraments, drawing heavily from the Gospels, while still offering a critical critique of the institutional Catholic Church. A Catholic Worker “lifer”²⁴ described how his personal faith related to the movement, stating:

The Church needs a Catholic Worker presence. The parishioners in the parish near where I live know our family, see us in the newspaper when we get arrested or go to jail, know about our work with the poor, and mostly respect us for that ministry. If we were not part of a parish community these relationships would not exist (2013).²⁵

These views extend beyond Catholicism as the Movement has been adopted by other denominations in addition to those outside the religion entirely.

Ecumenicity of the Movement

While Catholic Worker Houses and communities still follow biblical teachings, many hold alternative faiths lying outside the institutional Roman Catholic Church.²⁶

While Catholics continue to engage in the Movement, young evangelical Protestants are becoming more prevalent. This seems especially common with the rise of the Emergent Church.

Emerging churches are communities that practice the way of Jesus within postmodern cultures. This definition encompasses nine practices. Emerging churches (1) identify with the life of Jesus, (2) transform the secular realm, and (3) live highly communal lives. Because of these three activities, they (4) welcome the stranger, (5) serve with generosity, (6) participate as

²⁴ I have often heard this term in relation to those that devote nearly their entire lives to the Movement. Many of these people met or knew Dorothy Day.

²⁵ Email correspondence with North Carolina Catholic Worker, February 2013.

²⁶ The term “faith” is used primarily in a Christian context, e.g. few refer to the Buddhist faith or Hindu faith. I use this word, echoing the Catholic Worker movement today through the word choice of various Houses.

producers, (7) create as created beings, (8) lead as a body, and (9) take part in spiritual activities.²⁷

The Emergent Church has made popular New Monastics. New Monasticism recognizes an emerging movement of young Christians creating religiously based communities in slum neighborhoods.²⁸ These are usually made in the spirit of the Franciscans, Jesuits and other early church orders.²⁹

Catholic Workers are not limited to Catholics, evangelical Protestants or even those who profess a religion. People from many backgrounds are attracted to the CW Movement's good-natured hospitality, egalitarian focus, and universal conceptions of love and good will.

Catholic Worker communities are welcoming to all. They are usually "off-the-grid" in the sense that they don't publicize themselves, doing the work in their area and staying out of the limelight (with the exception of public protests).³⁰ For example, Nashville Greenlands, is based in the so-called Bible Belt. Contrary to their location, this CW group describes themselves as a "non-sectarian community, not based in prayer or religious doctrine" (The Catholic Worker Movement 2013). They share radical direct action through protests in the promotion of justice and peace, act as a place for

²⁷ The Emergent Church is defined by Eddie Gibbs and Ryan Bolger in their book, *Emerging Churches: Creating Christian Community in Postmodern Cultures* (2005). This definition was also echoed in Scot McKnight's 2007 online article featured in *Christianity Today* labeled, "Five Streams of the Emerging Church," (McKnight 2007).

²⁸ For more information, see: Jonathan R. Wilson's *Living Faithfully in a Fragmented World* (1998), Shane Claiborne's *The Irresistible Revolution* (2006), and Rob Moll's "The New Monasticism," featured in 2005 on *Christianity Today's* website (<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2005/september/16.38.html>).

²⁹ Based out of evangelical Christianity, Shane Claiborne is a prominent New Monastic. He drew from early Church orders in addition to the Catholic Worker in order to form his community, The Simple Way located in Philadelphia. See <http://www.thesimpleway.org/>.

³⁰ Similarly they are not "ready to convert" but rather live life in the best way that suits them. They show their faith through works.

education about peacemaking and nonviolence, and attempt to create an ecologically sustainable lifestyle within the confines of a city. They find themselves “affiliated with the Catholic Worker Movement through many years of personal association, and a deeply shared ethical and social vision” (The Catholic Worker Movement 2013).³¹ Years after the founders deaths, the spirit continues in the rhetoric, ideas, and values of contemporary communities. The Movement continues to evolve and expand. Before looking at individual cases, I draw from Pramod Parajuli to help set the stage for how these communities are utilizing bioregionalism in order to sustain themselves.

Pramond Parajuli’s “Ecological Ethnicity”

Catholic Workers form an “ecological ethnicity.” Anthropologist Pramond Parajuli defines an “ecological ethnicity” as “any group of people who derive their livelihood through day-to-day negotiation with their immediate environment” (Parajuli 2004, 236). Parajuli viewed these communities as enacting justice both environmentally and socially. Parajuli viewed the “gaps between environmentalism of the global North and the global South” as being very wide and profound (Parajuli 2004, 236). Environmentalism of the global South encompasses both social and environmental issues, as these two realms overlap in daily life. In fact, “it is difficult to discern where the environmental part of the struggle begins and where it ends” (Parajoli, Laura Pulido, 236). I use Parajuli’s notions of the ecology and social justice of the global South to understand CW communities in the United States.

³¹ Today there are various online publications including *The Mormon Worker* and the *Mennonite Worker* both heavily influence See: *The Mormon Worker*, in Salt Lake City, Utah, and *The Mennonite Worker* based out of Oklahoma City (The Mormon Worker 2013; The Mennonite Worker 2010).

Parajuli claimed that, “the movements of ecological ethnicities are proposals about initiating alternative modes of production, consumption, and distribution” (Parajuli 2004, 241). Catholic Workers fit the model for ecological ethnicities as they resist the strictly mainstream (and often global) markets. Ecological ethnicities act as a barrier to global capital markets through resistance and political autonomy. They provide sustainable living technologies (Parajoli 2004, 254). Understanding who the Catholic Workers are and how they can be considered ecological ethnicities helps form the connection to how they unknowingly have utilized and continue to utilize the modern idea of bioregionalism. They do this in an effort to sustain themselves.

Sustainability

“Sustainability” is a widely used word in our culture. Its broad meaning extends from agriculture to social systems and everything in between. In most cases, sustainability results from the intersection of positive environmental, social, and economic systems. The 1987 United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) addressed this issue in the *Brundtland Report*. The Report offered a holistic understanding of the World’s environmental, developmental, and energy-related crises. The WCED defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Sustainability should balance the needs of the poor with limitations “imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment’s ability to meet present and future needs” (UN’s *Brundtland Report* 1987). Sustainability meets the needs of today, while promoting and caring for the needs of the

future.³² *In this study, I am defining sustainability as that which meets the needs of today without compromising those of the future.*

Bioregionalism

Bioregionalism is the “reinhabitation” of people to their bioregions, or areas defined by ecological, biological and topographical features.³³ Reinhabitation may occur “in raincoast valleys, in prairie hollows” or as expressed with many Catholic Worker communities, “in urban neighborhoods” (Aberley 1999, 13). Bioregionalism is not a new concept. It was practiced long before its naming. It was enacted by indigenous people and later in the 19th century through Henry David Thoreau’s critiques of industrialized society and his call for a simple lifestyle. Michael McGinnis views bioregionalism as both a philosophy and an activism settled at the intersection of ecology, politics, and culture. It emphasizes decentralization and place-based views of life. Bioregionalism is based in the interrelation and connectedness of Earth’s natural systems. This philosophy is concerned with local economies and their role in supporting inhabitation. Before connecting bioregionalism to the Catholic Worker Movement, a brief history will help position this term in its proper context.

³² The 2005 World Summit placed sustainability at the confluence of environmental, social and economic demands, often referred to as the three pillars. In the journal article, “Elements of Organizational Sustainability,” Peter A.C. Smith cited Len Fisher’s *The Perfect Swarm* (2009) as speculating that “successful ecosystems are complex adaptive systems.” This viewed the Earth as an adaptable, intricate system. In this respect, a sustainable system takes a variety of issues and concepts into account in order to maintain itself (Smith, Elements of Organizational Sustainability, 6). An example of this expresses itself in The Earth Charter Initiative (2000), a “universal expression of ethical principles to foster sustainable development” (<http://www.earthcharterinaction.org/content/>). Started by the UN, and now run by an independent international group known as the Earth Charter Commission, this global project set out to establish “a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace” (The Earth Charter, 2000).

³³ Doug Aberley defined the term this way: A body of thought and related practice that has evolved in response to the challenge of reconnecting socially-just human cultures in a sustainable manner to the region-scale ecosystems in which they are irrevocably embedded (Aberley 1999, 13).

History

First coined in 1975,³⁴ scholars have traced the roots of bioregionalism to past authors, activists, and environmentalists. In the beginning of *Bioregionalism*, McGinnis recognized the importance of Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*, as it influenced regional planner, Lewis Mumford and his call for ecoregionalism.³⁵ Ecoregionalism was based heavily in the notion of economy. Similarly, Daniel Kemmis spoke of "city-regionalism, or a steadily expanding emphasis on neighborhoods" (Kemmis, xvii). Though these terms may seem like a better way to represent the Catholic Worker Houses and communities, I find the holistic concept of bioregionalism best describes the Movement. Since *Bioregionalism* was published in 1999, recent literature has continued to expand the concept of bioregions.³⁶ Bioregionalism advocates a "return to the place 'there is,' the landscape itself, the place we inhabit and the communal region we depend on" (McGinnis 1999, 3).³⁷ The efforts of social movements enacting bioregionalism have continued to popularize this philosophy.

Anarchy

Bioregionalism first appeared in the actions of radical environmental groups to preserve watersheds. In their efforts to preserve various natural areas, large regional

³⁴ Bioregionalism was first coined by Allan Van Newkirk who was active in radical politics of the Eastern U.S; however he failed to expand upon the notion (Aberley 1999, 22).

³⁵ Mumford called for a "transformation of technology and science to fit regional culture and geography" (McGinnis 1999, 3).

³⁶ "City-regionalism" and "Ecoregionalism" have not quite caught on.

³⁷ Recent scholarship, like that of Terrance Young, a geographer known for his sustainability and bioregionalist work, drew from previous scholars in an effort to find a foundation for this new concept. In his essay "Belonging Not Containing: The Vision of Bioregionalism," Young cited such scholars as Howard T. Odum, Frederick Jackson Turner, Patrick Geddes, and Paul Vidal de la Blache as having a lasting impact on the philosophy.

movements were established, such as those in the Pacific Northwest involving the preservation of wild salmon. Eco-anarchists, such as Earth First and Peter Berg's Plant Drum Foundation, raged against mechanical and industrialized culture in their efforts to promote the well-being of the environment. Gary Snyder's ecologically centered poetry, especially his poems found in *Turtle Island* (1974), became popular literature for these groups. Using this material, eco-anarchists and environmentalists reinforced the notions of being place-based, advocating for the holistic concept of nature. These groups enacted this holism by promoting various forms of resistance that defied mainstream activities geared at sectioning off natural areas. Protests and civil disobedience such as monkey wrenching,³⁸ fought the dominant culture while establishing unity of their alternative sub-culture.

The anarchy and resistance of bioregionalism is reminiscent of the early views of the CW Movement. For example, many Catholic Workers were, and still are, committed to the Plowshares Movement (against nuclear arms) and the anti-death penalty movement. Both environmental and social activists look for an alternative to mainstream ideals. This continues in the CW Movement today, as displayed through my three case studies and their individual resistance efforts.

The overall trend of bioregionalism has expanded from radical environmental groups' deep ties to ecology in the 1970s and 1980s and into community groups of the

³⁸ Monkey wrenching was made popular by Edward Abbey's *The Monkey Wrench Gang* (1975). It is a form of eco-tage or sabotage in defense of nature. Protestors would throw monkey wrenches into logging machines and other such equipment in an effort to slow and stop the deforestation of trees. Tree spiking is another form of monkey wrenching. It occurs when spikes are driven into trees, as they would destroy sawmill equipment.

1990s.³⁹ This trend has finally reached into the world of globalization through the social and environmental justice advocacy of today.

Catholic Workers and Bioregionalism

Catholic Workers have exemplified bioregionalism since their beginnings. Maurin's biblical ideas of simplicity and community align with the bioregional ideas of McGinnis. Just as "bioregionalists believe that as members of distinct communities, human beings cannot avoid interacting with and being affected by their specific location, place, and bioregion" (McGinnis 1999, 2), Maurin showed the importance of being rooted in the immediate surroundings and conditions. McGinnis argues that bioregionalism is just as much cultural as it is environmental. Bioregionalism, he argues, is a grass-roots movement based within social and community activism, and existing "wholly outside mainstream government, industry, and academic institutions" (McGinnis 1999, 4). Like the CW, bioregionalism does not stop merely at the local. By recognizing the global situation, contemporary bioregionalism uses the idea of catering to the local in conjunction with living in a globalized world.⁴⁰

The result is "glocalization," a term used by Thomas Tweed which combines globalization and localization. Bioregionalism parallels the Catholic Worker Movement in that the impact for both is localized and global. Both spiritual and religious activities

³⁹ As expressed through Richard Evanoff's *Bioregionalism and Global Ethics*, Tom Lynch's edited work entitled *the bioregional imagination*, among other publications like Jonathon Olsen's article "The Perils of Rootedness: On Bioregionalism and Right Wing Ecology in Germany."

⁴⁰ It is important to note popular bioregionalist authors known to many Catholic Workers. These include Wes Jackson, Wendell Berry, and Ched Meyers. Wes Jackson and Wendell Berry share a particular affinity to the land reminiscent of Peter Maurin.

have led to the growth and expansion of bioregionalism.⁴¹ I draw upon this term to show how the Catholic Worker Movement, based in a religious and social activist framework reconciles work with a sense of place in order to sustain its efforts.⁴² Bioregionalism provides a useful context for us to understand the Catholic Worker Movement especially with its community-based ecosystems and functioning power found outside mainstream American society. Before looking in depth at my case studies, I will provide an overview of how bioregionalism manifests in various Catholic Worker Houses and communities.

