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Hindutva Nationalism and Civil Government in India: Towards a Theology of Engagement from Luther's Two Realm Perspective

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HINDUTVA NATIONALISM AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT IN INDIA:
TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF ENGAGEMENT FROM LUTHER'S TWO REALM
PERSPECTIVE

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By
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To my loving wife and friend Shana and two cheerful children Sasha and Shaan. Regardless of where we are in the world, it always feels like home when we are together. I love you all.

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

BJP   Bharathiya Janatha Party

CSI   Church of South India

IELC   India Evangelical Lutheran Church

LCMS   Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

LW   Luther's Work

MELIM   Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission

RSS   Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

WCC   World Council of Churches

ABSTRACT

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The task undertaken by this dissertation is to offer a theological response to *Hindutva* nationalism and its challenges to Christians in India. The particular focus is to understand and critique *Hindutva* conception of the State and its failure to work towards the common good of all. Towards that end this dissertation expounds a theological frame work in light of Luther's Two Realm theology to help Christians take their Christian faith seriously (exclusive in nature) while embracing an inclusive paradigm (inclusive in nature) which enables Christians to work together with people of different faiths or no faiths for the common good. This dissertation affirms that, Luther's Two Realm theology provides an analytical tool to understand and distinguish between the concerns, activities, and mode of God's rule in relation to God's two realms of life, which is fundamental to any theology of engagement. In light of the principles explicated, this dissertation affirms the state to be an instrument of God in the left-hand realm for the maintenance of external peace, justice, and the common good for all. Such an affirmation helps Christians in India to affirm the Indian constitutional version of the state and government which seeks to represent and accommodates every one irrespective of one's caste, creed, language or culture over against the *Hindutva* vision of a monolithic Hindu state where people belonging to non-Hindu religions do not have a legitimate space in the nationhood. In our effort to find a common ground with people of different faiths or no faiths, this dissertation emphasizes the importance of two foundations for our common existence, namely common Creatureliness and common morality based on natural law and human wisdom. This dissertation explores a Christian's social engagement in the public square, through their vocational call to be a citizen and/or as political authority. Finally this dissertation examines how the Church as an institution in the left-hand can carry out its divine mandate towards the extension and welfare of all under law in the temporal realm. This dissertation is written as a faithful confession of God's word within the Lutheran doctrinal tradition with an intention to provide a resource to help and equip the church, and Christians in India, to continue to be faithful in the midst of *Hindutva* challenges in the public square towards the common good for all.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"Intolerance Debate" is an ongoing debate which is very much live across India, one regularly featured in public forums, social, mass media. The fear and suspicion that the *Hindutva* government, in power since May 2014, might impose a majoritarian agenda on the country, is the driving factor behind this debate. The anti-conversion laws (active in five States),[1] Beef Ban (active in twenty-two States),[2] Ghar Vapsi movements (Re-Conversion from other religions to Hinduism),[3] increasing violence and intolerance against religious and ethnic minorities,[4] hate speeches against religious minorities,[5] instances of media control (which includes ban on Wendy Doniger's book "*The Hindus: An Alternative History*, 2011"[6], BBC Documentary, *India's Daughter, 2015*[7] and, shooting and subsequent death of Malleshappa Kalburgi, an academic, for

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[1] Shanoor Seervai, "The Arguments For and Against a National Anti-Conversion Law," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 9, 2015, http://blogs.wsj.com/indiarealtime/2015/01/09/the-arguments-for-and-against-a-national-anti-conversion-law (accessed November 20, 2015).

[2] "The States Where Cow Slaughter is Legal in India," *The Indian Express*, October 8, 2015, http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/explained-no-beef-nation (accessed November 20, 2015).

[3] Lalmani Verma, "Ghar Wapsi, Conversion Tools of Politicians for Political Purposes," *The Indian Express*, February 1, 2015), http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/lucknow/ghar-wapsi-conversion-tools-of-politicians-for-political-purposes (accessed November 20, 2015).

[4] R. Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism and the Indian Church: Towards an Ecclesiology in Conversation with Martin Luther* (New Delhi: Christian World Imprints, 2013), 67–71.

[5] Ram Puniyani, "One Year of Modi Sarkar: Hate Speech Galore," *Central Chronicle*, May 16, 2015.

[6] Doniger's critics, among many other things points out that this book insults the religious feeling of the Hinduism by discussing the sexual desires of figures in Hindu mythology and describing Mahabharata, one of the Hindu epic as a fictional work. See Shashank Bengali and Juan Perez Jr, "India Bans 'Vulgar' Book by University of Chicago Scholar," *Chicago Tribune*, February 13, 2014, http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2014-02-13/news/chi-india-book-ban-wendy-doniger-20140213_1_penguin-group-hinduism-chicago-scholar (accessed November 21, 2015).

[7] *India's Daughter* was a documentary film based on the twenty three year old medical student Jyoti Singh,

his criticism of Hinduism) and the returning of the National Academy of Letters by at least forty

Indian novelists, poets and playwright, in protest over alleged *Hindutva* encroachment towards

freedom of speech and other secular rights,[8] are few of those instances which kept people

concerned about *Hindutva* in the recent past. *Hindutva* sympathizers try to downplay these

instances of communal violence as sporadic and unrelated. Critiques of *Hindutva* finds this

common thread as part and parcel of the *Hindutva* world view and agenda to establish a Hindu

Rashtra (country) in India.

What then is *Hindutva*? Although we shall answer this question in much detail, a brief

definition is all that is presently needed. *Hindutva* is an ideology involving ethnic/cultural

nationalism which seeks to create a Hindu nationhood in India. Having its roots in Brahmanical

Hinduism, the concrete and comprehensive project of *Hindutva* either absorbs religious and

cultural minorities into its ideology or eliminates them through systematic discrimination and/or

violence. Through its selective and reductionist use of Hindu religion, *Hindutva* proponents

picture the nation as a manifestation of the Supreme Being and equate patriotism to religious

duty which could help earn one's salvation. In this shrinking of religious and political space to a

single reality, a person's citizenship in the country is based on membership in the Hindu fold.

All those who do not belong to Hinduism and/or have left the Hindu fold for other religions are

unpatriotic and should return to their original fold. Thus as Sahayadhas rightly notes "Hindu

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who was gang raped and murdered in Delhi. This documents contains interviews from the rapist and the lawyer who justifies the act representing the typical male chauvinistic attitude. This documentary was banned from airing in India through governmental intervention alleging that it is an international conspiracy to defame the nation. See "Silencing India's Daughter: Why has the Indian government banned the Delhi Rape Film?" *Newstateman*, March 5, 2015, http://www.newstatesman.com/world-affairs/2015/03/silencing-india-s-daughter-why-has-indian-government-banned-delhi-rape-film (Accessed November 21, 2015).

[8] Rishi Iyengar, "Top Indian Scientist Returns Prestigious Award to Protest 'Attack on Rationalism'," *Time*, October 29, 2015, http://time.com/4092177/india-scientist-award-return-bhargava-padma-bhushan/ (accessed November 21, 2015).

nationalism in India represents a deliberate use of the dominant religion laced with an extremist mode of discourse in order to impose a corporatist religious/cultural identity on all those who inhabit this land, which dumps pluralism as an impediment to realization of a strong and unified nation."[9] In *Hindutva* schema, State/government has an important role to play towards the realization of a Hindu nationhood. The purpose of the state is to defend and establish Hindu Dharma and to actively use various power structures and channels available to translate its homogenizing religiocultural agenda into a reality.

The purpose of this dissertation is to help Christians in India to critically assess, respond and live responsibly in the context of increasing Hinduisation of public sphere in India. The questions to which answers are sought in this dissertation are (1) can Christians argue that the purpose of the society/government is to look after the common good of all irrespective of caste, culture, and religion? (2) Can Christians argue that Hindu nationalism as envisaged by *Hindutva* ideology runs counter to God's purpose of common good for all? If so, what are the theological resources available to make such an argument? (3) Can Christians join with others and actively support the cause for justice, peace, and common good for all, avoiding the danger of Christian nationalism and upholding the Christian Gospel and witness? The answer to these questions is sought as a faithful confession of God's word within the Lutheran doctrinal tradition from Luther's Two Realm theology.[10]

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[9] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism and the Indian Church,* 5.

[10] Luther's understanding of two realms is also alternatively known as the doctrine of the two kingdoms or the twofold rule of God. John R. Stephenson points out that in Luther's usage one cannot find a clear-cut distinction between *Reich* and *Regiment*, *regnum and regimen*. As Robert Kolb elaborates, Luther did not know that he was inventing technical vocabulary when he spoke of "two kingdoms," so he rather casually used the language to mean at least three concepts. Namely the realm of God and Satan in conflict with each other, the two dimensions of inseparable but distinct spheres of human relationships or existence, i.e., in relation to God and in relation to all other creatures and occasionally, the institution of Church and state. So he suggests the usage of (1) "two kingdoms" in reference to the kingdoms of God and Satan in conflict, (2) two "institutions" in reference to that of the Church and secular government, and (3) two "realms" or "governments" for the relationship to God and other creatures. See John R. Stephenson, "The Two Governments and the Two Kingdoms in Luther's Thought" *Scottish Journal of*

The Thesis

This dissertation will argue that Luther's teaching on the Two Realms can provide the theological and ethical rationale for Christians in India to support actively a society/government that looks after the wellbeing of all people regardless of caste, religion, or cultural identity. This stands over and against an exclusive Hindu nationhood promoted by *Hindutva* ideology. The Lutheran Christian alternative does so by grounding the left-hand realm of God in God's work as creator, and it sees the purpose of the State/government as an instrument of God, the creator, to ensure the common good, justice, prevention of evil, and external peace for all, irrespective of one's religious, caste, class, cultural, or linguistic identity.