Bioregionalism and the Creation of Sustainability within the CW Movement

While the founders, foundations, and history contribute to the Movement's longevity, it is ultimately the regard for specifics through the practice of bioregionalism that sustains the CW Movement today. Each House or community fills its bioregionalist niche.

According to Dan McKanan, the CW Movement is "an organism rather than an organization." It "has never really tried to endure" (McKanan 2008, 28; 22). This organic nature created its sustainability. Rather than instituting the same model in every location, each House and community fills its own niche for the region within which it

⁴¹ For example, Freeman House's *Totem Salmon: Life Lessons from Another Species* discussed the efforts of a group of people in Northern California who work to protect the Mattole king Salmon. They take their place into account, as they advocate for the protection of their watershed. Their local watershed is the foundation of salmon's existence.

⁴² While this appears positive, it is important to also acknowledge the negative effects of bioregionalism. According to some scholars, bioregionalism's place-based attitude can be taken too far. In "The Perils of Rootedness: On Bioregionalism and Right Wing Ecology in Germany," Jonathan Olsen looked at the way in which far right groups have used the bioregionalism philosophy in order to oppose immigration⁴² (Olsen 2004, 76). Could bioregionalism deny specific groups? "Rootedness' excludes as much as it includes" which, according to Olsen, could lead to "violent separatism" (Olsen 2004, 82). Similarly, Catholic Workers could follow Olsen's model. They could exclude rather than include. This is not the case as they draw from the glocal, promoting the care for all people through personalism on both a large and small scale. It is interesting to note, because the literature mentioned above, in addition to this study of Catholic Workers, have taken the exact opposite approach.

operates. While visiting other Houses, Day counseled those new to the Movement, instructing them to “craft their own communities in response to local needs” (McKanan 2008, 23).

McKanan specifically notes four pieces of advice that Day offered to new Catholic Worker communities. First, start at your current place, meaning, “identify the gifts and needs present in your neighborhood and practice the works of mercy there” (McKanan 2008, 35). The other three follow a similar attitude of simplicity, including the ideas of staying small, honoring your vocation, and accepting mishaps and failure. Staying small counters the common trends of globalization and industrialization. Catholic Worker Houses have a small yet manageable network of relations, focusing on a more artisan and do-it-yourself approach to life. Tied to the idea of staying small, honoring your vocation invites the individual to pursue their calling in life and do it in a way that produces beauty. While Maurin advocated both manual labor and self-reflection, he recognized the importance of living in a mindful manner, not in an assembly line like setting. Honoring one’s gifts allowed for the community to rely upon the skills of many to promote the daily work. Similarly, the founders accepted learning from mishaps and failures as part of life. Even today, these communities consider themselves experiments. Soon after purchasing the first Catholic Worker Farm, Day and Maurin discovered the sole water source belonged to a neighbor, creating difficulty for sustaining their own crops. They later overcame this challenge by purchasing the surrounding land, which contained a reliable stream (Day 1963, 46). For Day, these challenges were to be embraced and she accepted them as just another part of the experience to live out her beliefs.

These four ideals suggest a bioregionalist view that has helped these communities persist since the death of Day and Maurin. Like bioregionalists, CW communities realize the importance of the goods, services, ideas, and people associated with a particular place. While there are no living central figures offering these axioms to new CW communities, the legacy of Day and Maurin allows for these guidelines to flourish in the communities of today. I now provide examples of how bioregionalism is reenacted in present communities.

Houses Today

Each Catholic Worker community is individually run, unique to the area, and centered on the local. As the website of the recently established San Diego Catholic Worker House states, “There is no set plan for the house; it will grow in response to the needs of the people in the area and the prompting of the Holy Spirit” (San Diego Catholic Worker 2013). These communities follow Day’s anarchistic spirit, some refusing to be incorporated into an official non-profit or NGO.⁴³ Not only does this refusal show their opposition to the larger governmental social structure, but it also allows for quick adaptation. Their plans can change according to emerging needs.⁴⁴

The CW Houses recognize the power of the individual as well as the local and the potential harm wrought by centralized structures. As Day put it, “We must never cease emphasizing the fact that the work must be kept small. It is better to have many

⁴³ Here I use non-profit in a governmental sense, as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Some Catholic Workers such as the community in Syracuse, NY, run by Catholic Charities, have adapted this identification, or that of a non-governmental organization (NGO). We see this again with the Houston Catholic Worker’s Casa Juan Diego.

⁴⁴ For example, the Gainesville Catholic Worker (GCW) can change its projects to better meet the needs of the homeless without going through the legalities of a non-profit. Specifically, the GCW are able to exceed the meal limit placed on the local non-profit soup kitchen, St Francis’s House, restricting the number of meals it can serve due to regulations.

small places than a few big ones” (Day and McKanan 2008, 43).⁴⁵ The Movement grew in precisely this fashion, focusing on many small communities, rather than getting lost in the politics of a large corporation. This structure allowed each House to focus their efforts on the issues in their particular area or bioregion.

The Mustard Seed

A prime example of this place-based attitude is The Mustard Seed, a Catholic Worker Farm, north of Ames, Iowa. While they believe in feeding the homeless, they recognize their homeless population is nowhere near that of a large city like Los Angeles. Where other CW Houses must rely on outside food sources, The Mustard Seed works to grow food for those in need, donating part of their harvest to local shelters and soup kitchens.⁴⁶ Instead of providing a soup kitchen, The Mustard Seed holds farmland. Recognizing the destruction wrought by modern farming techniques, they work to implement crop rotation, cover crops, green manure, permaculture, promotion of helpful insects, erosion control, and other organic farming methods (The Mustard Seed 2013).

Sheep Ranch

Another farming community is Sheep Ranch, located in the foothills of the Sierras, a three hour drive inland from San Francisco. Like The Mustard Seed, they focus on stewardship of the land. Since the community is located 45 minutes from the nearest town, its social action efforts are targeted. It’s seclusion has provided a basis for their various projects over the years, acting as a summer camp for disabled adults from

⁴⁵ Dorothy Day to “Fellow Workers in Christ,” Christmas Season 1938.

⁴⁶ The other part of their harvest goes towards their CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), in which people buy shares of food in an effort to support continual production on the farm.

1987 to 2006, and then functioning as a retreat center in 2001 (Catholic Worker Farm, Sheep Ranch 2013).

The Alderson Hospitality House

The Alderson Hospitality House (AHH), located in Alderson, West Virginia, uses its efforts to support the women of a local federal prison camp. Since they opened in 1977, The Alderson House has provided accommodations for over 50,000 guests who come to visit family and friends in the Federal Prison Camp (Alderson Hospitality House 2013). Additionally, they offer support for women who are looking to turn themselves in to authorities for a crime they committed. Their website offers information on this process of “self-surrendering.” It informs women of the logistics behind the process, such as what to expect, the time of day in which it occurs, and the formal steps to make the situation as peaceful as possible. They prepare women, by administering helpful tips concerning personal items, goodbyes to family members and contact information for the Bureau of Prisons.

Silver Springs Catholic Worker

Another hospitality-based house is the Silver Springs community in Maryland. According to their website, they offer, “hospitality on a small scale to seniors and those who come to Washington, D.C. for demonstrations, lobbying, internships, and studying” (Silver Springs Catholic Worker 2013). Based in the politically active realm of D.C, they also direct their energies toward maintaining a legal clinic, which contributes free legal assistance in cases such as “landlord-tenant disputes, small claims, immigration, mental health, mental retardation rights, social security and disability rights, and child custody” (Silver Springs Catholic Worker 2013).

Su Casa

Just as the AHH and Silver Springs focus their efforts on assisting visitors to prisons and politics, the proximity to Chicago's Hispanic community allows Su Casa Catholic Worker to cater directly to their guests by offering bilingual services. Since 1990, Su Casa has served their surrounding community giving "hospitality and a healing environment for displaced Hispanic people who are poor, homeless, and oppressed" (Su Casa Catholic Worker 2013). They do this service through education and social action to better their guests and the surrounding neighborhood. Their activities involve a soup kitchen, education for community members and a special area for children known as Su Casa Kids.

Reflection

Chapter 2 has explored the history of the CW Movement by looking at its founders, beginnings, foundations, and expansions. It then linked the issues of bioregionalism and sustainability to the CW Movement. I ended by showing how various CW Houses and communities enact bioregionalism today. Chapter 3 provides a more in depth look at three of these Houses and their attempts to serve in a place-based way.

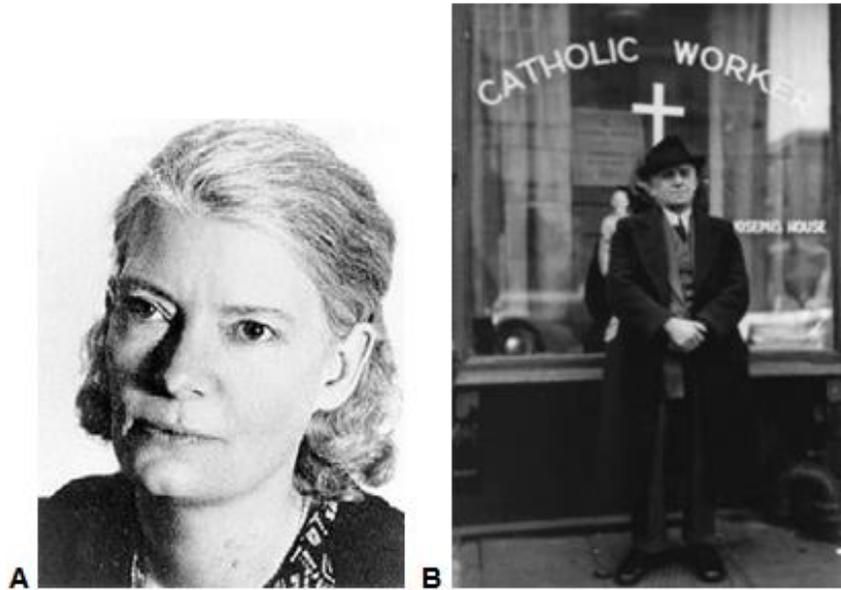


Figure 2-1. Founders of the Catholic Worker Movement, (A) Dorothy Day and (B) Peter Maruin. Courtesy of the Catholic Worker Website (www.catholicworker.org).



Figure 2-2. A picture expressing the Works of Mercy, labeled the “Works of Peace,” found at the GCW. Courtesy of author (2013).

CHAPTER 3 THREE HOUSES

My brief look at various CW Houses and their locations helps connect bioregionalism to the Catholic Worker Movement. I focus Chapter 3 on three specific case studies. They illustrate the values of Day and Maurin in different locations and through distinctive structures. I focus heavily on the Gainesville Catholic Worker (GCW), because I have done extensive research there. Since the GCW modeled its framework loosely after the Los Angeles Catholic Worker (LACW), I chose to also look at their projects and structure through the LACW websites and publications. I followed the same method to glean information for my study of the Houston Catholic Worker's Casa Juan Diego (CJD). CJD was selected because it embodies bioregionalism through its close proximity to the US-Mexican border and its focus on immigration. It also holds the official status of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, unlike the other two houses. All three Houses demonstrate *how* bioregionalism appears in the CW Movement.

The L.A. Catholic Worker

The Los Angeles Catholic Worker (LACW) was founded in 1970. It is positioned in East L.A., just north of Huntington Park. Los Angeles is one of the largest cities in the US, boasting more than 140 cultures and roughly 224 languages. According to its website, L.A. County is home to 9.9 million residents. Roughly 51,000 of these residents are homeless and 10,000 of them are located in the area of Skid Row, a run-down area hosting the poorest of the poor. This area holds the label as the "homeless capital of the nation" (L.A. Homeless Services Authority 2011).

The LACW features a soup kitchen on Skid Row. An additional house, four miles away on North Britannia Street, acts as their community home and volunteer

coordination center. In addition to running the soup kitchen, the LACW also manages a House of Hospitality for the homeless, provides hospice care for the sick and dying, produces a newspaper, and actively stands against war and injustice. Although these activities mirror the larger Catholic Worker Movement, the way this community enacts these projects in response to the needs of the community is specialized. Their themes echo the foundations by providing groundwork, but ultimately, like others, the LACW takes its specific location into account.

Out of all their projects, the one that is most clearly place-based is their Hospitality Kitchen otherwise known as “The Hippie Kitchen.” The kitchen is based on Skid Row and opens for serving three days a week, providing meals to those on the streets (LACW 2013). (Figure 3-1) By positioning themselves in the heart of homelessness, they can better take care of the needs of those they serve. Jeff Dietrich, a longtime LACW Community member and editor of the *LACW Agitator*, described their mission in a 2008 independent interview as meeting people where they are. As Dietrich noted,

They called us ‘The Hippie Kitchen’ because they didn’t know what we were. We were the only ones down there [on Skid Row] serving that wasn’t a mission...They kind of looked at us and we looked like long-haired hippies, and so they called us The Hippie Kitchen (Dietrich 2008).

The LACW began by renting a building that once housed a hotel and a restaurant on the first floor. During that time, the Franciscans paid the rent and supported the efforts. Ultimately, they were able to buy the building. Since then, they have made a few changes: creating a prep kitchen and serving outside. Their “dining garden,” holds more people and offers a more positive atmosphere decorated with various donated plants in addition to a few fountains and areas for birds (Morris 2010). Another long time

community member, Catherine Morris has referred to the area as a “quiet alternative to the row.” (Morris 2010).¹ Jeff Dietrich refers to their work as that of “homeless enablers.” They work to “make the problem of homelessness publicly visible, because the problem cannot be solved by hiding it” (Debode 2012). In this way, they offer a critique of the dominant culture, as they resist the city powers at play.²

Recognizing the issues that arise from living in a big city, the LACW engages in other efforts to support those on the streets. Since L.A. is a fairly spread out city, homeless people may be forced to travel long distances. Although the climate does not fluctuate too much, homeless people must bring their belongings everywhere they go, and be prepared for any form of weather. Most homeless people push shopping carts, full of belongings and stray cans. Others, who are disabled, use the carts as a form of transportation. When the city passed a law against removing shopping carts from their various store parking lots, the LACW decided to take matters into their own hands. Since 1997, the LACW purchased and distributed over 25,000 shopping carts. (Figure 3-2)

Not only does the LACW serve the surrounding Skid Row community, but they also engage in protest and resistance actions. Resistance appears in various forms of protest through public vigils, marches, prayers, and fasting. The LACW has protested such issues as “unfair treatment of the poor and homeless, the death penalty, US torture policy, US wars and occupations, and bloated military budgets that rob the poor and make the world an unsafe place to live” (LACW 2013). Both the local and the global

¹ Also see interview with Catherine Morris, (Morris 2010).

² This occurs at public protests in which action is presented through nonviolent resistance.

are engaged in these protests, as participants see the physical links that connect various issues of concern. At times, the LACW has engaged in acts of civil disobedience, leading to arrest, jail and prison time.

Like most Catholic Workers, the LACW promotes standing in solidarity with the oppressed in an effort to amplify the voice of the voiceless. Within the past year, they have teamed with Occupy LA, Occupy Skid Row, Occupy the Hood³ and LA Community Action Network (LACAN)⁴ for various protests. These groups empower those living in poverty. In May of 2012, the LACW protested the injustices and mistreatment of the poor and homeless by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD). The actions, held in front of the Central City Association (CCA), resulted in the arrest of several members from the LACW for blocking traffic and using chalk to deface the sidewalk (LACW 2012). These local issues can turn into larger disputes as expressed below. The LACW also offers a voice on national issues, such as the death penalty. Drawing from Jesus' teachings, such as the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10,⁵ the LACW push for a different kind of justice system in which "offenders are allowed to live and are called to conversion." They hope to promote rehabilitation and redemption rather than death and destruction (Debode 2012).

³ The Occupy groups, follow and support the larger Occupy Movement, that was made popular by Occupy Wall Street, a "people powered movement" aiming to fight against the richest 1% of the population including the "corrosive power of major banks and multinational corporations" (<http://occupywallst.org/about/>).

⁴ The Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN)'s mission "is to help people dealing with poverty create and discover opportunities, while serving as a vehicle to ensure we have voice, power and opinion in the decisions that are directly affecting us" (<http://cangress.org/about-us/>).

⁵ Though labeled a "sinner," upon meeting Jesus, Zacchaeus, a wealthy tax collector, offered to pay back four times the amount he had cheated. The LACW use the story to show redemption.

These calls to action connect their locale to their wider community. Just as early environmentalists used bioregionalism to advocate for the well being of their watersheds, and in turn the surrounding environment, Catholic Workers advocate for their communities in addition to the larger social structure. They recognize their actions have larger repercussions that reverberate into their community and beyond.

The LACW acts locally in an effort to promote broader positive effects. Their local actions create a larger rippling effect showing the wider impact of small communities. Drawing from Dorothy Day, they believe “We are made for community,” further stating it is “precisely the power of community that will heal the wounds of our era” (LACW 2013). Positioning themselves with a focus on community caters to their surroundings, further echoing the key concepts of bioregionalism. This is also seen in the next case study, the Gainesville Catholic Worker (GCW).

Gainesville Catholic Worker

The Gainesville Catholic Worker (GCW) is located in Gainesville, Florida, about an hour and a half drive from both the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean. Gainesville, a small town with 125,000 residents, is best known as a college town, home to the University of Florida, which hosts 50,000 students (US Census 2010, UF 2011). The GCW refers to the LACW as their sister house, modeling much of their structure after that of the longer existing L.A. home. Like the LACW, they are unincorporated, partly to stay within the CW tradition, but mainly because the GCW feels like it can better serve the changing needs of the community by existing as an independent home.

The live-in community currently consists of Johnny Zokovitch, Kelli Brew, and their two children, Johnny and Grace, living upstairs. Downstairs lives a young married couple Gloria and Clayton Grady-Schmidt, Mohamad Ramadan, an older moderate

Muslim who was formerly homeless, and myself. The community has held as many as fourteen live-in residents and as few as five. Community members have included formerly homeless, those suffering from addiction and still others in the confines of mental illness.

Johnny who has been directing the afternoon serving at the House for nine years labels their position in the neighborhood as an accessible location for the east and west sides of Gainesville to meet. East Gainesville, formerly the “black side of town” pre-civil rights era, has been considered the “poor” side of town, hosting low-income housing projects.⁶ The West side holds the University of Florida, Shands Hospital, suburban neighborhoods and prospering schools.⁷

According to Kelli, the House acts as a “third space for folks who normally don’t sit down together.” This third space gives University students and residents from West Gainesville insight into a different world. Many students only come downtown for the entertainment of the theatre, restaurants or nightclubs, passing by the House unaware of its foundation in the community. Similarly, the GCW provides a comfortable space for homeless people to interact with a range of people from the community. The House has hosted people living on the streets, students, and city commissioners all in one dining room. Kelli noted how it “helps people meet each other as human beings instead of different classes of people.” These meetings bridge the differences, causing people to step out from their world and gain insight into the life of someone else.

⁶ According to various GCW House visitors and local neighbors.

⁷ West Gainesville holds Haile Plantation, an upscale, suburban neighborhood that was home to UF’s famous head football coach, Urban Myer.

Since purchasing the House, the neighborhood, like most downtown areas is becoming increasingly gentrified.⁸ The area had been home to numerous African American families, yet, over the last eight years, an increasing amount of college students have moved in. Many CW Houses are situated in neighborhoods in the process of gentrification, and the increased taxes can be a problem. This has been the case with the Dorothy Day House in Washington, DC, increasing their taxes.⁹ Although this is not a worry of the GCW, the eclectic mix of neighbors opens the House up to a variety of people.

The GCW began in a small house labeled the Jeremiah House,¹⁰ in the Pleasant Street neighborhood, a couple blocks north of their current location and close to downtown. In October of 2000, the early GCW served the community with three primary activities: offering breakfasts at labor pools, preparing and serving a weekly meal at a local homeless shelter and offering hospitality in their modest home. In 2004, they expanded to their current location, a larger house with seven bedrooms, two and a half bathrooms, a large kitchen and an open communal dining and living room. (Figure 3-3) The house, which dates back to the early 1900s, was formerly used as the old Birthing House of Gainesville, an alternative to hospital deliveries, complete with midwives and doulas. This larger house allowed the GCW to join other CW Houses as they began

⁸ Many people are fixing up older houses and advertising them for rent at higher prices than normal for this area, usually for college students.

⁹ Even with neighborhood gentrification, needs still exist. Houses may also expand their impact into surrounding areas, displaying the fluidity of bioregions.

¹⁰ The name comes from the pit that Jeremiah was left in. The house had various problems, and the shower consisted of a garden hose strung through a hole in the wall. The GCW actually predates the Jeremiah House, as it began as a group of people preparing meals from Kelli Brew's kitchen and taking them over to St. Francis's House, a local homeless shelter, to share with guests.

hosting an “intentional, live-in community” (GCW 2013). An intentional community is defined by the Fellowship for Intentional Communities, as:

An inclusive term for ecovillages, cohousing communities, residential land trusts, communes, student co-ops, urban housing cooperative, intentional living, alternative communities, cooperative living, and other projects where people strive together with a common vision (Fellowship for Intentional Communities 2013).

The GCW was able to create an intentional community along with on-going hospitality for a handful of homeless men and women. Over the years they have established various House projects to serve their community, one of which hosts several young people for a chance to live and think differently about their place in the world.

In the following paragraphs I will discuss the activities of the GCW House. First I will explore their Metanoia semester then I explain the main projects including Dorothy’s Café, Breakfasts, distribution of socks and blankets, Art for All, and Green House Knitters. I end by discussing resistance, lifestyle and local food.

Young adults usually commit a semester to living at the House.¹¹ This time is known as the Metanoia semester, coming from the Greek word, roughly meaning “transformation.” Johnny told me “it literally means to turn around, to change direction.” Johnny and Kelli created this internship to allow participants to reevaluate the direction of their lives and the world in which they live. This period is viewed as a time of discernment and questioning in their journeys of life. Often this time provides insight into a different, more communal way of living. It exposes participants to a chance to live out their faith. This type of living places values on developing unlikely relationships and doing simple, often underappreciated work. Part of the work consists of House chores,

¹¹ In some cases, this time continues for a year or longer, as in my case.

such as laundry, dishwashing, and sweeping. More importantly, this time involves developing uncommon friendships with many of Gainesville's homeless. The Metanoia semester allows communion with others, regardless of class or background. This time is about listening and being present with those who need to see a friendly face or hear encouraging words. By doing odd jobs and getting to know the "regulars" who stop by, the GCW can better welcome guests. The comfort they provide creates an atmosphere in which stories can be shared and community made.

In addition to aiding with the House projects and partaking in communal dinners, the semester consists of various book readings and discussions, scripture study, and weekly centering prayer. Additionally, the live-in community holds House meetings, in which the coming weeks are discussed and planned. House members sign up for various duties and responsibilities, such as tending the chickens, shopping at the farmers' markets, cooking dinner, working at the Micro Farm, and being present for such activities as Art for All and Monday Night Knitting (explained below).

For the most part, each person has a "house day" which consists of being present at the GCW House. Every day, Monday through Saturday, someone is guaranteed to be at the GCW from one to five in the afternoon. Since the House is not large enough to offer full time over-night hospitality in addition to the intentional house members, it tries to accommodate the daily needs of those who pass by. During these daytime hours, people can stop to make a phone call, grab a blanket or use the restroom. Additionally, donations can be dropped off, most of which come from local community gardens.¹²

¹² House Days have changed semester-to-semester depending on the schedules of those living full time at the House. At one point, a House Day consisted of a 24-hour shift.

Like the LACW, the GCW offers food to its surrounding community, but in a different way. The homeless count in Gainesville is considerably lower than that of Los Angeles, numbering around 1,500.¹³ Recognizing the homeless in Gainesville are “not calorie deficient, but rather nutrient deprived,” the GCW focuses its efforts on a weekly home-cooked vegetarian meal, incorporating fresh food that is both local and organic in a café setting (Kelli Brew and the GCW website). Rather than resorting to a separate location, the GCW serves these meals from its home in downtown Gainesville. The GCW offers a space in which people can be served with dignity and respect. Every Wednesday from noon to three, they set up Dorothy’s Café, a free lunch served in the dining and living rooms of their home. The tables are set with linens, silverware, glasses, plates, and freshly picked flowers from the garden in front, reminding more than a few of their grandmother’s house.

The Café provides an average of fifty to eighty lunch meals each week, which requires a large, oversized kitchen. The kitchen offers two stoves/ovens and a wide industrial sink. This is different from “The Hippie Kitchen,” which serves one to two thousand meals each serving day, and therefore requires a larger kitchen and more volunteers. Kelli prepares the meals each week, with help from other members and various volunteers from the community. Most of the volunteers are college students, which is why the House schedule usually corresponds to that of the University. The GCW takes summers off as a time to rest, and in an effort to not be shorthanded.

Kelli Brew is the mastermind behind the meals, organizing and leading the preparation with a handful of volunteers. She views the Café as “a celebration of the

¹³ According to Alachua County Coalition for the Homeless and Hungry, 2011. For more information see: <http://www.acchh.org/infoabout.shtml>.

abundance of what grows in our region” (Brew 2013). Nearly all of the ingredients are locally grown, reminding many guests of their Southern family dinners. Such meals include, Collard Greens and Beans, Citrus Salad, Stuffed Squash, Baked Rutabaga and Turnip fries, Black-Eyed Peas over rice, Stuffed Sweet Potatoes, Veggie Quiche, among others. All meals are served with fresh homemade bread and honey butter.¹⁴

Only vegetarian meals are offered in an effort to respect animals and the system in which they were raised.¹⁵ There are many injustices against both animals and workers in the meat industry. By avoiding the purchases of meat, and buying only local dairy products, the GCW “votes with their dollar” and is able to avoid supporting the system they oppose (Pollen 2008). Avoiding meat also allows the GCW to keep their kitchen clean. Although not an official certified kitchen,¹⁶ they make a strong effort to adhere to industrial standards, showing that good food need not always be regulated.

Kelli says they try to “live authentically and with integrity.” As Johnny notes they carry out their Café each week, by “sharing a meal with friends.” Mohamad Ramadan who has been to all of the homeless services in Gainesville describes the GCW House as “the only place in town where people can come and they respect you.”