The Dissertation in the Context of Current Scholarship

The challenges posed by *Hindutva* have led several Indian Christian theologians to respond to it from their distinctive perspectives. Some of these approaches can be broadly categorized under an inculturation approach, a secular approach, an inter-religious approach, a liberation approach, an evangelical approach, and a Lutheran critique from Luther's ecclesiological perspective. We shall go into each of these approaches in greater depth in chapter three of this dissertation. Although all these responses dismissed *Hindutva* as an illegitimate politicization of religion, they made genuine and thorough attempts to understand *Hindutva*. Most of these responses were marked with a great amount of self-criticism, but also confrontation where it was due.

One of the serious drawbacks latent in these approaches is the pursuit of a solution at the

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Theology 34 (1981): 6 and Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther: Confessor of the Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 176–77. Cargill Thompson further clarifies the relationship and the inner connection between God's two realms and God's two fold rule or two government thus: "God has instituted two realms ("Reiche").In this dissertation, I will be using the term two "realms" wherever possible to denote heavenly and earthly spheres of human life and two modes of rule in its respective sphere.

expense of the basic Christian faith and identity. Most of these approaches were in some sense one dimensional, whether neglecting social concerns at the cost of Christian faith or vice versa. In order to move forward with our theological engagement with the challenges raised by *Hindutva* nationalism, an approach is needed that has the strength to take seriously our Christian faith (exclusive in nature) but at the same time embrace all humanity, both Christian and other, (inclusive in nature) as we live and work together for the common good.

Therefore, in the context of an alarming militant Hinduisation of the public square this dissertation seeks to undertake two tasks. One is to develop a theological approach that would avoid the methodological pitfalls of the above-mentioned approaches. The other is to employ that methodology to reflect upon the theological significance of the government/state and Christians as responsible citizens of the country in the context of Hindu nationalism in India.

This dissertation will argue that a critical interaction with Martin Luther's understanding of the two realms will help Christians in India shape a theological framework that would avoid the danger of neglecting the Christian faith and identity and, at the same time, foster an inclusive theological rationale for cooperating with others towards the common good. Moreover, Luther's understanding of God's left-hand realm and God's work as creator helps us understand the purpose of the State/government as an instrument of God the creator to ensure the common good, justice, prevention of evil, and external peace for all irrespective of one's religious, caste, class, cultural, or linguistic identity.

The Methodological Procedure to Be Employed

The method used in this research is descriptive, analytic, and evaluative. In order to present an ideological framework of *Hindutva*, I will interact with the original writings of two premier *Hindutva* thinkers and their major works, namely, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883–1966),

Hindutva: Who is a Hindu? (1923) and *Hindu Rattrap Dashing: A Collection of the Presidential Speeches Delivered from the Hindu Mahasabha Platform* (1949), and M. S. Golwalkar (1906–1973), *We or Our Nationhood Defined* (1944); *Bunch of Thoughts* (1966). I will rely on scholarly consensus to interpret their thoughts and to bring out the central features of this ideology. Some of the modern scholars I will be interacting with are Chetan Bhatt, T. Madan, Christophe Jaffrelot and the like who interprets *Hindutva* nationalism as the Brahmanical assertion of power and illegitimate politicization of Hinduism.

In order to develop Luther's understanding of the two realms I will make use of primary sources from Luther as well as secondary sources. The primary sources include but not limited to *Temporal Authority: To What Extend It Should Be Obeyed*, (1523), *Commentary on Romans* (1531), *Commentary on Galatians* (1531), *Commentary on 1 Peter* (1522), *Commentary on Psalms 82* (1530), *Commentary on Psalms 101* (1534), *Lectures on Genesis* (1535-1545), *Whether Soldiers, Too, Can Saved* (1526), *Luther's exposition of the Lord's Prayer*, *Sermon on Two Kinds of Righteousness* (1518). I will also be relying on scholarly consensus as found in the writings of following scholars, namely, Robert Kolb, Charles P. Arand, Joel Biermann, and Oswald Bayer. By interacting with these scholars, I will be placing two-realms perspective as Luther's basic framework in understanding Christian reality or, as William J. Wright put it, as his reformation worldview or *Weltanschauung*, which is essential for clarifying all of his views.[11] This is over against some interpretations that place Luther's two-kingdom perspective as his political theology or reduce it to a Church-and-state theology.

In order to critique and argue for the untenability of *Hindutva* ideology, I will rely on the two-realm perspective on state, natural law, human reason and the importance of affirming our

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[11] William J. Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding of God's Two Kingdoms: A Response to the Challenge of Skepticism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 15.

common Creatureliness in the left-hand realm. This provides a common ground for all humanity to talk about a common good and can help Christians critique *Hindutva* and appeal to India's constitutional vision of the state/government and common good for all, irrespective of caste, culture, religion, or linguistic background. Finally, in order to develop the contours of a Christian response and action in the hostile atmosphere saturated by *Hindutva*, I will rely largely on the distinction of two-kinds of righteousness and vocational call of a Christian as citizen and/or as a political authority. Robert Benne's four connections, namely, indirect and unintentional influence, indirect and intentional influence, direct and unintentional influence, direct and intentional action will clarify the Church's response in the public square.

The Outcome(s) Anticipated

This dissertation will help Christians in India critically interact with the basic tenets of *Hindutva* ideology in light of Luther's understanding of God's two-realm theology. In doing so this dissertation seeks to provide a conceptual clarity with regard to the distinct concerns and activities of God as understood by two-realm framework. Such clarity will contribute to ongoing theological scholarship in India to embrace a theological approach that takes seriously our Christian faith (exclusive in nature) but at the same time embraces an inclusive attitude (inclusive in nature) towards all as they address various challenges that comes from *Hindutva* nationalism. From this vantage point this dissertation seeks to provide a theological reflection on the nature, place, and role of state/civil government as a God-given institution in the left-hand realm to work towards external peace, justice, and wellbeing for all, irrespective of caste, class, culture, or ethnic background. This reflection, in the context of alarming rise of militant *Hindutva* nationalism seeks to equip Christians with theological, ethical, and conceptual tools to engage critically and respond responsibly to the *Hindutva* version of nationhood and civil

government that is threatening the temporal and religious life of Christians and other ethnocultural and religious minorities in India. In this regard my goal is to help the Church in India to be faithful in the face of this particular political situation. This dissertation provides a resource intended to teach and guide the Church and her response. The answers are sought as a faithful confession of God's word within the Lutheran doctrinal tradition.

Structure of this Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter provides a brief introduction to the area of research, which includes the thesis of this project, the methodological approach and structure of this entire dissertation. The second chapter will present a detailed theoretical and philosophical frame work of *Hindutva* nationalism in India. The third chapter will outline and analyze various Indian Christian responses given to political Hinduism from different theological orientations. The forth chapter provides a general introduction to Luther's Two Realm perspective outlining its basic contours. An attempt has also been made to understand the *Sitz im Leben* of Luther's Two Realm thought and address some the misinterpretations came to be associated with this perspective from the interests of the present research. The fifth chapter deals with Luther's understanding of the nature, purpose, and place of the state/civil government in the left-hand realm. The importance of natural law and human reason in relation to the functioning of the state is explored. Moreover the importance of state's role in working towards the common good for all irrespective of one's cultural, religious, and ethnic or caste background is underlined. The importance of the state's role in maintaining a conducive atmosphere for religious tolerance and possible relationship between Church and state is also discussed.

The sixth chapter introduces a Lutheran frame work for Christian engagement in the society in light of Luther's two-realm perspective. The significance of Luther's understanding of

two kinds of Righteousness and the place of Christian vocation in social engagement is discussed. Chapter seven occupies an important space in this entire dissertation as the ideas presented and principles developed throughout this dissertation are brought together to formulate and provide a critique to *Hindutva* nationalism in India with particular reference to *Hindutva* ideals for a State/Civil Government. This chapter also explores foundations for a common ground a Christian has with people belonging to different world views or religious persuasions in working together towards the common good. In formulating a proper foundation to work towards the welfare of all in the context of *Hindutva* nationalism, the importance of a Christian's call to be a citizen and/or as leader in political realm, as well as possible ways in which the Church can influence the public square are also discussed. The eight chapter provides a brief summary and conclusion to this research.