Position continues to play a big role in the GCW. Like the LACW, the GCW takes its location and situation into account when designing their projects. The population size

¹⁴ No bread machines are used. Rather Gloria, a current resident, or Kelli mix and kneed 8-12 loaves. Similarly local honey is added to organic butter to create honey butter. Sometimes extra grains are added to the bread creating Sunflower-Flax Bread with Cornmeal, Wild grain rice, or oatmeal honey loaves.

¹⁵ This acts as a protest against factory farm injustices. These injustices occur as conditions sometimes create unsafe environments for both animals and workers.

¹⁶ A certified kitchen is “an inspected, commercial kitchen facility,” such as that offered by the local not-for-profit kitchen incubator, Blue Oven Kitchens (For more information see <http://www.blueovenkitchens.org/about/>). By industry standards, they cannot qualify as an official kitchen, due to their location in a private home. Their little dog, Rudy, also creates a problem for industry standards, however he does his part in keeping the floors clean by eating any crumbs that drop.

and resources available are taken into consideration in an effort to cater to the needs of the area. Often during the harvest months, extra vegetables are available for guests to take home with them. The Café attracts homeless as well as low-income folks from around the neighborhood. Volunteers, usually students, young adults, and families, are always encouraged to sit and eat with guests, most of who are on government assistance or homeless. This is done in an attempt to bridge social barriers and norms with the “breaking of bread,” a biblical term for sharing a meal.

In addition to Dorothy’s Café, Johnny and Kelli became aware that many homeless people looking for work typically missed the breakfast served at the local shelter. The work these men and occasionally women engaged in was difficult and repetitive labor that was often construction related, e.g. moving slabs of concrete, sweeping, laying bricks, picking up trash. For the most part, this work required few skills and paid low wages.

For nearly 12 years, the GCW catered to Gainesville’s day laborers in an effort to recognize the workers and thank them for their work. The GCW would bring freshly made cinnamon-raisin bread, cage-free¹⁷ hard-boiled eggs, and local fruit (usually locally grown oranges or Muscadine grapes) to various labor pools around the area. Volunteers carried the food in baskets, and occasionally set up a table with a tablecloth, flowers, and a candle. The decorated tables brought a particular sense of beauty to the labor pool halls, which usually consisted of a sparse warehouse with cold concrete floors. The Breakfast Brigade, as the GCW labeled this project, helped to remind students and other volunteers that these men and women performed important labor.

¹⁷ The importance of locally raised chicken eggs, and cage-free chickens connects to the GCW’s respect for all life, including animals.

Bringing breakfast showed respect and dignity for both the jobs and, most of all, the people who performed them.

In January of 2013, the GCW responded to changing needs and halted the Breakfast Brigade. Since the downturn of the economy, fewer people have been finding work and most of the jobs going out of the labor pools went to men who had previous skills. Many of these people were coming from their home and had already received breakfast. The need was no longer there. Instead, the GCW discovered that most homeless people have a lapse of time between when they wake up and when the library or other various public services open. The GCW House refocused their resources and efforts toward a new kind of breakfast served from their home. Johnny notes,

I think that for people, particularly our friends living outside, that's a real awkward time. Not just difficult, because there's not a lot of places to go. The difficulties of sleeping in cold weather, rousted by the cops, taunted by college students- it gives them a friendly welcoming place to start the day, catch their breath, feel human again (Zokovitch 2013).¹⁸

Currently, every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 7 am to 9 am, the GCW opens its doors for a light breakfast. They create a warm atmosphere for people to come, sit for a while and have a cup of coffee and a piece of toast and an egg, or maybe a baked good such as a scone or muffin. Again, they cater to their specific place offering local jams and jellies such as Orange Marmalade or Blackberry Honey Jam.¹⁹ The eggs are cage free and come from local farmers and every now and then a Southern favorite (always vegetarian) comes to the table, such as Kelli's famous biscuits and gravy or Swiss Chard Frittata. Again, their position acts to their advantage

¹⁸ Various guests agree with Johnny. A homeless man with tan leathery skin commented on how nice it was to have breakfast at the House. He appreciated the positive tone it set for the rest of his day.

¹⁹ Both a local favorite.

as they are situated in relative proximity to public service offices, legal offices, the homeless shelter, and the library. Waiting in a cozy house is usually preferred to wandering around outside for these services to open.

Since January, numbers have increased to an average of 40-45 guests each morning. Like the Café, sometimes the numbers correspond to the time of month, as many people receive government assistance. While Johnny and Kelli speculate that the numbers correspond to payday and days of harsh weather, they have noticed that overall, there is no particular pattern. People come when they come.

At the GCW homeless and low income guests appear on a daily basis and give back in different ways. One man, who usually bikes everywhere, brought the GCW a rather large chocolate bar (taking out 20% for himself).²⁰ Others offer small acts of kindness, gracing the House with artwork, cleaning up trash in the yard or helping with garden work. Still some offer skilled services of plumbing or painting. “Overall, people are really nice to us,” Kelli notes. There is a sense of everyone sharing whatever acts of service they can.

Those in the surrounding Gainesville community who may not be able to give time or service, may donate money and gifts, such as socks and blankets, to the House. When a cold snap is forecasted, donations of blankets come pouring in. People can stop by anytime during the week to pick up additional layers. Many of these items are distributed from the GCW during breakfasts and the Cafe. Again, this form of distribution caters to their specific location. Since most people do not expect cold weather in Florida when temperatures drop, the homeless are caught unprepared. The GCW works to

²⁰ Another time, he donated a bag of beans and a single potato. A large amount, if you do not have much.

collect and distribute blankets during the winter months. They offer to wash and replace any dirty blankets in an effort to save them from the trash. Additionally, the humidity in Northern Florida can be extremely high, preventing the drying of clothes soaked in a rainstorm or from the morning dew. For this reason, the House also works to collect socks. Distributing clean socks prevents complications that arise from wet feet, along with issues of other illnesses. Over the years, additional projects, like the collection of blankets and socks, have emerged, adapting and changing in response to community needs.

Art for All, weekly gatherings in which art is created from recycled materials, was started by a former community House member in an effort to utilize her skills. Participants turn calendars into gift bags, magazines into greeting cards and scraps of fabric into prayer flags. The gatherings began as a way for homeless people to earn a small amount of income by selling their recycled art through the House. After various meetings including homeless, formerly homeless, and community participants, Art for All soon transformed itself in an art therapy group, as they focused more on the emotional connections behind their creations rather than making enough to earn an income.

Another project is the Monday Night Green House Knitters group. Every Monday evening, throughout the year, the House opens its doors for a women's only knitting group. The group was originally established to provide homeless women a place of their own. Most homeless women travel with a male counterpart for protection, and usually do not find time for themselves. The original need for the space did not match participants, but still the group continued. They teamed with Art for All and supplied

various items for the art sales. Their crocheted rugs made from old t-shirts became a signature item.

Resistance

The GCW also addresses the needs of the community by engaging in various protests including such local actions as joining pray-ins²¹ and holding signs in support of workers' rights.²² Members have also attended events like the School of the Americas²³ protest in Ft. Benning, Georgia, pushing for the closing of a US based militant training area. Still the GCW's main resistance is found in their House projects.

Perhaps the most well publicized project is the Peace Crane Project. Made from used and outdated magazines and hung on beaded strands, these small origami birds beautify the House and the community while representing the greater cause of world peace. In August of 2011, for the 66th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the GCW engaged in an act of guerrilla art as 40 community members met and folded one thousand paper cranes to hang throughout various locations in Gainesville. Over the course of four days, they decorated downtown Gainesville with

²¹ Pray-ins are public prayer vigils. The GCW joined one held by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) at a local Publix in promotion of fair wages.

²² They have done this in support of such localized groups as The Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW). The CIW describe themselves as a "community-based organization of mainly Latino, Mayan Indian and Haitian immigrants working in low wage jobs through the state of Florida" (<http://www.ciw-online.org/about.html>). They push for fair wages, better working conditions, respect and dignity.

²³The School of the Americas (SOA) is a military training facility that is linked to many conflicts in South and Central America. Protesters see the base as a militant training area for foreign governments as well as US military personnel to learn tactics in the act of suppression. For more information see: <http://www.soaw.org/>.

these birds, each attached with a message that read, “This is our cry. This is our prayer. Peace in the world” (GCW 2011).²⁴ (Figure 3-4)

This action is strikingly similar to Catholic Worker Kathleen Rumpf’s Plowshares action. After being deeply influenced by various Vietnam protests, Rumpf and a group of people trespassed on government property in an effort to enact “symbolic destruction” upon military planes (Riegle Troester 1993, 223). Rumpf hung paper cranes on various fighter jets and painted “This is our cry, this is our prayer of peace in the world” on a couple planes. They hammered on weapons, symbolically displaying their opposition to the war.²⁵

Lifestyle

Resistance enacts itself through lifestyle choices. While many Catholic Worker Houses and individuals commit to a life of poverty, sustaining on donated items or dumpster diving,²⁶ the GCW does not resort to these measures (Holben 1997). Instead, the GCW makes an active effort to live simply, realizing their actions impact others.²⁷ In their dining room, green letters grace the wall, stating, “Do the best that you can in the place where you are and be kind.” They understand nonviolent resistance takes many forms and try to cultivate a local peace through their daily actions.

²⁴ Another well-known art project is their crocheted rugs. It uses old t-shirts, savaged from ending up in the trash.

²⁵ Both were inspired by Sadako Sasaki’s message of peace through the folding of 1,000 paper cranes. Sasaki was a survivor of the bombing of Hiroshima. She passed away from leukemia, 9 years after the bombing at age 12. For more information on the GCW Crane project and some of Sasaki’s story see: <http://www.wcjb.com/local-news/2011/08/paper-cranes-promoting-peace>.

²⁶ Dumpster diving is the act of salvaging food from the dumpsters of restaurants and grocery stores. This promotes solidarity with the poor, while presenting a simple, non-consumerist lifestyle.

²⁷ They act as a reminder of Gandhi’s “live simply so that others may simple live.”

The GCW makes a conscious effort to remove itself from the mainstream, industrialized food system and the associated social and environmental devastation. They promote alternative activities such as keeping chickens, composting and gardening in the medians of the adjacent parking lot. They derive a significant portion of the food they serve from a local large family garden, commonly referred to as The Micro Farm. The GCW has established a relationship with the family that runs this agricultural endeavor, which is located a mile away from the House.

Local Food

The Micro Farm is run by a young family who volunteers at the House as a group. Reflecting Catholic Worker tradition, they are “off the grid.” Their farm consists of a half acre of land surrounding their suburban home, encompassing their entire yard. They are not zoned as an agricultural area, so the term “micro farm” is not official, but rather something the GCW community has labeled them. Although volunteers from the GCW House come once a week, the work is on going and all done “in the spirit of the Catholic Worker” (says the main farmer). Community workdays occur on the third Saturday of each month. The GCW House supplies volunteers and the farm delivers a generous portion of vegetables each week.

In addition to The Micro Farm, the GCW receives local produce from farmers with whom they have developed relationships over the years. The Hendersons provide discounted oranges in the winter and the Grahams offer vegetables and canned goods such as hot pepper relish and various jams and jellies. For goods they are unable to buy from farmers markets, they resort to the locally owned grocery or the Citizens Co-op.²⁸

²⁸ A local cooperative grocery store that sells local and organic items and produce. For more information see: <http://www.citizensco-op.com/>.

Again, they commit to protecting the larger landscape by purchasing organic food (most of this consists of grains, like rice, quinoa, pasta, etc. and baking ingredients such as flour, sugar etc.). For household supplies they purchase items with the lowest environmental impact possible, refilling soap bottles, purchasing environmentally friendly cleaning agents and looking for materials made from previously recycled materials, such as toilet paper and trash bags.

Taken together, the resistance of the GCW, both through protest and lifestyle choices, displays their dissatisfaction with the dominant culture. Through these forms of opposition, they follow Maurin's suggestion to "create a new society in the shell of the old" (Maurin 1961).²⁹ This opposition aids their personal quest for living an authentic and integrity filled life. Just like the LACW and the GCW, these reflections continue in the last case study, Casa Juan Diego (CJD).

Houston Catholic Worker

My third case study Houston's Catholic Worker's Casa Juan Diego (CJD) situated in Houston, Texas, "America's fourth largest city."³⁰ Houston is about a five and a half hour drive from the US-Mexican border. CJD focuses primarily on serving undocumented immigrants and refugees (Kirkwood 2011). Founded by Mark and Louise Zwick in 1980, CJD began by offering hospitality to the refugees who came in from the wars in Central America (Connolly 2012). Over the years they have expanded their community from one to ten homes, offering services such as a women's house of

²⁹ Also see Catholic Worker website's "Why Peter Maurin Matters." Originally presented by Paul Magno at the Dorothy Day Centenary Conference, Marquette University, October 10, 1997, found here: <http://www.catholicworker.org/roundtable/pmlegacytext.cfm?Number=67>.

³⁰ According to Houston's website (Houston 2013), the city hosts such well-known facilities as Texas Medical Center and Johnson Space Center, in addition to a rising music scene. Officially home to over two million people, 919,000 who classify themselves as Hispanic or Latino.

hospitality, a men's house of hospitality, a social service center and medical clinic and food and clothing centers. All of their services cater directly to immigrants, mainly those of Mexican and Central American descent and origin. (Figure 3-5)

Nonprofit

In 1982, CJD registered with the IRS and incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in an effort to better cater to their community.³¹ Although a government recognized charitable organization, CJD considers themselves to be a CW House.

Some Catholic Workers view becoming a nonprofit as an individual preference.³² They realize each house does what it can to respond to the circumstances of their particular bioregional. Sometimes that involves the form of incorporation. Other houses strongly oppose incorporating as they feel it lessens the passion of the work and creates a more institutionalized feel.³³ The LACW decided not to follow the nonprofit path, stating, "We do not accept nor solicit donations from corporations nor the institutional church. We do not write grants. We are not, and never have been, a 501(c)(3) non-profit" (LACW 2013). Rather, adhering to the anarchy of Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, the LACW is funded solely by individual donations, believing "Christians should not expect reward from the government for fulfilling our Christian obligation" (LACW 2013). Either way, the nonprofit dimension of CJD shows that Catholic Workers are a diverse crowd. Though CJD is an official 501(c)(3), I do not believe they intend to

³¹ Nonprofits also adhere to guidelines, regulations, and power structures beyond those of the house members and communities. These take the form of board members, bylaws, and governmental regulations, which are difficult to change in a moment's notice.

³² In some CW communities, becoming a nonprofit is looked down upon. Other CW Houses could care less about nonprofit incorporation.

³³ This is an interesting point as some Catholic Workers echo the thoughts of Peter Maurin, as he stated "The more it looks like a nonprofit agency, the less I think it's Catholic Worker" (featured in Rosalie Riegler Troester's *Voices from the Catholic Worker*, 462).

fall out of line with the CW Movement. For example, they still demonstrate anarchistic tendencies as their work cares for those unwelcomed by the US government. Like all CW Houses, their organizational structure differs according to their situation, locations, and the people involved. Further discussion of CJD can be found in Chapter 4.

Reflections

I have offered cases studies of the LACW, the GCW and CJD to show how each caters to the particular needs of their communities. (Table 3-1) Both the LACW and the GCW aid the homeless as individual collections of people, while CJD supports immigrants through a nonprofit model. Each provides an overview of what it means to serve the needs of their regions, with the local resources and community support. I now turn to Thomas Tweed's theory of religion to help explain how these case studies connect to bioregionalism



Figure 3-1. The L.A. Catholic Worker's Hippie Kitchen. Courtesy of Mike Wisniewski, LACW's LACW's website (<http://lacatholicworker.org>).



Figure 3-2. One of the LACW's shopping carts. Courtesy of Mike Wisniewski, LACW's website (<http://lacatholicworker.org>, 2012).



Figure 3-1. The Gainesville Catholic Worker’s current location. Courtesy of author (2012).



A



B



C

Figure 3-4. (A) Paper Cranes hanging in the Downtown Bo Diddley Plaza. (B) A Paper Crane made from recycled paper. (C) Cranes in front of a local business. Courtesy of Kelli Brew (2011). Found on the GCW's website (<http://gainesvillecw.org>).



Figure 3- 4. Our Lady of Guadalupe, the inspiration behind the name CJD. Featured on the CJD's website (<http://cjd.org/>, 2012).

Table 3-1. Comparison of three case studies.

CW House	LACW	GCW	CJD
Location	Los Angeles	Gainesville	Houston
Year Founded	1970	2000	1980
Status	Individual	Individual	Nonprofit
Serves	Homeless	Homeless	Immigrants
Population of Region	~9.9 million	~125,000	~2 million
Website	http://lacatholicworker.org/	http://gainesvillecw.org/	http://cjd.org/

CHAPTER 4 RELIGION AND GEOGRAPHY

Political boundaries both create and reinforce divisions.¹ In an effort to deconstruct these formalized boundaries and understand *how* a fairly recent term, like bioregionalism, is used to promote the sustainability of the Catholic Worker Movement, I draw from the dynamic and relational theory presented in Thomas Tweed's *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion* (2006). In his theory, dwelling and crossing help account for movement, relation, and position. I use these key aspects for understanding Catholic Workers Houses in relation to their community work. His notions of dwelling and crossing expressed through aquatic metaphors can assist understanding how the Catholic Worker Movement sustains itself through bioregionalism.

Position

Tweed on Position

In *Crossing and Dwell: A Theory of Religion*, Thomas Tweed employs geographic notions of movement and place in an effort to make sense of Catholic ritual enacted by Cubans in Miami, Florida. The result of his study is a kinetic understanding of religion that is both relational and dynamic.

Understanding position allows a smooth transition into the notions of dwelling in a particular place, movement through crossing, and the power of relationships. Just as I have made an effort to position myself in the introduction, I now focus on using Tweed's understanding of position to place my case studies. Tweed reminded us that religions have their place as they "imagine the wider terrestrial landscape and the ultimate

¹ As geographer Terrance Young noted, "Regions based on political boundaries, however are territories designed for ease of management rather than sustainability" (Young 2000, 48). For more information see: Yong's essay on bioregionalism for *Landscape Journal*, entitled "Belonging Not Containing: The Vision of Bioregionalism" (2000).

horizon of human existence –the universe and the beings that inhabit it” (Tweed 2006, 98). Tweed’s theory aids the connection between the Catholic Worker Movement and bioregionalism, as both bioregionalism and Catholic Workers account for the local in addition to the global. Their position is not static, but instead takes movement, both regional and global, into account. Together these organic-cultural flows move through time and space as “glocalities” become a front and center issue (Tweed 2006, 62). This is reminiscent of the commonly used phrase “think globally, act locally.”

Tweed borrowed the term “glocalities,” from Roland Robertson who discussed it in his article “Glocalization: Time-Space and Homogeneity-Heterogeneity,” featured in the 1995 book *Global Modernities*. Once known as a Japanese business term or “global localization,” Robertson expanded this definition to encompass a variety of issues that deal with both the global and the local (Robertson 1995, 28). Denouncing the “tendency to cast the idea of globalization as inevitably in tension with the idea of localization,” Robertson combined the two, considering both space and time (Robertson 1995, 40). Catholic Workers engage in glocalization as they transmit concepts from previously visited Houses to that of a new community. By accounting for their strengths and the needs of the local community, Catholic Worker Houses are able to assist their homelands in addition to the wider or global landscape. As expressed through the concept of bioregionalism, many Catholic Workers engage the notion of the “glocal” as their projects care for both the regional as well as the larger surrounding area. Their glocality is exemplified through various social actions in the form of resistance, such as direction action and lifestyle choices, to be described below.

This resonates with Tweed, as he provides a fluid understanding of movement

among vast regions of both time and space. For Tweed, religion perpetuates crossing and dwelling with the establishment of steady, flowing streams. Crossing refers to the moving across boundaries, home, homeland and cosmos. Dwelling is a place of being that is mapped, built, and inhabited. It is with these two concepts that we receive an understanding of how religion deals with space and time through a series of relationships. Catholic Workers are constantly negotiating and renegotiating spaces through crossing, dwelling and movement flows. In this sense, they can cater to both the local and the global as they draw from the encouragement of other Catholic Workers, foundational values, and their surroundings. This is enacted through their actions, as seen prominently with resistance.

Resistance

Resistance includes both direct action protests and nonviolent, intentional choices.² The latter includes activities such as the work of CW intentional communities. They purposefully choose to spend their time, energy and resources constructively feeding the hungry, giving clothing to the naked and sheltering the homeless rather than participating in destructive activities. Riegler noted, “Workers point out that they are both protesting and resisting by living counter culturally in community and providing hospitality” (Riegler Troester 1993, 184). By partaking in counter-cultural efforts, resources are spent in a different way, promoting alternative forces and power. Those

² Rosalie Riegler Troester found, “Resistance or civil disobedience can range from ‘crossing the line,’ a simple trespass action, to the nonviolent property destruction known as the Plowshares Disarmament Actions, with imagery taken from the biblical prophecy” (Riegler Troester 1993, 184). The Plowshares movement is firmly against nuclear weapons and power. It draws its name from Isaiah 2:3-4, as swords were beaten into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. Similarly, resisting the dominant culture has also proven to be a form of action. For example, refusing to pay income taxes has become a form of resistance as Houses choose “living below the tax level” an effort to resist providing funding to such activities as war, the production of nuclear weapons, and other such endeavors (Riegler Troester 1993, 185).

who live in this way fight the current system by questioning mainstream society and the authority powers that support it. This form of resistance is expressed through each of the three houses I spotlight.

The LACW's examples of resistance bridge the gap between the local and the global. Glocalization enacts itself in their service of meals on Skid Row and through their engagement in public protest. Drawing attention to examples of homeless discriminations or the destruction of the death penalty offers criticism of inequalities within mainstream society. Providing shopping carts to their friends on the streets or chalking sidewalks call into question the morality of dominant powers (laws and police authority).³

Likewise, the GCW bridges the gap of their immediate surroundings and that of the larger region or world. Their push for peace penetrates the larger context as, for example, they hung paper cranes of peace in remembrance of the 66th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. By publicly hanging these cranes, they looked to broaden the thoughts and hearts of their community. Not only are they pursuing peace by beautifying the town, they are expanding the call to peace by reminding their neighbors of injustice.

Again glocalization occurs in their attention to food. By promoting a local food system, they are actively choosing not to participate in larger industrial agriculture. Their choice is intentional as it promotes the local as well as the global. By supporting local farmers, they are supporting a transparent, just food chain. Similarly, in the purchase of organic and environmentally friendly goods, they are investing in a more sustainable

³ By recognizing a flawed system of authority, the LACW can make efforts to make a positive change in their neighborhood and the larger community.

future. This investment is enacted as they promote companies and organizations that choose an alternative, more positive way of production and manufacturing, defined by environmental and human rights standards. More so, by raising their own gardens, tending their own chickens, and doing without, they lessen their participation in the larger society's consumption.

CJD also practices resistance as their work speaks directly against the US government's policy of immigration. They do not ask to seek documentation from those they aid, but rather they call upon Jesus' notion of caring for the stranger.⁴ Their work impacts people across borders as the care for one may provide emotional and spiritual strength of families in Latin America. The glocal is expressed through the name of CJD as it is drawn from the religions of many of those familiar with the story of Juan Diego and the Virgin of Guadalupe (expressed below). In this respect, they are directly enacting Tweed's example of the glocal. Religious practitioners, especially those from other countries, help fuel the religious overtone of CDJ. Their participation brings their faith from their place of origin to their current location in Houston, TX. CJD's actions as well as those of the LACW and the GCW go beyond placement. These houses also represent motion as we view them in relation to Tweed's discussion of movement.

Movement and Relation among Regions

Tweed's notions of crossing and dwelling help us understand how Catholic Worker Houses sustain themselves. As mentioned above, both the GCW and the LACW position themselves, geographically, culturally, and socially, in a setting through their protests, projects, and simple lifestyle. These actions aid the constant movement

⁴ As exemplified through Luke 10:25-37, The Parable of the Good Samaritan.

of values between the local and the global. They both use resistance in an effort to bridge the gap between the local and the global. In this respect, they are able to cross boundaries, connecting the act of speaking out against community violence in L.A. with the opposition of war or hanging a paper crane in Gainesville with the symbolism of world peace.

An even greater example of the importance of movement and relation is presented through the Houston Catholic Worker and their particular focus on immigration. Again, echoing the importance of bioregionalism, the Houston Catholic Worker's Casa Juan Diego addresses the "glocal" like their counterparts. They bridge the local and the global through the movement of ideas such as anti-industrialization and nonviolence, but they, more than the others, deal with the movement, position and relation of the physical, through their front line work on immigration.

Movement and relation are also exemplified through CJD as they host and cater to those who move between two "established" boundaries. The services they provide include serving food, offering clothing, caring for the sick, holding English classes, putting on a weekly Spanish liturgy service, sheltering men new to the country, and housing pregnant and battered women whose spouses have been deported. Immigrants utilize the services as needed as CJD provides a foundation on which to rebuild life. Their website hosts a list of Houses of Hospitality abroad for immigrants who have been deported back to Mexico and Guatemala. Though only a list of names and addresses, this information can be vital to someone who was removed or deported from the US. Additionally, blogs and past publications offer literature that moves through time. While most CW Houses present thoughts on Day, Maurin, the Movement, Catholic social

teaching, liberation theology, and economics, CJD caters specifically to the issue of movement through its writings of immigration and globalization. Throughout the years CJD has seen an estimated 50,000 people. Mostly immigrants, pass through their doors in search of a better life, restored health and spiritual comfort (Serazio 2005).⁵

Similar to glocalization, movement, relation, and position are also represented through the very name of CJD. The story of Our Lady of Guadalupe tells of the appearance of the Virgin Mary manifested as an indigenous woman to a poor Native American named Juan Diego. Juan Diego was instructed by the saint to speak to the Bishop about the importance of the native people. Though reluctant at first, the Bishop finally listened to Juan Diego's plea when he saw the vision of Our Lady of Guadalupe imprinted on Juan Diego's cloak. CJD labels the story a reminder that the poor are "worthy of an apparition" (CJD 2013).

While movement and relation appear in CJD, it did not originate here. Dorothy Day was always traveling to other CW Houses, encouraging and at times reprimanding them for their work. Perhaps the best way to discuss movement is through Tweed's notion of crossing. Before entering this discussion, it helps to understand the point from which the crossing is initiated. I will now explain Tweed's notion of dwelling.

Dwelling

For Tweed religions establish ever-expanding homes or dwellings. He labeled the various degrees of homemaking starting with the body, expanding to the home, into the homeland and finally beyond to the cosmos. Each level appears pertinent to the Catholic Worker Movement.