CHAPTER TWO

HINDUTVA NATIONALISM AND ITS CHALLENGES

What is *Hindutva*? What are the basic tenets upon which this ideology is built? How does Hindu nationalism, driven by *Hindutva*, fail to promote peace, justice, and the common good for the multi-religious, multi-cultural, and multi-ethnic context of India? What is the purpose of the state and government in the *Hindutva* imagination? What are some of the challenges *Hindutva* poses to Christians in India? The purpose of this chapter is to try answer these questions. But before I attempt to do this, it is important for us to have conceptual clarity on three major concepts namely nation, nationalism and state. This chapter will start by providing a general framework on these three key concepts. After that I will begin the discussion by outlining the basic contours of *Hindutva* ideology as articulated by its two chief ideologues namely Vinayak Damodar Savarkar and Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar. My concern in the next part will be to bring out the *Hindutva* conception of State and Government. Here I will discuss briefly, 'integral humanism', the philosophy of *Hindutva* political party, the Bharathiya Janatha Party (BJP) as articulated by Deendayal Upadhyaya, another important *Hindutva* political ideologue. In the next part I will explain how *Hindutva* ideology departs from the Indian constitutional conception of nationhood and state.

Conceptual Considerations: Nation, Nationalism and State

The scope and concern of this dissertation is limited to an in-depth study about the concepts of Nation, Nationalism or State. However a basic understanding about the same is desirable because we will be relating to these concepts for our theological concerns.

To begin with, a nation should be distinguished from an ethnic community. Anthony Smith a prominent figure in the field of study of nationalism, defines a nation as "a named human community occupying a homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a common public culture, a single economy and common rights and duties for all members."[1] Whereas an *ethnie* or an ethnic community could be defined as "a named human community connected to a homeland, possessing common myths of ancestry, shared memories, one or more elements of shared culture, and a measure of solidarity, at least among the elites."[2] The dividing line between nation and ethnic community may appear to be blurry at times but it is important for us to note that a nation is not an ethnic community. The above definitions clearly points that in order for a nation to constitute itself, physical occupation of a territory, a common public culture, along with shared history, common myths, common rights and duties are important. Whereas for an *ethnie* or ethnic community, although they may be linked to a physical territory, occupation of its own homeland is not important. An ethnic community is also more exclusive in nature and the emphasis largely placed on belief in descent from a supposed common ancestor or ancestors. But for a nation, the focus is placed on territorial descent. Moreover in a nation one can find different ethnic groups. [3]

It is also important to note that a nation is not a state. Anthony Smith makes it clear that a state "has to do with sovereignty, with power and authority over a given area and population...."[4] As Steven Grosby puts it, "The state may be loosely defined as a structure that, through institutions, exercises sovereignty over a territory using laws that relate the individuals within

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[1] Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism: Theory, Ideology, History* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), 13.

[2] Smith, *Nationalism,* 13.

[3] Steven Grosby, *Nationalism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 14.

[4] Smith, *Nationalism*, 12.

that territory to one another as members of the state."[5] In short, state refers to the institutional activity responsible for regulating and furthering the life of a nation and is ideally in line with the goals and aspiration of a nation.

The next important concept which needs our attention is Nationalism. Nationalism as understood by many scholars is a powerful political and cultural force which binds people together and determines the destiny of a nation.[6] In broader terms, nationalism can be understood as a set of beliefs about a nation[7] or an ideology concerned with promoting the wellbeing of a nation[8]. Anthony Smith defines it as "An ideological movement for attaining and maintaining autonomy, unity, and identity for a population which some of its members deem to constitute an actual or potential 'nation'."[9] According this definition, three generic goals which concern a nationalistic ideology are: national autonomy, national unity, and national identity.[10] Towards this end, nationalism is a goal oriented movement which prescribes certain kinds of action that eventually shape the general character, values, and direction of a nation.

Two important approaches towards the study of nation and nationalism which are of our interest is primordial and modernist approach.[11] In addressing the question 'when is a nation' the

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[5] Grosby, *Nationalism: A Very Short Introduction,* 22

[6] Jonathan Hearn, *Rethinking Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 9–19.

[7] Grosby, *Nationalism: A Very Short Introduction*, 5.

[8] Philip Spencer and Howard Wollman, *Nationalism: A Critical Introduction* (New Delhi: Sage, 2002), 2.

[9] Smith, *Nationalism*, 9.

[10] Smith, *Nationalism*, 9.

[11] Another important approach towards the study of nationalism is Ethno symbolic approach advocated by Anthony D. Smith. Ethno symbolism underlines the continuity between premodern and modern forms of social cohesion, without overlooking the changes brought about by modernity. According to Anthony Smith "modern nationalism did not appear ex nihilo, but has clearly premodern antecedents. For him, the rise of nations is predicated on the prior existence of ethnic groups, and nations are formed around 'ethnic cores', developed from premodern 'ethnie' whose members possess a collective proper name, share a myth of common ancestry, possess one or more differentiating elements of a common culture, share historical memories, associate themselves with a specific 'homeland', and have a sense of solidarity for significant sections of the population. It makes no difference whether these beliefs are themselves rational or irrational; they exist and are effective." Spencer and Wollman,

primordial approach tends to understand nations as ancient constructs. According to

primordialism, nations are a natural part of human organization and "they share with God the

attributes of existing before all things and of originating everything."[12] To primordialists many

modern nations have evolved continuously out of pre-modern ethnic formations. And to them,

race, language, culture, region, and religion form integral parts in the existence of a nation.[13]

In opposition to this, the modernist approach asserts that nations and nationalisms are

products of 'modernization' that came after industrialization and the French revolution. They

reject the view that nations are primordial and argue that pre-modern societies lack a common

culture, political, and democratic citizenship which is essential for a nation to exist. To

modernists, nations and nationalisms are not 'given's but are modern social and political

constructions.[14]

The two types of nationalism which emerge respectively from primordialist and modernist

approaches are ethnic nationalism and civic/territorial nationalism. Ethic nationalism which

offshoots from primordialist approach tend to thread people together with emotions of common

ancestry or race , religion, sacred geography, language and culture and so on. It also often seeks

to rediscover a significant ethnic past as the golden age and re-appropriate or manipulate it for

modern political ends. In contrast, civic or territorial nationalism, having roots in modern social

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Nationalism, 28. See also Anthony D. Smith, *Ethno Symbolism and Nationalism: A Cultural Approach* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

[12] Smith, *Nationalism*, 51.

[13] Two important figures associated with primordial approach are Johann Gottlieb Fichte and Johann Gottfried Herder. Primordialist approach received serious setback after the Second World War with the arrival of modernist scholars who argued that nations are modern constructs. See Hearn, *Rethinking Nationalism, 20–43.*

[14] Some of the important thinkers associated with modernist approach towards nations and nationalism are Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, Arnold Joseph Toynbee, Talcott Parsons, Ernest Gellner, Anthony Giddens, Eric Hobsbawm (1989) and so on. Generally modernists would argue that nationalism, as an ideology and movement, is both recent and novel and similarly nations are the same. They both are the products of 'modernization' and it is futile to seek the roots of nations and nationalism, in pre-modern epochs, that is before the eighteenth century. For more discussion see Smith, *Ethno Symbolism*, 4–7. And Hearn, *Rethinking Nationalism, 67–94.*

contract theories, envisages a nation with citizens having equal political, legal, socio-economic rights, duties, and status. Here citizenship and rights are not ascribed through ethnic descent but by birth to the national territory and/or voluntary acceptance of political creed/ideology of that particular nation. As we consider both kinds of nationalism, we could discern clear differences in their goals and differences that reach back into the underlying conceptual divergence.[15]

The *Hindutva* Nationalism and Its Ideological Fundamentals

Hindutva—literally translated as "Hinduness"—is an ideology that drives Hindu nationalism, which seeks to establish a Hindu state in India. The main goal of this majoritarian nationalism is to establish the political, cultural, and religious supremacy of Brahmanical Hinduism[16] and to create a single, collective identity for Indians under *Hindutva*. Equating India with Hindu society, the political project of *Hindutva* is to create a Hindu nation. The purpose of the state then is to defend and establish Hindu Dharma to purify culture, transform society according to its tenets, and eliminate all those factions that do not fit in its grand design.[17]

A critical analysis of *Hindutva* Nationalism reveals that it fulfills the criteria of ethic nationalism and the primordial conception of nationhood. In his explanatory model, Anthony Smith traces ethnic nationalisms to 'start from a pre-existent homogeneous entity, a recognizable

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[15] For more discussion on civic and ethnic nationalism see Spencer and Wollman, *Nationalism,* 101–05.

[16] Brahmanism may be briefly defined as that system of religious beliefs and practices based on the ancient texts knows as the Vedas and their associated literature. Caste system is an integral part of Vedic or Brahmanical Hinduism, which hierarchically organizes the society into four main castes, or Varnas: Brahmans (priests), Kshatriyas (warriors), Vaishyas (farmers) and Shudras (labourers or servants). A fifth group is referred to as outcasts or untouchables. This division has its origins in the Vedas, the ancient Hindu scriptures. The caste system is also referred to as the oldest form of racial discrimination in the world. For more discussion see Diane P. Mines, *Caste in India* (Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies, 2009).