⁵ They push for immigration reform and better policies that help those moving into the US.

While homemaking is an essential part of any CW House, it is a particularly important theme at the GCW. Recognizing that many of their guests do not have a place to live, the GCW strives to host a space that is not simply a house, but a home. They serve needs, while creating a beautiful space in which people can feel welcome, as if it is their home.⁶ Founders Johnny Zokovitch and Kelli Brew have lived at the GCW since its beginning. Homemaking is significant to them because it *is* their home. Not only do they feel the desire to create a loving space where their two children, who live at home with them, and their four grown children can feel safe coming to, they also are driven to provide a safe place for those outside their immediate family to come and rest.

Like Day, they are personalists, as they strive to see Christ in every person who walks through their doors. This idea brings the notion of family to the forefront, as Lawrence Holden noted, “Every human person is, in and of him or herself, the whole, total, and complete focus of the self-emptying love that burns at the heart of God” (Holden 1997, 6). As stated above, personalism asserts that there are connections between the redemption of individuals and that of the whole universe (Holden 1997, 31). Johnny notes the importance of going beyond the metaphorical labeling of others as their brothers and sisters in Christ, but actually believing that every person is their brother and sister in Christ.

If they are our brothers and sisters then why don't we treat them like it? If your brother came to the door hungry, disheveled, and frightened, you wouldn't hand them a day old PB & J sandwich and some pie filling. No, you would prepare them something nourishing to eat (Zokovitch 2009).

⁶ One homeless man felt so comfortable he took his shoes off, once inside, only to find them gone by the time he was ready to leave. Luckily, a community member offered him another pair.

In most cases, a home is established along with a notion of family. Even those Houses that are incorporated, such as CJD, still hold a family like atmosphere, caring for the needs of the community and individuals rather than using the jargon of catering to the public. Many of those who visit the Houses reside in surrounding regions. Many of those who visit the LACW stay in the streets of Skid Row in L.A., while Tent City⁷ and surrounding woods supply the location for the homeless of Gainesville. By providing a warm atmosphere, the Houses offer a home to those without.

One morning when discussing the GCW and its impact, a regular guest came into the kitchen and commented “It is my home, I’ve been staying in the back yard for years now and I really appreciate everything you all do.” On cold nights and when the weather is particularly rainy, the GCW opens its doors to a handful of their homeless friends. If room is limited inside, Johnny and Kelli open their backyard as a space for people to stay. This hospitality acts as a gift especially as many homeless are run off of private property and occasionally arrested for trying to sleep in public areas.

Although the home is a comfortable space, Tweed reminds us, it is “not always a permanent dwelling,” (Tweed 2006, 103). This impermanence is expressed through the notions of hospitality in the LACW, the GCW, and CJD. The life they create for guests is not meant to be permanent, but rather a step towards independence and the creation of a sustainable livelihood. Realizing the downward spiral of homelessness, they know that not everyone achieves this independence. In that case, the LACW, GCW, and CJD offer a place of resting, a break from the harsh world. Houses of Hospitality offer a chance for guests to recuperate, recover, and rejuvenate and are usually not a permanent

⁷ Tent City refers to an area in the woods where many homeless set up camp.

residence. Similarly, many Houses offer care for the sick and those recently released from the hospital.

The dwelling, though temporary, is home for young adults wishing to learn more about the Movement and its alternative and simple lifestyle. Commitments for the semesters as well as hospitality invitations vary from House to House and for the most part people come and go as they please. Tweed comments on this fluidity through the use of aquatic metaphors particularly seen in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's "hydraulic model" as "interpreters of religion 'follow a flow in a vectorial field'" (Tweed 2006, 59). This is further explained below as dwellings are crossed.

The fluid movement of Catholic Workers dates back to the first House in New York. People came and went as they saw necessary. Maurin saw the need for Houses of Hospitality to be similar to that of parish houses of early times, stating:

We need houses of hospitality as much as they needed them then, if not more so. We have parish houses for the priest, parish houses for educational purposes, parish houses for recreational purposes, but no parish houses of hospitality (Miller 1984, 259).

For Maruin, it was important for every home to have a Christ Room.⁸ He found no reason for people to turn others away to a governmental agency. In this respect, the CW Movement caters to the personal body. Its anarchistic nature allowed and continues to allow for a free environment in which very few externally structured rules and regulations exist. The community takes on the responsibility of caring for each other, rather than relying on government assistance. This notion expands the study into the homeland.

⁸ A Christ Room refers to an extra room for expected and unexpected visitors, or those in need.

Just as the body gave way to the home, the home offers itself to the notion of the homeland. This fluidity is precisely how bioregionalism affects the Catholic Worker Movement as each House creates a symbiotic relationship with its homeland. In the case of most Catholic Workers, their homelands are the communities in which they are situated. The GCW, LACW and CJD depend greatly on their surrounding community. As Lawrence Holben states in *All the Way to Heaven*, “We are meant for community, community understood as a place where love is found and given in all the interactions (including frictions) of daily living and shared fortune” (Holben 1997, 27). The community is both the served and the server. Not only are the needs of the surrounding community met but the resources used to meet these needs are gathered and utilized. In the case of the GCW, outside community members donate food, time, and money to ensure the longevity of the House’s presence in the Gainesville community. As Tweed noted, the homeland deals with “people within and beyond its borders” (Tweed 2006, 110).

CW Houses further deal with “vast regions beyond intimate space and collective space” known as the cosmos (Tweed 2006, 112). The very term “catholic” hints at notions beyond our world. Kelli, who has visited a wide array of CW Houses, views her work at the GCW and the broader work of the CW Movement as “living out the spirit of Dorothy Day” (Brew 2013). She sees the work displayed by Day and the work at the GCW to be very similar. Situations are different, but the basic motivations and intentions behind the work is the same. Again drawing upon the notion of bioregionalism and the importance of utilizing local resources and efforts to create positive repercussions within each community.

Kelli noted how Day struggled to find any food to provide men and women because it was the Depression and rations were so limited. “Today, we don’t have that problem.” Kelli’s community pushes for making good, healthy food available. Those donors who aid the House encourage the effort to buy local, organic and fair trade products. Not only do these activities tie various homelands together as these purchases work to promote positive environments for both people and nature, but they also symbolically display a universal love that transcends both time and space. The push to buy local, organic and fair trade is an effort to promote a system that not only benefits current people and places, but also supports a social atmosphere and environment that can flourish for generations to come.⁹

Fluidity

The LACW, GCW, and CJD all practice resistance. Forms of resistance also create a sense of fluidity as spaces are negotiated and systems are constantly created and recreated. Though individually structured, each House hosts a great deal of fluidity through the movement of their projects, guests, and/or services. The GCW expresses this aquatic metaphor through their experimental nature. Even after almost thirteen years, they continue to refer to their House as an experiment in the making. “There are not guidelines about how you do this...We’re always trying to fit it together, what works one year, might not work another year.” Kelli continued stating:

We’re trying, we’re experimenting. It speaks to the transient nature of this. Things don’t always go on forever. We know things are always changing....We can’t get attached. Life here is a practice in fluidity in just

⁹ The conditions of work and the land benefits workers, the environment and those immediately effected involved. Additionally it promotes a higher standard of living for future generations. By implementing workers’ rights now, the hope is that organizations and unions have a better time sustaining rights for the future. The same can be said of the environment. By creating sustainable food systems now, we can better ensure sustainable systems of agriculture and food for the future.

recognizing that things are changing. We're open to changes in our personal lives in relation to the House, but right now it feels like a really good place (Brew 2013).

The fluid notion has expressed itself in the experimental concept of dwelling in addition to the idea of crossing.

Fluidity corresponds with bioregionalism, as bioregions and watersheds themselves are constantly changing areas. For example, while climate stays steady during various spans of time, the ever-looming climate change presents the world in flux. Watersheds flood and land forms change. New regions with different needs and resources arise. I find this to be the case in Los Angeles, Houston, and Gainesville. Both the natural and cultural environments of these areas matter, as these aspects sustain life and livelihood. Changing climate may prohibit crossings, dwellings, movements, and relations from forming. By understanding this fluidity, we can better comprehend the role of dwelling in addition to the position of crossing.

Crossing

The biggest thing is that the Gainesville Catholic Worker is an extended community that goes well beyond the people who live here (in Gainesville) and well beyond those who live at the House...It's a lot of people just doing whatever small thing or whatever little thing they can do. Not a heroic amount, but doing what they are capable of doing. I see our Catholic Worker (House) as being a really large extended community that kind of goes beyond time and space (Zokovitch 2013).

Tweed made clear that dwellings do not come without movement. Each aspect of homemaking suggests some form of crossing. Crossing, like dwelling, comes in various forms. It further promotes the negotiation of space as movement causes areas to be interpreted and reinterpreted. Tweed discussed terrestrial, corporeal and cosmic crossing as it mirrors various spaces, each aiding a particular form of movement. It is

through this movement that aquatic metaphors are applied in an effort to show the open transition periods of the body, emotions, and spirit.

Tweed discussed terrestrial crossing in relation to physical motion. He spoke directly to the notion of pilgrimage and its movement from one's current location to a place of origin or sacred area. I mentioned Day's physical mobility during the early years of the CW Movement as she encouraged and supported other Houses through traveling. In addition to her travels, other people involved with the Movement set out on their own voyages to discover what other CW Houses looked like and how they functioned.

Today, this physical motion enacts itself as a form of pilgrimage as many Catholic Workers travel the country staying at Houses along the way. The GCW has had more than a handful of calls, which have resulted in various visitors from current and past CW Houses interested in visiting and seeing how the GCW specifically works and caters to their social environment. Similarly, the GCW engages in a form of pilgrimage as they encourage their Metanoia semester residents to choose another Catholic Worker community to visit. Their young adults have since traveled to the LACW, the Dorothy Day CW (Washington D.C.), the Karen House (St. Louis), and the Haley House (Boston), among others. For current resident, Gloria Grady-Schmidt the idea of visiting other Houses adds to the experience, as it displays "how different Houses apply some of the same principles of Dorothy Day and Peter Maruin."

Physical crossings may appear more clearly in the aid and connections supplied to guests. While this is evident in the care for immigrants at CJD, it is important to note that each House presents some kind of physical crossing for guests, residents, and

community members. As mentioned above, people are constantly moving in and out of the Houses. Very rarely is the home an ending location.

The beginning stages of the CW Movement display this movement as well, beginning with its first public appearance in newspaper format. Starting as a newspaper, the Catholic Worker acted as a way to distribute information by transcending physical and social space. During the Great Depression era, Day first began writing on such issues as unemployment, evictions, the economic system, and communism.¹⁰ Copies were sold for a penny each, and stayed at that price throughout the lifetime of Day. Today, most Houses continue in the spirit of the first Catholic Worker through their publications, which include House news, prominent issues of the day, social commentary, and reprinted essays from Day, Maurin, and other Catholic Workers. This notion of traversing time and space is discussed below as a cosmic crossing. The idea of reaching out to current supporters, friends, and family via news publications offers another example of terrestrial crossing.

Publications as Crossings

Each House, Los Angeles, Houston, and Gainesville, crosses the boundaries of space utilizing the same means of written words. As mentioned above, the Catholic Worker started as a newspaper. It was never meant to generate an income, but rather sustain itself and act as a way to speak to the public. When Day's friends urged her to turn it into a business she retorted "But this isn't a business, it's a movement" (Dorothy Day: Select Writings, 61, 1934). Since then, the Movement has continued as many Houses have followed suit, producing publications similar to those of Day and Maurin.

¹⁰ Holding communistic ideas, though heretical, in a positive light (Miller 1984, 262).

The physical movement generated by these publications crosses boundaries of space, and exemplifies Tweed's notion of terrestrial crossing.

In terms of CW Houses today, the LACW offers one of the larger newspapers. The LACW publishes a paper six times a year, called the *Catholic Agitator*. (Figure 4-1) Following in the steps of Day and Maurin, LACW offer cheap subscriptions for \$1 a year, but they are more than happy to accept subscription without any payment.¹¹ They refer to the paper as a way to “stay in contact with our extended community of supporters and spread our ideas on what it means to be a disciple of Jesus in our current world” (LACW 2013). Their language exemplifies Tweed's concept of terrestrial crossing, as the newspaper is meant to act as a bridge for extended community and those at the House. Similarly, CJD also offers a news publication that is bilingual, half in English and the other half in Spanish (covering the same stories). Simply named the *Houston Catholic Worker*, the publication is issued roughly five times a year in an effort to share stories of current Catholic Workers, volunteers, and those aided by the House. (Figure 4-2) Like the LACW, they also post pertinent issues and the progress of national campaigns in an effort to keep those interested in CJD and their work up-to-date. The November/December 2012 issue featured an article on the Dream Act, a nation wide push to allow young undocumented immigrants the opportunity to become legal, pursue an education, and attain better jobs. These articles cross terrestrial boundaries, extending the work, efforts, and support beyond those in the community.

¹¹ William D. Miller noted Day's outlook on money as she told a DePaul University professor “you can't get a second class mailing permit if you give away a copy; so you put the least possible price on it to indicate what you feel about money” (Miller 1984, 255).