[17] Dibyesh Anand, *Hindu Nationalism in India and the Politics of Fear* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 1–5.

cultural unity;'[18] and their primary concern is to 'ensure the survival of the group's *cultural*

identity.'[19] This then necessitates a separate political organization, or state, to ensure their

political survival.[20] In contrast to ethnic nationalism, civic or territorial nationalisms 'start from

an imposed entity and possess no common and distinctive cultural identity to protect.'[21]

Anthony Smith's analysis of the impact of European modernity on the colonial world,

causing a perceived notion of backwardness among the colonized people, and the subsequent

attempt of the local elite intelligentsia to reform their traditions to meet the challenges from the

west, helps to understand the emergence of *Hindutva* in context. Smith points out that the "main

concern was to endow that renewed tradition with the sanction of a theoretical 'Golden Age', an

ideological interpretation of the past, perfectly fashioned to meet the challenge of the West."[22] In

this regard, it is worthwhile to note several *Hindutva* scholars including Chetan Bhatt and

Christophe Jaffrelot argue that *Hindutva* is a recent phenomenon that developed as a reaction to a

perceived threat from the "other," to the Brahmanical or Aryan power configuration during the

colonial period.

It is important at this point to briefly distinguish *Hindutva* from Hindu reform movements

in the nineteenth century, which also to a great extent emerged as a reaction to the challenges

arose from European colonialism and Christian expansionism. These movements were largely

led by high caste Brahmins and figures like Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833). Organizations

like Brahmo Samaj, founded in 1828, are typical examples. Although Hindu reform movements

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[18] Anthony D. Smith, *Theories of Nationalism* (London: Harper & Row, 1971), 216.

[19] Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 217.

[20] Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 217.

[21] Smith, *Theories of Nationalism*, 217.

[22] Christophe Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement in India* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 13.

saw Christian proselytizing work and European colonialism as a threat, they never aimed to militarize Hinduism. These were largely ideological reaction to reform the Hindu tradition in line with European modernity by eliminating superstitious and unethical practices in Hinduism.[23]

Bhatt and Jaffrelot, in their writings, trace several factors that led to the rise of *Hindutva* ideology during the 1920's. The following are some of the major reasons:

(1) Nineteenth-century fascination with Aryan supremacy together with European theories about Aryanism supported an identification of Aryans, which included the people of Vedic religion. This triggered a sense of pride and a need to regain and protect the glory and interests that were at stake because of the threat from Islam, Christianity, and British colonizers,

(2) The caste system and many other oppressive practices coming from Brahmanical Hinduism came under attack because of the influence of western education and Christian missionary activities,

(3) Mass conversions to Christianity and Islam combined with a decline in the Hindu population, as noted in the British colonial census of 1901, 1911, and 1921, posed a challenge to Brahmanical orthodoxy,

(4) During the colonial period, missionary work considerably improved the socioeconomic status of the low castes and untouchables. Consequently, the upper-caste feared reprisal for their long-standing oppression of the lower castes and untouchables.

(5) The alleged privileges accorded to the Muslim community in political participation and their pan-Islamic tendencies created a perceived need for Hindus to defend their culture and interests against an imagined Islamic domination.[24]

In the modern times, *Hindutva* found a revival beginning in the 1990's. Scholarly

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[23] Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement,* 7–9.

[24] Chetan Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies and Modern Myths* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 21–48.

consensus points towards three major events that have occurred since the 1990s marking this phenomenon. They are: (1) the demolition of the Babri Masjid, a Muslim Mosque dating back to the sixteenth century, to enable the building of a Hindu temple in 1992, (2) widespread anti-Christian and anti-Muslim communal violence in Gujarat and Orissa, and (3) the subsequent rise of Hindu Right to political power in 1996, 1998–2004 and since 2014. For the past three decades, with the active growth and presence of various *Hindutva* organizations, *Hindutva* is trying to remold the very fabric of India. This resurgence means not only a militant approach to reordering India's sociopolitical composition according to a *Hindutva* mold but also systematic efforts to rewrite school textbooks along *Hindutva* lines, efforts to forbid religious conversion to Christianity, as well as efforts at forceful reconversion to Hinduism, attacks and killings of Christians and Muslims, the aggressive assertion of ownership over sites designated as sacred, and the like.[25]

The Ideological Contours of *Hindutva*

Two important ideologues whose work is crucial to understand the basic fundamentals of *Hindutva* ideology are Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883–1966), who first coined the word *Hindutva* and Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar (1906–1973), who further elaborated this ideology. These two figures are important to our discussion because they both are credited with conceptualizing and systematizing *Hindutva* thought, which remains unchanged even to the present time.

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, who described himself as a Hindu atheist, was a Maharashtrian Brahmin. He spent twenty-seven years in prison for his revolutionary activities against the British. From the prison he wrote *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?* often called the real

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[25] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies,* 168–70 and 179–206.

charter of Hindu nationalism.[26] His narrative starts with the claim of a glorious and prosperous

Hindu land existing even before the Egyptian and Babylonian civilizations. The beginning of this

nation came about in time immemorial with the migration of Aryans or Indo-Europeans towards

northwestern India. These people made their home in the land of seven rivers, the Sapta Sindhus,

in Punjab. According to Savarkar, the name Hindu came from the Aryan name for the Sindhu

(Indus River).[27] The land entered by the Aryans was vast and wild but thinly populated.

However, it was soon converted by the civilizing Aryan spirit whereby "forests were felled,

agriculture flourished, cities rose, kingdoms thrived—the touch of the human hand changed the

whole face of the wild and unkempt nature."[28] The spread of Aryans to different parts of the land

resulted in the development of regional identities and empires. In addition, this "colonization" of

India concluded with the entry into Ceylon of the Hindu mythical figure called Rama, who

Savarkar calls "Prince of Ayodhya;" Rama actually brought the whole land from the Himalayas

to the Seas under one sovereign sway. In addition, Savarkar notes, "It was truly our national day:

for Aryans and Anaryans knitting themselves into a people were born as a nation."[29] In

Savarkar's view, it was this entire geographical territory that was later colonized by the British.

In Savarkar's view the relationship between the Aryans and locals was generally

benevolent, and it was "the commingling of the blood" of the Aryans and the people they

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[26] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalism,* 85.

[27] Vinayak Damodhar Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu*? (1923; repr., New Delhi: Bharatiya Sahitya Sadan, 1989), 6.

[28] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, 6.

[29] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, 7. The Hindu Epic, Ramayana (5–4th BCE) talks about Lord Rama, the seventh avatar or incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu. He entered Ceylon (present Srilanka) to kill a ten headed wicked demon king, Ravanna, who managed to kidnap his wife, Sita. Soon after this successful war, he ruled from Ayodhya (present Delhi) to usher in a golden age for his people. Savarkar refers to these incidents in his work, to create a starting point for the birth of India. For more information on Rama, see Cybelle Shattuck, *Hinduism* (London: Calmann & King, 1999), 35–40.

encountered that gave rise to Vedic-Hindu civilization.[30] At this point, Chetan Bhatt's assessment

of the constituting factor of Vedic-Hindu civilizations is worth looking at. He observes that

"Savarkar did not discuss any belief systems that may have existed prior to the Aryan migration

into India, nor how they may have influenced or changed Aryan-Vedic culture"[31] and that "it was

the infusion of Aryan blood, ideas, and culture that provided the basis of Hindu nationhood."[32]

So he argues, "Even if the Hindu owed its origins to Aryan and Anaryan consanguinity, the

definitive influence on Hindu culture, and therefore the Hindu nation, was Aryan."[33] Chetan

Bhatt's assessment resonates with other modern *Hindutva* scholars including the eminent Indian

historian Gyanendra Pandey, who observes that Hindu nationalism is nothing but upper-caste

racism and a Brahmanical assertion of power.[34]

The next phase of Savarkar's *Hindutva* history starts with the cataloguing of the causes

responsible for the degeneration of this once-great civilization. The first in his list is Buddhism,

which caused Indians to swap their swords for rosary. According to him, Buddhism with its

ideals of love, toleration, and nonviolence made Hindu people weak, vulnerable, defenseless, and

unsuspecting towards the ferociousness and brutal egoism of other nations. This opened the door

for Muslims and later Europeans to invade India.[35] Therefore, Savarkar concludes, "The only

safe-guards in future were valour and strength that could only be born of a national self-

consciousness."[36]

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[30] Shattuck, *Hinduism,* 13.

[31] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies,* 87.

[32] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies,* 87.

[33] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies,* 87.

[34] G. Pandey, "Which of us are Hindus?" in *Hindus and Others–The Question of Identity in India Today*, ed. G. Pandey (New Delhi: Viking, 1993), 252.

[35] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, 11–12.

[36] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, 12.

Savarkar's presentation of the Muslim period, which extended from the eleventh century until the early decades of the nineteenth century, is one of a single, monumental war between "indigenous Hindus," "Muslim invaders," and "tyrants." However, he argues that the presence of this common foe provided a powerful stimulus to protect and maintain *Hindutva*.[37] Chetan Bhatt notes that Savarkar's imaginary reconstruction of *Hindutva* history was twofold: "to present a monologic history of the overwhelming innocence and oppression of a monolithic nation of Hindus, and of vitality and power of *Hindutva* as the grand motor force of history."[38] He also rightly observes that "later *Hindutva* writers were to considerably extend Savarkar's imaginary of Muslim invasion, tyranny and persecution to present a predominant vision of Hindu victimhood and suffering during the medieval period."[39]

Savarkar's major contribution towards *Hindutva* ideology is his conceptualization of Hindu nationhood based on his definition of 'Who is a Hindu?" His basic purpose was to create a unified Hindu self in the midst of internal diversity and the perceived external threats from Islam, Christianity, and westernization. In Savarkar's casting, India belongs to Hindus alone, and *Hindutva* national identity rests on three pillars: geographical unity, racial features, and a common culture. In defining who is a Hindu, his first premise is that a Hindu is one who regards the entire subcontinent as his (or her) motherland/fatherland. Hindus are accorded citizenship by paternal descent within this physically bounded territory of India. Along with this common fatherland concept, Savarkar adds the concept of racial common bond as the second criterion in defining Hindu identity. Hindus are not merely citizens of the Indian state but they are part of a

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[37] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, 19.

[38] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies*, 93.

[39] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies*, 93.

race determined by a common origin, possessing a common blood.[40] Savarkar notes, "All Hindus claim to have in their veins the blood of the mighty race incorporated with and descended from the Vedic fathers."[41] Finally, the ultimate criterion that determines the Hindu identity is the sharing and bonding with a common culture and civilization that is Vedic in origin. So according to him, the Hindu is the one who "has inherited and claims as his own the Hindu Sanskriti, the Hindu civilization, as represented in a common history, common heroes, a common literature, common art, a common law and a common jurisprudence, common fairs and festivals, rites and rituals, ceremonies, and sacraments."[42]

An important question that needs to be asked here is, what is the relationship between Hindu religion and Hindu culture? Can a person be called a Hindu by following Hindu culture and not Hindu religion? Although Savarkar and his modern-day advocates might argue that *Hindutva* is not identical with Hinduism, it is clear from his articulation that he cannot conceive of a Hindu culture without Hindu religion. There exists an intrinsic connection between the two, and they cannot be separated. This becomes obvious when Savarkar further defines a Hindu as one who follows the religion native to the land and who ceases to own Hindu culture when he embraces a religion of foreign origin. Therefore, Christians and Muslims, despite sharing a common territory (fatherland) and common blood (race), cannot be considered Hindus because "since their adoption of a new cult they had ceased to own Hindu civilization (Sanskriti) as a whole. They belong, or feel that they belong, to a cultural unit altogether different from the

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[40] Savarkar, *Hindutva,* 30–37.

[41] Savarkar, *Hindutva* 30. Bhatt notes that the concept of race employed by Savarkar was not strictly speaking a "scientific" or biological racism. But his concept of race was in all respects both hereditarian and caste supremacist but did not rely on the formal resources of disciplinary biology or science. This was akin to anti-egalitarian theories of hierarchical nobility and racial eminence that flourished in Europe in the aftermath of the French Revolution and again during the mid-nineteenth century. These encapsulated a hierarchical paradigm based on both sensibility and heredity that allowed for the transmission and inheritance of the vital impulse, culture, civilization, religious mythology and sublime metaphysical knowledge. Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies*, 96.

[42] Savarkar, *Hindutva: Who is a Hindu*?, 37.

Hindu one."[43] Savarkar further notes in this regard,

> That is why in the case of some of our Mohammedan or Christian countrymen who had originally been forcibly converted to a non-Hindu religion and who consequently have inherited along with Hindus, a common fatherland and a greater part of the wealth of a common culture—language, law, customs, folklore and history—they are not and cannot be recognized as Hindus, for though Hindusthan to them is fatherland as to any other Hindu, yet it is not to them a Holy land too. Their Holy land is far off in Arabia or Palestine. Their mythology and Godmen, ideas and heroes are not the children of this soil. Consequently their names and their outlook smack of a foreign origin. Their love is divided.[44]

To Savarkar conversion to Christianity or Islam is highly problematic because it entails abandoning one's culture, which then would weaken national unity and pose a serious threat to national security.

Unlike Savarkar, Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar (1906–1973), was a religious man. He was born into a Brahmin family and was attracted to Hindu spirituality and monastic life early in his youth. He was a zoology professor at the Benares Hindu University in Varanasi. He was invited by Keshav Baliram Hedgewar (1889–1940) to join the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the most powerful and important *Hindutva* nationalist organization in the country, founded by him in 1925. Subsequently Golwalkar succeeded Hedgewar as the head of the RSS in 1940 and remained at its helm until his death.[45] In his important work, "We or Our Nationhood Defined,"[46] he builds upon the contributions of Golwalkar and gives an even more rigid definition of "Hindu Rashtra" or Hindu nation.

Golwalkar's narration of Indian history corresponds broadly to that which Savarkar advanced. He therein mentions or builds upon the major themes of a glorious past with national

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[43] Brenda Cossman and Ratna Kapur, *Secularism's Last Sigh?: Hindutva and the (Mis)Rule of Law* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999), 37–38.

[44] Savarkar, *Hindutva*, 42.

[45] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalism,* 97.

[46] M. S. Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood Defined* (Nagpur: Bharat, 1939).

unity, fragmentation starting with Buddhism, subsequent Muslim invasion, European

colonization, and resilient Hindu resistance. However, unlike Savarkar he does not subscribe to

the theory of Aryan invasion but claims that "we Hindus came into this land from nowhere, but

are indigenous children of the soil always, from time immemorial and are natural masters of the

country."[47]

Golwalkar laments that the present-day servitude of the Hindus stems from their lack of

national consciousness. Thus what is needed is s the restoration of a sense of nationality among

Hindus.[48] In his conceptualization of Hindu nationhood, after analyzing several academic

definitions of nationality, he puts forth what he called the five "unities" to define a nation.

According to Golwalkar, "The idea contained in the word Nation is a compound of five distinct

factors fused into one dissoluble whole the famous five unities: the Geographical (county),

Racial (race), Religious (religion), Cultural (culture) and Linguistic (language)."[49] Golwalkar

argues that these five together make a homogeneous unity that constitutes a nation. If one of the

five is missing or destroyed, the nation itself will come to an end.[50]

Golwalkar illustrates in detail the idea contained in each of the categories. As far as

geographical unity is concerned, Golwalkar notes that for "a people to be and to live as a Nation,

a hereditary territory, a definite home country, relating to which it has certain indissoluble bonds

of community, is essential."[51] Golwalkar argues that "race is by far the important ingredient of a

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[47] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood Defined*, 46.

[48] B. D. Graham, *Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics: The Origins and Development of the Bharathiya Jana Sangh* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 46.

[49] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood,* 59.

[50] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood,* 76.

[51] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood,* 64.

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Nation."[52] Like Savarkar, his definition of race falls more on cultural rather than biological or scientific categories. So a race is defined as a "hereditary Society having common customs, common language, common memories of glory or disaster; in short, it is a population with a common origin under one culture."[53]

Golwalkar discusses culture and religion together because, according to him, culture and religion are often indistinguishable. Thus, he notes, "Where religion forms the very life-breath of a people, where it governs every action of the individual as well as of the Society as a whole, it is difficult to distinguish these two factors clearly."[54] He understands culture as the "cumulative effect of age-long customs, traditions, historical and other conditions and most particularly of religious beliefs and their attendant philosophy."[55] He accords a greater place to religion and finds culture and even race as the product of religion. Golwalkar notes that "naturally, therefore, we are what our great Religion has made us. Our Race-spirit is a child of our Religion and so with us Culture is but a product of our all-comprehensive Religion, a part of its body and not distinguishable from it."[56] Finally, Golwalkar explains language as an essential factor in the making of nationhood. He points out that "every Race, living in its own country evolves a language of its own, reflecting its culture, its religion, its history and traditions . . . . It is an expression of the Race spirit, a manifestation of the National web of life."[57] In addition, taking away language from a nation is fatal because "its whole-literature goes with it—and the Nation

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[52] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood,* 64.

[53] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood,* 64.

[54] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood,* 65.

[55] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood,* 65.

[56] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood,* 67.

[57] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood,* 73.

as such ceases to be."[58]

Golwalkar argued that Hindus qualify the five "unities" and thus constitute a nation by themselves:

> Here is our vast country, Hindusthan, the land of the Hindus, their home country, hereditary territory, a definite geographical unity, . . . deserving in every respect to be called a Country. . . . Living in this Country since pre-historic times, is the ancient Race—the Hindu Race, united together by common traditions . . . a common culture, a common mother language, common customs, common aspirations. [59]

And concerning Hindu culture and religion Golwalkar notes,

> This great Hindu Race professes its illustrious Hindu Religion, the only Religion in the world worthy of being so denominated, which in its variety is still an organic whole, capable of feeding the noble aspirations of all men, of all stages, of all grades, aptitudes and capacities . . . Guided by this Religion in all walks of life, individual, social, political, the Race evolved a Culture, which despite the degenerating contact with the debased "civilizations" of the Mussulmen's and the Europeans, for the last ten centuries, is still the noblest in the world.[60]

Golwalkar recognizes the problem with the multilingual context of India in that each region having its own language. However, he address this issue by arguing that "there is but one language, Sanskrit, of which these many 'languages' are mere offshoots."[61] Golwalkar concludes his discussion of Hindu nationhood by claiming that

> thus applying the modern understanding of 'Nation' to our present conditions, the conclusion is unquestionably forced upon us that in this country, Hindusthan, the Hindu Race with its Hindu Religion, Hindu Culture and Hindu Language, (the natural family of Sanskrit and her off-springs) complete the Nation concept.[62]

Golwalkar makes it clear that all those who fall outside the fivefold limits of Hindu nationhood can have no place in the national life unless they adopt the religion, culture, and language of the Nation:

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[58] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood,* 73.