The same situation occurs at the GCW. Of the three houses, the GCW, perhaps the smallest size-wise and situated in the smallest town, also offers the shortest newsletter publication, which they have named *ConSpire*. (Figure 4-3) *ConSpire*, meaning “to breathe with,” offers the House letter, a brief overview of who’s at the GCW and various events involving the House. House projects including Café, Art for All, Breakfasts, Knitting, and gardening days are included. Reflections are also offered from both from present House members as well as past writings from Day and Maurin. This is similar to other CW Houses and helps to keep the tradition alive. *ConSpire* is usually compiled by Johnny with occasional help from various house members. Like the LACW and CJD, the GCW’s publication offers a connection to their supporters, friends, and family both locally and far away.

Corporeal Crossing

While these activities speak directly to a physical crossing, the Movement can also be found in transition periods. The best example of these transitions can be seen in the GCW’s prayer services, occurring at the end and the beginning of a semester. In each case, the GCW hosts prayer services and potluck dinners to act as an official start and end to the Metanoia semester. Periods of reflection mark this time as House members, community members, and friends gather in a circle to reflect on the hopes and prayers of upcoming semester. Similarly, when the semester ends, the circle is again created as past events and experiences are shared. Throughout the process, the person is honored and thanked for their presence. In both cases, the person is blessed as everyone lays hands on them and a collective prayer is given. Viewing this experience within Tweed’s framework helps us to understand that religions both “interpret limits and promote crossings” (Tweed 2006, 138). These events signify the

transitions from one point of life into the next. As Tweed noted, transitions do not stop at the physical. They go beyond life into a cosmic journey.

Cosmic Crossing

Even those who commit to a lifetime of service to the CW Movement find their position on earth as merely a step in a cosmic voyage. GCW Founder Johnny Zokovitch views the House as the “culmination of where I’ve been headed since I was a child.” Various stages in his life have led him to this point. “I don’t know if it’s an ending point. I might be here forever, I might not be, I don’t know.” Kelli adds that they both feel open, stating, “We recognize that things in life are always changing. The ideal world would be one in which we wouldn’t need to have this place. I think like Johnny, this is definitely part of a continuum in my life” (Zokovitch 2013).

The journey transcends the here and now as the CW Movement promotes the effort to live out the spirit of Day and Maurin. Similarly and perhaps even more so, the Movement transcends time and space to live out the spirit of the Gospels, the spirit of justice, love, and compassion. Day noted how “Peter thought not only in terms of eternity, but of the present life where we are actors, where we are placed as though on a testing ground, to prove ourselves for eternal life” (Sicius 2004, XXV). The cosmic world of Day and Maruin are negotiated in the present as communities continue to look to them and other worldly beings in day-to-day life. As many have commented, the spirit of these beings lives in the present.

It is important to note that although the spirit of Gospels and Jesus’ teachings are carried out through the CW Movement, not everyone associated with the Movement is Catholic, Christian, or even religious, as noted above. Those who are very much irreligious still drawing on the notion that there are greater forces and powers within the

world. These greater forces can be anything from a higher power to the responsibility to treat everyone with dignity and respect.¹²

While religion need not factor into cosmic crossing, it plays a huge role in early CW thought in addition to the three Houses today. Both Day and Maurin were devout Catholics, drawing heavily from Jesus' teachings. Day stated "We should always be thinking of ourselves as pilgrims [anyway]" (Day 1946).¹³ Their physical travels mimicked their spiritual journeys; they refused to be stagnant, always questioning and discerning the next step, through Mass, prayer, and meditation.

Spiritual Activity as Crossings

Each of the three Houses engage in some form of spiritual activity that is a form of crossing. The LACW is known to offer Stations of the Cross during the Lenten Season, practicing prayers at various locations around town in which the injustices of Jesus are replayed. Such places have included the downtown Federal Building and "locations of darkness where Christ continues to be crucified" (LACW 2006). The GCW also engaged in a similar Stations of the Cross during the Lenten season in Gainesville, offering prayers in front of the City Court House, the police station, City Hall, and the offices of large bank companies that rest in the control of corporate America. A large wooden cross is carried on the walk to replicate Jesus's journey to the cross and the suffering and oppression that still continues today. Knowing that most of their guests are immigrants from Latin America, Casa Juan Diego caters to them spiritually by offering a

¹² Though not interested in the actual form and structure of religion, some Catholic Workers still believe in some sort of cosmic power. Similarly, the power may not be an over arching power, but rather a universal concept of love, kindness and/or peace.

¹³ See Day's essay "On Pilgrimage" (1946). This is also found on the Catholic Worker Movement's website (<http://www.catholicworker.org/communities/onpilgrimage.cfm>).

once a week liturgy in Spanish. Just as their services provide a material and physical assistance, this effort offers a renewal of spirit, connecting them with their place of origin and suggesting a spiritual home. They offer guitar music, encouraging song and worship that is usually familiar to those from Latin America. They are more than welcome to offer transportation to guests wishing to attend Sunday Mass. After Mass services, they pray for the canonization of Dorothy Day, a contested subject in CW circles. Some argue Day explicitly did not want to be labeled a saint, while others push for her sainthood.

As a community, the GCW has been offering a weekly mediation practice known as centering prayer. It is offered early mornings and is attended by most of those living at the House. Centering prayer is a form of mediation made famous by such people as Thomas Keating and John Main. Drawing from Eastern practices, this silent form of contemplative prayer is commonly practiced as a way to experience God's presence within the self (Contemplative Outreach 2013). The GCW begins this time with a short reflection, followed by 10-20 minutes of centering prayer. During this time, a mantra is chanted silently to one's self in an effort to empty the self and open the soul to God. At the end of the reflection period, they collectively recite the Lord's Prayer followed by a time of faith sharing. The GCW concludes this time with the sign of peace.

Tweed's notions of crossing and dwelling provide a framework in which to study how bioregionalism is used to promote the sustainability of the Catholic Worker Movement. While Tweed's understanding aligns with my study, it is important to note the gaps in scholarship.



Figure 4-1. LACW's newspaper, *Catholic Agitator*. Courtesy of the LACW (2012).



HOUSTON

CATHOLIC WORKER



June - Aug. 2012 Publication of Casa Juan Diego House of Hospitality Vol. XXXIII, No. 3

Monseñor: The Last Journey of Oscar Romero

Monseñor: The Last Journey of Oscar Romero. A film by Ana Carrigan & Juliet Weber. Produced by the Kellogg Institute at the University of Notre Dame.

Reviewed by the Editors, Mark and Louise Zwick

Watching the docu-mentary, *Monseñor: The Last Journey of Oscar Romero*, brought back to us our intense experience of living in El Salvador during the time Monseñor Romero became Archbishop of San Salvador. It vividly illustrated

again for us his prophetic, loving, prayerful role in the midst of growing violence, repression, and terrible suffering in the country.

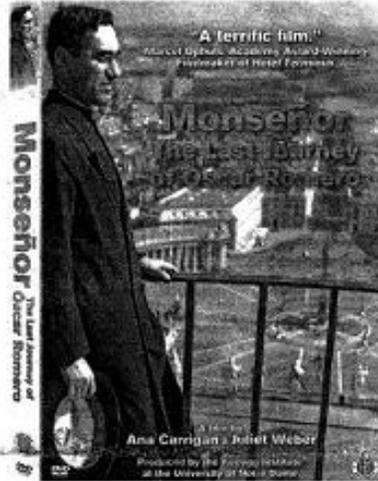
The film, made last fall and now widely available in DVD, features not only much actual footage of Archbishop Romero, but eye witnesses who knew him and his friend Fr. Rutilio Grande. The speakers included poor campesinos, those who accompanied the Arch-bishop as he visited the places where people were killed and the families of the disappeared,

the human rights lawyers who helped him prepare cases regarding the disappeared, Monseñor's driver, priests, nuns, and catechists, former soldiers, former guerrillas. The story is especially told by the campesinos, the farm workers who inspired Romero.

As is pointed out in the beginning of the film by a Sister who worked with him, Monseñor's voice and words were preserved as he recorded his daily activities and thoughts into a tape recorder. Early in the film, farmworkers who participated in Fr. Rutilio's country parish tell the story of his arrival at the parish and how he spoke with the people, sharing the Scriptures with them and explaining their prophetic significance.

We moved to El Salvador in early January of 1977 with our children to live with the

to learn about the work of the Catholic Church among the poor. When we arrived, we did not know



world's belongings at the time) from our car. We did so, and the military people examining our things were very agitated

San Salvador, we soon became aware of the tense situation in the country. Elections were held right after our arrival, and



A



trabajador católico

de HOUSTON



Junio - Agosto 2012 Publicación de Casa Juan Diego Casa de Hospitalidad Vol. XXXIII, No. 3

Monseñor: El Último Viaje de Oscar Romero

Monseñor: The Last Journey of Oscar Romero. Una película de Ana Carrigan y Juliet Weber. Producida por El Instituto Kellogg de la Universidad de Notre Dame. En español e inglés.

Reseñada por los Editores, Marcos y Luisa Zwick

Ver el documental, *Monseñor: El Último Viaje de Oscar Romero*, nos trajo de vuelta a nuestra intensa experiencia en El Salvador durante el tiempo en el que Monseñor Romero se convirtió en Arzobispo de San Salvador. El documental ilustró vívidamente de nuevo para nosotros su rol profético, amoroso y de oración en medio

de la creciente violencia, la represión y el terrible sufrimiento del país.

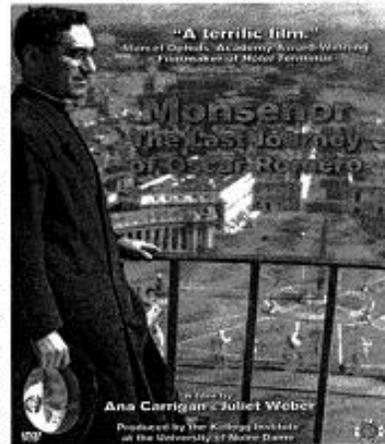
La película, realizada el pasado otoño y ahora disponible en DVD, presenta no sólo material real del Arzobispo Romero, sino también testigos que lo conocieron a él y a su amigo Rutilio Grande. Los narradores incluyen campesinos pobres, aquellos que acompañaron al Arzobispo mientras visitaba los lugares donde la gente fue asesinada, a las familias de los desaparecidos, los abogados de derechos humanos que lo ayudaron a preparar los casos de los desaparecidos, el chófer de Monseñor, sacer-

otes, merjas, catequistas, ex soldados y guerrillas. Esta historia es contada especialmente por campesinos que inspiraron a Romero.

Como es señalado al principio de la película por una Hermana que trabajó con él, la voz de Monseñor y sus palabras fueron preservadas mientras grababa sus pensamientos y actividades diarias en una grabadora.

En el inicio de la película, los campesinos que participaron en la parroquia del P. Rutilio cuentan la historia de su llegada a la parroquia y cómo hablaba con la gente, compartiendo las Escrituras con ellos y

Continúa en la página 4



La hospitalidad nos lleva más allá de nuestros límites

por Carlos Díaz

Quien vuelve de un viaje largo y difícil busca a alguien que lo espere en la estación o en el aeropuerto. Todos

seguir con vida para ver a su hijo antes de dejar de luchar. Un soldado puede impedir su desintegración mental y física cuando sabe que sus

que trataban de consolar así al enfermo creían en sus propias palabras. ¿Qué sentido tiene hablar sobre la espera del día de mañana cuando esas

vivas? ¿Qué puede significar para un moribundo ver frente a él a un hombre para el que la vida apenas ha empezado? Parece más bien una tortura

han hecho presentes la una a la otra, la espera de una debe ser capaz de cruzar la estrecha frontera que separa la vida de una y la muerte de otra. Y

B

Figure 4-2. CJD's newspaper, *Houston Catholic Worker*, (2012). (A) English version. (B) Spanish version. Mailed to the GCW.



*The greatest challenge
of the day is how
to bring about a
revolution of the heart.*

*~ Dorothy Day
(Co-founder of the
Catholic Worker Movement)*

Côn • spīre

Newsletter of the
Gainesville Catholic Worker

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THE HOUSE LETTER

January 2013

Dear friends,

We've just finished our first full week of activity at the house following the Christmas break. There are 8 of us living at the house right now (or 9 of us, if you count Youssef, who occupies the hammock in our back yard most nights). Kelli and I and the kids are still here, and we have three additional community members and one long-term guest. Vickie, who has been at the house since August of 2011, will be finishing her MA in Religion and Nature at the University of Florida this spring. Vickie has been a fixture at the GCW for almost 5 years now, first as a regular volunteer and extended community member, before moving in and living here for over 1.5 years now. Our newest community members are a young married couple, Gloria and Clayton, who moved in at the end of July 2012. Gloria is a doula and graduated from UF after the Spring 2011 semester; Clayton graduated from UF last May, works at Target Copy



The Art for All group at their planning meeting for the Winter-Spring 2013 semester.

Center and is also a graphic artist. Both of them were extended community members for several years before joining us in-house this summer. We're also happy to have our good friend Mohamed, who has lived with us off and on for the past 7 or 8 years, move back in this month. Whether we are a community of 7 or 8 folks, or 12 or 13, it always feels like a full house!