[59] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood*, 94–5.

[60] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood*, 94–5.

[61] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood*, 98.

[62] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood*, 99.

> The foreign races in Hindusthan must either adopt the Hindu culture and language, must learn to respect and hold in reverence Hindu religion, must entertain no ideas but those of glorification of the Hindu race and culture . . . or may stay in the country, wholly subordinated to the Hindu nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment-not even citizen's right. [63]

Thus, like Savarkar, Golwalkar finds Christians and Muslims as foreign elements in the country. Golwalkar also shares Savarkar's view that religious conversions are undesirable. He notes, "Conversion of Hindus into other religions is nothing but making them succumb to divided loyalty in place of having undivided and absolute loyalty to the nation. It is dangerous to the security of the nation and the country."[64] Moreover, there is no need for a person to convert because the best aspects of other religions are already present in Hinduism.

State in *Hindutva* Imagination

The concept of state receives significant attention in 'Integral Humanism' (1965) the official political philosophy of the Bharathiya Janatha Party (BJP)[65], a political party founded in 1980 to further the cause of *Hindutva* nationalism in India. 'Integral Humanism,' which emerged as a political philosophy and program for *Hindutva* ideology, was conceptualized and articulated by Deendayal Upadhyaya (1916–1968), the first General Secretary of Jana Sangh, the

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[63] Golwalkar, *We or Our Nationhood*, 106.

[64] M. S. Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts* (Bangalore: Sahitya Sindhu Prakashana, 1966), 142.

[65] The main carrier of *Hindutva* ideology is the Hindu cultural organization called the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), founded in 1925. For decades, the RSS has worked at the grassroots level, recruiting children who are taught to fight religions founded outside India and forming new political movements (that include student, labor, and peasant groups). The chief organization is a political party called the Bharathiya Janatha Party (BJP) founded in December 1980. Few among important organizations which comes under the RSS are Vishwa Hindu Parishad (World Hindu Council) Bajrang Dal (Para militant wing), Dharm Jagaran Samiti (Organization for conversion of non-Hindus to Hinduism), Ekal Vidyalaya (organization for free education and village development) Vidya Bharati (group of Educational Institutions), ijnana Bharati (Science Forum), Bharatiya Kisan Sangh(Indian Farmers' Association) Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (Indian Labour Association), Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (All India Students' Forum), Bharatiya Shaikshik Mahasangh (All India Indian Teachers organization), Vit Salahkar Parishad (Financial consultants' association), Bharatiya Vikas Parishad (Organization for development & growth of India) Vivekananda Medical Mission (Sociomedical Services), Rashtra Sevika Samiti, literally (National Volunteer Association for Women), Hindu Vivek Kendra (Center for the promotion of *Hindutva* Ideology. see C. Jaffrelot, ed., *The Sangh Parivar: A Reader* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005).

predecessor organization of the BJP.[66] In this section I shall discuss briefly the understanding and purpose of the state as envisaged by integral humanism.

Two key concepts which are crucial in understanding state in *Hindutva* imagination are 'Chitti" or soul of a nation and "Dharma" or fundamental law of nature. Integral Humanism, committed to a primordial conception of nation, explicates 'Chitti' or soul of a nation as the ideals or the very character which constitute a nation. [67] From *Hindutva* articulations 'Chitti' or soul of the nation can be largely understood within the framework of the 'five unities' which constitute the Hindu nation namely - the Geographical (Sacred Hindu Land), Racial (Hindu Race), Cultural (Hindu Culture) and Linguistic (Sanskrit Language) all shaped by Hindu Religion. Upadhaya notes that "on the strength of this 'Chitti', a nation arises, strong and virile".[68] And "'Chitti' is the touch-stone, on which each action, each attitude is tested, and determined to be acceptable or otherwise."[69]

In Hinduism, the root meaning of the word Dharma means to "uphold, maintain, sustain, and keep in balance."[70] Thus Dharma is understood as those principles, duties or the right way, which help to maintain order and balance in the universe generally[71]. But in his *Hindutva*

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[66]Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalism,* 17.

[67] Deendayal Upadhyaya*, Integral Humanism* at http://www.bjp.org/about-the-party/philosophy/?u=integral-humanism, (accessed on January 14th 2015), 12.

[68] Upadhyaya*, Integral Humanism,* 12.

[69] Upadhyaya*, Integral Humanism*, 12.

[70] Ludo Rocher, "The Dharmashastras," in *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism,* ed. Gavin Flood. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), 102.

[71] Dharmashastras are ancient Sanskrit treatises on the subject of dharma. Ludo Rocher points out that there is no equivalent term for dharma in western languages. Dharma is understood as a principle which keeps everything in overall balance. As soon as any element in the cosmos deviates from its dharma, i.e. commits adharma, the overall balance is disturbed. At a human level dharma governs every aspect of a Hindu's life. Dharma is not synonymous with "law" nor with with "religion". But Dharma in addition to legal and religious law embrace various "dietary", "hygienic" and moral rules by which a Hindu is supposed to abide in. An individual's specific dharma (his sva-dhartna) is primarily determined by two criteria: his social class (Varna or caste) and his stage of life (as'rama). There are four social classes or caste. The fifth being untouchables of the outcaste who are treated as sub humans. Each have their own different dharmas. The three higher classes, they are called the "twice-born," have three kinds

political project, Upadhaya makes a selective and reductionist use of this concept.[72] Thus

according to him, Dharma can be understood as those laws that help manifest and maintain Chitti

of a nation.[73] Since dharma is eternal and supreme, the ideal nation *Hindutva* envisages is a

'Dharma Rajya'.[74] Upadhaya contends that at the human level, one helps maintain a harmonious

and integrated Hindu society by practicing one's Varna Dharma (caste duties) and that of his

Ashram Dharma (duties in relation to a person's station of life).[75] And "similarly, the power of

dharma was reflected in society through a deep love and affinity for the motherland, its common

history, culture, traditions, values and ideals".[76] Moreover since Hindu society is considered as a

visible manifestation of Almighty, one can achieve moksha through sacrificial service to the

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of dharma in common: study the sacred texts (adhyayana), patronize sacrifices for their own benefit (yajana), and generosity toward others. The Brahman or priest have specific dharma includes teaching the Vedic texts, performing sacrifices and receiving special gifts to which only Brahmans are entitled.. The Ks.atriya or warrior caste Dharma is to maintain law and order inside the territory and defends the country against outsiders. The Vais´ya or business caste people earns a living with trade, crafts, and agriculture. The members of the sole class that is not twice-born is the Shudaras or the servant caste. Their only dharma is to serve the members of three higher classes.There are also four life stages (as´rama) in life which the dharma of the Hindu is different. At an early age (5 or later, depending on his social class) the boy born in one of the three higher classes undergoes a rite of passage called upanayana. The boy is given a sacred thread at this time and becomes a brahmacharin. The main dharma of the brahmacharin is to study the sacred texts under the guidance of a teacher (guru), to serve his guru, and to observe strict celibacy (brahmacarya). At the end of this stage one is given a choice to take permanently brahmacharin or not. The second stage of life starts with marriage and that of a "householder" or gra'hastha. Here a person establishes and sustains a family, including the primary duty of fathering a son who will perform the necessary funeral rites after his father's death. The third stage of is to retire from active life, and become a vanaprastha or "forest dweller," The final stage of life is to become a sannyasin or "renouncer." In Hindu Dharma there is only one rite of passage for women that is their wedding. See Rocher, "The Dharmashastras," 102–4.

[72] Chettan Bhatt notes that representation of Dharma in *Hindutva* poses a grim challenge to dharma rather than its fulfillment. He notes that "Indeed, a vivid characteristic of Hindu nationalism is its reduction of the dense and sophisticated metaphysical content of Hindu and Buddhist philosophy to bare Hindu nationalist political slogans and mottos that are incapable either of conveying the vast range of speculative metaphysics within the different schools of Indian philosophical thought or of challenging Western or Eurocentric philosophical hegemony, aspects of which they uncritically reproduce." Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies*, 131.

[73] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalism,* 152.

[74] Upadhyaya*, Integral Humanism,* 17.

[75] Upadhyaya*, Integral Humanism,* 18.

[76] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies*, 156.

nation.[77]

Against the backdrop of "Chitti" or soul of the nation and Dharma (innate law of nature and nationhood), Upadhaya places the function and purpose of the State. While affirming the nation to be self-born, he asserts that the existence of state should be understood in terms of social contract theory. According to him state is "brought into existence to protect the nation; produce and maintain conditions in which the ideals of the nation can be translated into reality."[78] State exists fundamentally to uphold Dharma and thereby maintain and protect the "Chitti" or soul of the nation. Unity, Independence, and security are basic Dharma of any nation. State is expected to uphold it.[79] However, Upadhaya also clearly demarcates the limitation of state. He makes it clear that although State is an important institution, it not supreme nor it is above all others. State is subject to Dharma and is not absolutely powerful. State is also not the sole representative of the nation.[80] Upadhaya notes that since nation was sustained by the practice of Dharma, "Our national life continued uninterruptedly even after the state went in the hands of foreigners."[81] The *Hindutva* ideologues, in general, are also conscious that power of the state and political power is limited in molding the minds of men on the lines of virtue.[82] In this line Golwalkar has already noted "after all, political power is an external appliance, which cannot by itself mould the 'inner man' after an ideal."[83] In Upadhyaya's view the state benefits society only so long as it remains as the upholder of dharma and 'the state could not assume authority or powers over the people in contravention of 'dharma'. In such cases, the people, in so far as they

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[77] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts,* 46.

[78] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalism, 152.*

[79] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalism,* 147–48.

[80] Jaffrelot, *Hindu Nationalism,* 55.

[81] Upadhyaya*, Integral Humanism,* 14.

[82] Golwalker*, Bunch of thoughts*, 74.

[83] Golwalker*, Bunch of thoughts*, 74.

acted in accordance with 'dharma', had an obligation to oppose the state.'[84]

Indian Secularism and *Hindutva* Nationalism

It is important to note that *Hindutva* nationalism emerged parallel to and oftentimes counter

to Indian nationalism, which was largely shaped by the Gandhian and Nehruian model of

nationalism, which aims to accommodate all religions practiced (not necessarily originated) in

India.[85]

One of the important scholars who studied the Gandhian and Nehruian model of

nationalism and secularism is Triloki Nath Madan, an eminent Indian sociologist. He articulates

that in a Gandhian conception of nationalism and secularism religion holds a positive role. A

complete separation of state and religion is neither desired nor necessary.[86] Gandhi wrote,

> I cannot conceive politics as divorced from religion. Indeed religion should pervade
> every one of our actions. Here, religion does not mean sectarianism. It means a belief
> in ordered moral government of the universe. It is not less, because it is unseen. This
> religion transcends Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, etc. it does not supersede them.
> It harmonises them and gives them reality.[87]

However, Gandhi's positive affirmation of religion does not allow him to support a

concept of a state religion or state support for any religion. As Madan points out, according to

Gandhi, "A society or group, which depends partly or wholly on state aid for the existence of its

religion, does not deserve or, better still, does not have any religion worth the name."[88] Gandhi's

attitude towards secularism was shaped by the ancient Indian concept called "Sarva Dharma

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[84] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies*, 157.

[85] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies*, 41–7.

[86] T. N. Madan, *Modern Myths, Locked Minds: Secularism and Fundamentalism in India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998), 234.

[87] Madan, *Modern Myths,* 235.

[88] Madan, *Modern Myths*, 237.

Sambhava," which denotes equal respect of all religions.[89] Christophe Jaffrelot agrees with Madan when he rightly points out that "Mahatma Gandhi looked at the Indian nation as, ideally, a harmonious collection of religious communities all placed on an equal footing."[90] In addition, to Gandhi a nation was to be defined not primarily in terms of cultural features but according to territorial boundaries. It encompassed all those who happened to live within in the borders of India irrespective of their cultural or religious persuasion.[91]

Unlike Gandhi, Nehru was an agnostic and his version of secularism was deeply influenced more by "the ideals of the European Enlightenment than the hard facts of society, culture and politics of India."[92] He saw religiosity and the attendant conflicts as the badge of social backwardness.[93] Nehru thought that the hold of religion over the lives of the people would disappear with economic affluence, the spread of education, and science and technology.[94] Therefore, Nehru, who was substantively influenced by Marx and Locke, observed that "the real thing to my mind is the economic factor. If we lay stress on this and divert public attention to it we shall find automatically that religious differences recede into the background and a common bond unites different groups."[95] Therefore, he dreamt of an economic nation-space and claimed that dams and steel plants were the temples of modern India.[96] Although economic precedence and scientific temper marked Nehru's approach to nation building, he did not dismiss religion as

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[89] Madan, *Modern Myths*, 237.

[90] Christophe Jaffrelot ed., *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 4.

[91] Jaffrelot ed., *Hindu Nationalism*, 4.

[92] Madan, *Modern Myths*, 242.

[93] Madan, *Modern Myths,* 246.

[94] George Mathew, "Fundamentalism in India: A Sociological Perspective," in *Religious Fundamentalism: An Asian Perspective*, ed. John S. Augustine (Bangalore: South Asia Theological Research Institute, 1993), 21.

[95] Madan, *Modern Myths*, 240.

[96] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism and the Indian Church,* 69.

the "opium of the people" as Marx had done. Although Nehru's western enlightenment notion of secularism leaned more towards a wall of separation between state and religion, he found value in the concept of "Sarva Dharma Sambhava" or equal respect of all religion as a strategy. Nehru acknowledged the all-pervasive influence of religion in Indian society because, as Sarvepalli Radha Krishnan, philosopher and the first vice president of India, noted, it would be "strange that our government should be a secular one while our culture is rooted in spiritual values."[97] Therefore, the dominant Indian concept of the nation shaped mainly by Gandhi, Nehru, and others was an ideology that could encompass, within its parameters, all cultures and religions that were practiced within this sub-continent.[98] And a distinctively Indian version of secularism as expressed in the words of H. V. Kamath, a prominent congressman who has come to dominate the legal and political thought of India, is that "the State represents all the people who live in its territories, and, therefore it cannot afford to identify itself with any particular section of the population. We have certainly declared that India should be a secular State. But . . . a secular state is neither a Godless State nor an irreligious, nor an anti-religious, state."[99]

Conclusion

Our discussion on *Hindutva* can be summed up thus: *Hindutva* ideology is of a recent origin, having its roots in the colonial period. *Hindutva* nationalism shaped by primordial conception of nationhood, embraces an ethnic nationalism with an agenda to protect Brahmanical cultural hegemony over against other ethno-cultural and religious minorities in modern India. The *Hindutva* ideology rejects the constitutional version of secularism that

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[97] Madan, *Modern Myths,* 245.

[98] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism,* 38.

[99] Madan, *Modern Myths,* 244.

embraces all the citizens of India irrespective of their religious affiliation. Instead *Hindutva* envisions a nation patterned after the majority Hindu religious community. Thus, they assume that India's national identity should be summarized by Hinduism, the dominant creed of the country, and Indian culture was to be defined as Hindu culture. In *Hindutva* imagination, the purpose of the state/government is to fashion society according to its tenets where Christians are seen as antinational and anti-cultural elements who do not have a rightful place in the nationhood. Thus Christians whose faith and culture with its "smell of foreignness" cannot expect the rights of citizens unless they embrace *Hindutva*, i.e., glorify Hindu culture and religion. Since conversion to any other religion from Hinduism is seen as an unpatriotic act, evangelistic activities of Christians are to be under strict government observation, and Christian charitable and social development activities often meet the heavy militant hands of *Hindutva* zealots. Moreover, cultural and political organizations of the *Hindutva*—with its nexus of state and government machinery—aims to curtail social opportunities and religious freedom of Christians and other ethno-cultural minorities in India. With this in view, in the next chapter I will look in detail at some of the Christian theological responses made to *Hindutva* challenges to the Christian Church and to the common good.

CHAPTER THREE

INDIAN CHRISTIAN RESPONSES TOWARDS POLITICAL HINDUISM

Since its inception *Hindutva* nationalism has created several challenges to Christians and other ethno-cultural minorities in India. The recent rise of a Hindu nationalist government has provided a fresh impetus to the ongoing Hinduisation of Public Square in India.[1] Several Indian Christian theologians to approach and respond to the challenges posed by *Hindutva*. Sebastian C. H. Kim [2] and his wife Kirsteen Kim [3] noted different approaches taken by Indian Christian theologians in responding to Hindu fundamentalism. In this chapter, adapting from their respective works, I will map out various Indian Christian Responses towards *Hindutva*. I shall also discuss briefly some of the strengths and weakness inherent in these responses. In order to provide a backdrop to various Indian theological responses, a brief summary on some of the specific challenges posed by *Hindutva* nationalism to Christians in India is desirable.

Hindutva Challenges to Christians: An Overview

The challenges posed to Christians by *Hindutva* can be broadly classified under three categories. They are the scandal of Religious Conversion, Scandal of Theological Exclusivism and a Challenge to Multicultural society.

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[1] The Bharathiya Janatha Party (BJP), the Hindu nationalist party claimed a historic landslide victory in Lok Sabha Elections in May 2014. BJP alone won 282 seats and with their alliance made 336 seats out of total 545.

[2] Sebastian C. H. Kim, *In Search of Identity: Debates on Religious Conversion in India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[3] Kirsteen Kim, "Indian Christian Theological Response to Political Hinduism," in *Nationalism and Hindutva: A Christian Response–Papers from the 10th CMS Conference*, ed. Mark T. B. Laing (Delhi: CMS/UBS/ISPCK, 2005).

The Scandal of Conversion

According to Golwalkar conversion brings about a process of de-Hinduisation which makes one abandon Hindu religion and culture. Such an alienation from the native culture with an adoption of foreign culture breeds divided loyalties. This is an assault to Hindu nationhood. The *Hindutva* ideologues are quick to dismiss Christians as anti-nationals who have little to contribute towards nation's good.[4] *Hindutva* literature also view religious conversion as a kind of religious colonialism or domination [5] and an attempt to convert manifest a 'fundamental contempt for Hinduism.'[6]

The modern advocates of *Hindutva* are also vehement in their attack on conversion. For example Sang Parivar finds conversion as "violence against humanity and therefore evil and unacceptable."[7] Similarly David Frawley, a Hindu convert from catholic faith insists that "conversion is an 'ideological assault', a form of 'religious violence and intolerance', and an 'attempt of one religion to exterminate all others.'" [8]

The *Hindutva* zealots pitch their attack on the premise that Christians carry out conversion through fraudulent means. Golwalkar candidly stated:

> We have nothing against the Christians except their methods of gaining converts. When they give medicine to the sick or bread to hungry, they should not exploit the situation by propagating their religion to those people. Their only aim is to make this Country a province of the Kingdom of Christ. Towards that end they feel that every tactics however foul is fair.[9]

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[4] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, 157.