Some of you may remember that we ended the Breakfast Brigade last June after 12 years. The number of folks who were finding work out of the day labor pools had dried up, whole one of our regular labor pools closed down and another moved to a new location. We decided that with the decrease in the need for breakfast at the labor pools, we'd start looking for another project that would address a greater need for our friends who live on the street, in our neighborhood, and in shelters and low-income housing facilities nearby. In keeping with the tradition of the Breakfast Brigade, we began this semester to prepare and serve a light, homemade, sit-down breakfast 4 days a week at the house (every weekday except Wednesday when we have Dorothy's Cafe, a mid-day meal that serves between 50-100 folks). After consulting with folks and talking with one another, it seemed that there was a need, not so much for more food, but for a warm, welcoming place for people to go early in the morning after waking up in that time before most services were available or places like the downtown library had opened. Despite the recent warm weather, it can be quite cold during January and February in Gainesville--even into March--and we wanted to provide a nice way for people to start their day--with a warm cup of coffee or tea, a light breakfast (hardboiled eggs, homemade bread, fresh oranges and the like...), a kind welcome and "Good morning!", and relaxing atmosphere. Breakfast@theGreenHouse seems like the right thing to do at the right time of day. If you ever want to help, or to donate baked goods, fresh fruit, fair trade coffee, and so on, we'd be happy for you to join us in this new project.

One thing that I have been thinking a lot about lately is just how many people do so much so quietly, without fanfare or attention, to keep the work of the GCW going each year. I cannot possibly name everyone, but I thought I'd give you a few examples of what I mean:

- Weekly, even several times a week often, we can count on Karen to drop something by--blankets when it is cold, a homemade dessert for the Roundtable, peanut butter to pass along to someone living out in Tent City...
- Chris and his children who come at the end of so many cafes to help clean-up, including the bathroom!...
- Kendera, Mary, Linda, Gloria, Kathy, Bill, Laura, Jessica, Elizabeth, Lori and all the regulars who show up for Art for All

(continued on the back page...)

Figure 4-3. GCW's newspaper, *ConSpire*, (2012). Courtesy of the GCW.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS

Chapter 5 presented my analysis of *how* Thomas Tweed's spatial theory of religion helps us to view the Catholic Worker Movement as bioregionalist. The ideas of crossing and dwelling through motion, space, and time offered clarity to my argument. The LACW, the GCW, and CJD each exemplified aspects of crossing and dwelling. While some Houses embodied these actions better than others, collectively they show how religion and geography interact. This interaction once again connects the social to the environmental. It is through this interaction that we discover the importance of connecting an ecological term like bioregionalism to the social movement of the Catholic Workers. I begin Chapter 5 by uncovering the blind spots in my study and laying out an overview of my thesis. I end by presenting my conclusion and the need for future research.

Blind Spots

My research has various gaps and unanswered questions. For example fluidity raises the question of how to measure the flow of ideas. While I know ideas are transferred between Houses and people, I am currently unable to measure to what extent these ideas are conveyed. The transmission of ideas expresses itself as past participants in the GCW Metanoia semester draw from their experiences and question how to live their current lives. Tamra Travers, who participated in the 2011-2012 Metanoia year, continues to seek a Catholic Worker inspired lifestyle as she attends medical school at The Florida State University. Similarly, Daniel Loya, a 2011 Metanoia semester participant moved south to Polk County to pursue a sustainable lifestyle through small-scale farming. Like Tamra, he looks to uncover aspects of Catholic

Worker life outside the GCW. The ideas and values of the Catholic Worker were not new to either participant. Therefore, it is difficult to measure to what extent their GCW experiences have shaped their current quests for aiding the poor and being self-sufficient.

Also, like Tweed, it is unclear to me where nature ends and culture begins. I continue to ponder this issue in my study. I wonder to what degree does nature create an area, especially an urban area such as Los Angeles, Houston, or Gainesville? To what extent does culture make up these regions? Weather factors into the daily lives of the homeless, especially those in Los Angeles and Gainesville as expressed through the need for shopping carts, socks, and blankets. Nonetheless, culture also plays an important role, as the dominant culture restricts mobility and services of illegal immigrants. In the case of Houston, culture plays the driving role in establishing the landscape. I would be interested to discover the role of nature and culture in other CW communities. Do the LACW and the GCW draw more from nature? Does CJD draw primarily from culture? How might my study change if I were to look at different CW Houses or communities?

Gaps in Research

The fact that I have not visited the LACW or CJD presents a gap in my research. I look at them from afar, relying on their internet presence and the personas they display in their publications. This gap is lessened as I drew from previously published interviews with the founders of the LACW and drawing from books published by the founders of CJD. I would be interested to discover how their projects function in real time. It would help my study to discover on a firsthand account, the area, people, and more importantly the community associated with the work in these two cases.

Outsiders may accuse the CW Movement of simply perpetuating a cycle of homelessness and oppression. My study may be viewed as merely addressing symptoms rather than the problem. In this respect, I do not show how the various projects of CW Houses are sustainable but rather how the CW Houses sustain themselves over time. None of the Houses I looked at labeled the goal of their mission to be ending homelessness or solving oppression. Rather, as I mentioned above, they are trying to create a better world. They are attempting to echo Peter Maurin, pursuing a “new society in the shell of the old” (Maurin 1961).

Conclusion

In this study, I uncovered how internal representations of Catholic Workers Houses are bioregionalist through their negotiation of time and space in their locale. My study shows how the bioregionalism of this Movement promotes its sustainability. I did this through a consideration of three Catholic Worker Houses.

Chapter 1 introduced my study and questioned the larger implications behind my research. It also acted as a roadmap, providing an overview of my research through my position, methodology, and outline of the chapters that followed.

Chapter 2 presented the historical foundations of the Movement. It defined the Movement’s founders, beginnings, foundations, and expansions. Pramod Parajuli’s theories led my thesis into a more holistic realm, as he connected the environmental with the social. From here, I expanded upon the notion of sustainability and the philosophy of bioregionalism and then connected these terms with the CW Houses of today.

Chapter 3 offered my three case studies. I looked specifically at the Los Angeles Catholic Worker (LACW), the Gainesville Catholic Worker (GCW), and the Houston

Catholic Worker's Casa Juan Diego (CJD). For each House, I uncovered their location and the situational needs they serve. Through their words and representations, I explored their projects and how they see themselves in relation to their community.

Chapter 4 presented my analysis of *how* the Catholic Worker Movement is considered bioregionalist. Thomas Tweed's spatial theory of religion tied into the philosophy of bioregionalism because both privilege place and time. This was explained through the LACW, the GCW, and CJD as each exemplified aspects of crossing and dwelling as multiple levels across regions and time periods.

In this thesis, I have shown that by focusing on the current needs of the surrounding community, these groups are able to adapt themselves to their region. They fulfill their niche as a service provider, be it through feeding the homeless, providing food for shelters, offering medical assistance, hosting hospitality, aiding with legal service, or acting as a retreat center. In each case, all of these actions help sustain the community, both the CW group and the surrounding area well into the future.¹⁴

The sense of place holds a greater impact on the movement than I had originally imagined. Place does not only account for the needs and resources in a particular locale, but it also includes the community. A region's community is perhaps the main driver behind the Movement's success, as it provides the resources, physical work force, and emotional and spiritual support to perpetuate such projects. Reminiscent of the same importance Day offered to the Movement, Tamra Travers explained community as one of the main notions of CW living. "I can make that kind of community

¹⁴ The CW groups offer their skills addressing the needs of the community. They hold a symbiotic relationship, aiding each other.

happen around me, I don't have to wait for it to happen. It's amazing how much people and the environment of community can impact your life, being so encouraging and helpful" (Travers 2013). Her notion of the "environment of community" is precisely the intersection of the social and environmental that the Catholic Worker Movement provides.¹⁵

Future Discussion

Until other Houses arise, this thesis is a starting point for a more comprehensive study of how the Catholic Worker communities sustain their efforts through bioregionalism. A further study would provide a more detailed understanding of the specific ways each House supports the local, rather than the short descriptions I have provided here. It may also include the driving forces behind the various Houses, as I have mentioned earlier in this Chapter. Perhaps the forces go beyond those of the social and environmental, entering the realm of economics. Only further studies will tell.

Beyond noting the value of Catholic Worker Houses and communities, my study raises various broader questions about bioregionalism, communities, and sustainability. Further research may uncover what roles bioregionalist communities play within society with regards to larger social movements. Like the Catholic Workers, there are many other groups across the country, which provide aid to the surrounding social structure.

¹⁵The Movement continues to thrive. As I mentioned above in a previous footnote, other groups and faiths have drawn from the basis of the Catholic Workers, establishing such newspapers as *The Mormon Worker*, in Salt Lake City, Utah, and *The Mennonite Worker* based out of Oklahoma City (*The Mormon Worker* 2013; *The Mennonite Worker* 2010). Both offer opinions and commentary from their respected faiths' radical backgrounds. Perhaps they will continue to follow in the footsteps of Day and Maurin, expanding to Houses of Hospitality. It is important to note that another group known as *The Mennonite Worker*, based in Minneapolis have established an intentional community (*The Mennonite Worker of Minneapolis* 2013).

Benefits- Education

A wide range of groups can benefit from my study. CW Houses and future CW communities will better understand the implications of being place-based. Perhaps they can call more upon their surrounding community in addition to their immediate community in order to perpetuate their work. Similarly, other intentional communities, communes, and cooperatives may gain information. By learning about bioregionalism, they can make a better effort to connect 'glocally.' Living locally, aware of the global implications, may allow for a greater ecologically sustainable lifestyle. This lifestyle can arise as people engage in a symbiotic relationship with their surroundings and local neighbors. Other organizations may benefit such as environmental and social justice nonprofits. By catering to the needs in their place of being or establishing collectives in a region that needs help, these organizations can offer more energy towards their work. Fewer resources will be spent on transportation and people aid. Such initiatives are already underway, as expressed through the Presbyterian Hunger Program, a ministry working to alleviate hunger and the causes related to hunger in many of the world's nations. This program works with communities in the area that needs support. They work on a local level to alleviate hunger through local, sustainable solutions.

Benefits-Organizational Sharing

Similarly new CW Houses can benefit by drawing from the organizational structures of existing Houses. The decision to become a nonprofit is something many new communities face. Incorporation could expose CW Houses to a wide array of grants and fundraising options. This exposure could support the development of projects and community aid. Additionally, this recognition could promote community support, perhaps proving more effective at uniting regional aid with regional needs.

Though incorporating into a 501(c)(3) presents mixed feelings within Catholic Worker circles, sharpening organizational tactics may propel the Movement into the future. Those CW Houses that may be wary of becoming a government recognized status organization still draw from nonprofit aspects without officially incorporating. For example, sometimes without realizing it, Houses consider strategic planning elements as they analyze their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (otherwise known as SWOT). Similarly, Houses establish concrete policies, procedures, and leadership in an effort to sustain their community projects. By implementing some form of risk management or crisis control, Houses are proactive rather than reactive.¹⁶ Using these organizational concepts in regional settings further expands glocalization and the importance of bioregionalism within the Movement. (Appendix-Nonprofit Perspective)

Ultimately, this study expands discussions of how groups and individuals make a localized impact on the larger society. These vital discussions are critical as we continue to negotiate our place in the world with regards to environmental and social concerns.

¹⁶ These are points current CW Houses have considered, a more in depth study could show the overlap of nonprofit concepts with those of independent CW groups. For example, Catholic Worker Houses display such notions as networking through their House to House relations and movement.

APPENDIX NONPROFIT PERSPECTIVE

From a nonprofit organizational perspective Catholic Worker Houses that have not decided to incorporate may gain from adopting nonprofit management skills. As I mention in my conclusion, strategic planning may prove useful when dealing with fundraising, risk management, policies/procedures, and SWOT analysis (strength, weakness, opportunities, and threats). A plan could cater to the present needs while offering a path for future organizational and community-based desires.

Additionally, leadership and decision-making may also aid various CW Houses in their ability to sustain themselves or expand. A diverse Board of Directors could expand rather than limit a CW House's role in the community. For example a Board may include homeless advocates as well as current and former homeless individuals. This diverse leadership creates a wide variety of outlooks that could help lead each CW House in its decision making process. A wide variety of views from an established Board of Directors could provide a holistic and sustainable way of approaching issues and planning initiatives. Appointing a set structure of leadership would also delegate responsibilities and create a durable CW House that may flourish into the future.

Creating this type of governance and leadership could offer more transparency concerning funds and projects. This may encourage more people to donate funds and volunteer time to CW Houses. This governance may also improve or create bylaws, rules, regulations, and plans for future development. Additionally, a crisis control plan could be placed into effect, allowing CW Houses to better handle unexpected issues.

Follow up studies could account for the number of incorporated CW Houses and their role in the surrounding community. Further research may also shed light on the

reasoning behind why CW Houses incorporated and if they find their community outreach to be strengthened or limited. In any organizational model there are benefits and downfalls. Recognizing the diversity of CW Houses helps us understand how each survives in its particular region.

Questions arise from this discussion of nonprofit incorporation. If CW Houses become 501(c)(3) organizations, to what extent are they required to comply with government rules and industry standards? When does a CW House stop being a House and turn into an organization or institution? Each CW House will have a different answer to these questions because each CW House faces different regional needs. These are issues to consider in a future discussion. The purpose of this Appendix is simply to bring light to these matters.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

In May of 2011, Victoria Machado earned her Bachelors, graduating Magna Cum Laude from the University of Florida where she majored in religion and double minored in environmental studies and geography. Victoria entered the Masters program for religion and nature as an undergraduate, pursuing a combined BA/MA degree. In the Fall of 2011, she began her graduate studies full time, studying religion and minoring in Nonprofit Organization and Leadership. It was also during this time, she began living at the Gainesville Catholic Worker. Victoria earned her Masters of Arts in May 2013. This thesis resulted as a culmination of her studies and her daily experience at the Gainesville Catholic Worker.