[5] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, 113.

[6] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 167

[7] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 165.

[8] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 166.

[9] "Shri Guruji_and The_Christian Missions," http://www.golwalkarguruji.org/download/books/en/Shri_Guruji_and_The_Christian_Missions.pdf (accessed March 20, 2013), 6.

Golwalkar further elaborates:

> Conversion of an individual does not take place after a serious and comparative study of philosophies by him. It is by exploitation of poverty, illiteracy and ignorance, offering of inducements and by deceptive tactics that people are converted. It is but right that this unjust activity is prohibited. It is a duty we have to discharge towards protecting our brethren in ignorance and poverty.[10]

There can be identified at least three ploys employed by *Hindutva* proponents to contain religious conversion from Hinduism. They are legislative measures, re-conversion movements, and persecution. The legislative measures includes anti-conversion laws and selective discrimination based on religion. The anti-conversion laws in India found their impetus from a governmental enquiry on Christian mission activities in Madhya Pradesh in 1954. The committee formed to produce the enquiry findings, called the "Niyogi Report' named after its chairman Bhawani Shankar Niyogi, a retired Chief Justice, mainly consisted of Hindus except one Christian, whose selection was highly criticized by Catholic Church, objecting that he is not a true representative of Christians in India.[11] The committee was "commissioned to enquire into any 'political and extra-religious objectives' in the missionary work and to make necessary recommendations to the government for necessary action".[12] The commission accused Christian mission agencies for using various means like schools, hospitals and orphanages for the sole purpose of proselytization.

Although the commission acknowledged the Christian claim that conversion is an act of God, still they objected on the premise that the majority of conversions are not genuine but were wrought through material inducements and false promises.[13] The report accused missionary activities for producing communal disharmony, and disrupting the convert's sense of unity and

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[10] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*, 142.

[11] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 61.

[12] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 61.

[13] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 67.

solidarity with the society. The commission observed that Christians hold supranational loyalty to Christ and that the strategy of the missionaries is to "to detach the Indian Christian from his nation"[14] and that a Christian's loyalty to the nation is questionable. The report also noted that the intention behind evangelization in India is not spiritual but should be considered a part of "the uniform world policy to revive Christendom for re-establishing Western supremacy and to create Christian minority pockets with a view to disrupting the solidarity of non-Christian societies."[15] The Niyogi commission's recommendations included withdrawal of foreign missionaries from the country, strict measures to monitor inflow of foreign funds for evangelism activities, prohibiting use of any professional services as means for conversion, and suitable control over conversion brought through fraudulent means, if necessary through legislative measures.[16]

The Niyogi commission's findings were significant for *Hindutva* proponents because it helped to crystalize and verbalize their accusations of Christians with an official study. Since then the Niyogi Report has been widely used by the *Hindutva* ideologues "as ballast for their anti-Christian arguments."[17] For example the Niyogi Report was an inspirational source material for Arun Shourie's book on Christian missionaries called *Missionaries in India: Continuities, Changes, and Dilemmas*. The Niyogi report also gave impetus to frame a bill known as the Indian Converts (Regulation and Registration) Bill, applicable to the whole of India, to use the state power to prevent conversion. The bill was presented to the Lok Sabha in December 1954, who opposed and rejected it. However, at present five states in India have anti-conversion laws

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[14] Parvathi Menon, "An Old Debate in a New Context," *Frontline*, Volume 16 - Issue 8, Apr. 10–23, 1999. http://www.frontline.in/static/html/fl1608/16080380.htm. (Accessed April 2, 2013).

[15] Niyogi Report, Chapter 4 Part IV Chapter I. – Conclusions (Findings). http://voiceofdharma.org/books/ncr/8vipiv.htm. (Accessed March 20, 2013).

[16] Niyogi Report, Chapter 4 Part IV Chapter I. – Conclusions.

[17] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 72.

in effect and another two are in the process of adopting one.[18]

The discriminatory measures put forward by the government to contain conversion to

Christianity is largely affected by Dalit Christians in India. Sebastian Kim notes:

> [T]he President's' Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order issued on 10 August 1950
> stated that no person who professes a religion different from Hindu religion shall be
> deemed to be a member of a Scheduled Caste', which meant that converts from these
> castes were outside the scope of state aid applicable to members. The special rights
> and privileges of the Scheduled Castes included political representation, educational
> opportunities and economic aid, and exclusion from them generated considerable
> tension and economic hardship.[19]

Christians appealed for not discontinuing governmental privileges for schedule castes

converts, based on the argument that the Christian convert's economic and social conditions are

no better than non-Christian scheduled castes. The Hindus argued that such governmental benefit

is meant to elevate the problem of caste and "since the converts had opted out of the caste

system, there was no reason to offer them benefits."[20] But it should be noted that Sikh, Buddhist

Schedule Caste converts still enjoy constitutional privileges.

The re-conversion movement or ghar wapsi (Home Coming) movement is another strategy

employed by *Hindutva* to check religious conversion. The re-conversion or ghar Wapsi

movement has its origin in Arya Samaj's Shuddhi movement in 1890's. *Shuddhi* or purification

ritual was a ceremony used exclusively by upper caste Hindu's to purify their defilement caused

through contact with lower castes.[21] But drawing inspiration from the practice of baptism by

Christian missionaries, this ceremony was adapted to form a re-conversion ceremony or home

coming ritual, "emphasizing that those who had adopted other faiths were to 'come back' to their

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[18] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 72–3.

[19] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 75.

[20] Kim, *In Search of Identity, 75.*

[21] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies*, 20.

'original', 'natural' faith, Hinduism, and hence their homeland."[22] Since the 1990's *Hindutva*

organizations engage in active re-conversion movements among Christian Dalit and tribal

populations which has caused a considerable communal tension within these communities.

Dharm Jagran Samiti (DJS), a *Hindutva* organization which is a close aide to Rashtriya Swayam

Sevak (RSS) and Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) in heading recent re-conversion movements,

has stated, "Our target is to make India a Hindu Rashtra by 2021."[23] To this end, they are

committed to actively pursue 'ghar wapsi' or 'home coming' program so that "Christians and

Muslims would either be converted to Hinduism or forced to run away from here."[24]

<center>The Scandal of Theological Exclusivism</center>

The *Hindutva* literature takes issue with Christianity for its theological exclusivism. This is

done through comparing Christianity with the notion of a pluralistic and all-inclusive Hinduism.

Ashok Chowgule, a prominent *Hindutva* leader notes, "Christianity believes in exclusivism. It

says that Christ is the only Son of God, and was sent to this world to lead the people to Him….

Christianity divides the world into believers and non-believers, with the former going to heaven,

and the latter to that place where one is eternally barbecued!"[25] Golwalkar had already stated

"All the good and great among the holy Christians, otherwise admirable are, when it comes to

the question of Church, all closed minds."[26]

In contrast to Christianity, Ashok Chowgule notes:

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[22] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism: Origins, Ideologies*, 198.

[23] Piyush Srivastava. "'We will Free India of Muslims and Christians by 2021': DJS Leader Vows to Continue 'Ghar Wapsi' Plans and Restore 'Hindu glory," http://www.dailymail.co.uk/indiahome/indianews/article-2879597/We-free-India-Muslims-Christians-2021-DJS-leader-vows-continue-ghar-wapsi-plans-restore-Hindu-glory.html. (accessed January 20, 2015).

[24] Srivastava. "'We will free India."

[25] Ashok V. Chowgule, *Christianity in India: The Hindutva Perspective* (Mumbai: Hindu Vivek Kendra, 1999), 3.

[26] "Shri Guruji and the Christian Mission," 10.

Hinduism believes in pluralism - that is there are multiple paths to salvation and one chooses the path that one thinks is valid for oneself. This is the hallmark of its tolerance. Its ethos is expressed in the shloka *Ekam Sat, Viprah Bahudda Vadanti*, which is best translated as follows: "There is an eternal Truth, but there are many ways to achieve it." While a Hindu may vigorously argue about the merit of his/her way to achieve the Truth, he/she will accept that another person may have a different way which is better suited to that individual. Hindus consider that the belief that one is in sole possession of the Truth is an impediment to enlightenment. It is even regarded as being arrogant.[27]

It should be noted that liberal Christianity in India has made a large paradigm shift in their Christological articulation to be more inclusive. Even evangelical Christianity has become more self-reflective and self-critical in their articulation of Gospel to accommodate Hindu sentiments. However as Sahayadhas puts it:

Thus, it has to be kept in mind that the Church or the Christians in India can hardly hope for any goodwill from the Hindu nationalists, which is made clear from the fact that they are not ready to take the recent paradigm changes in Christian theology and more specifically in Christological constructions seriously because, in their view, the official theology of the Church remains essentially unchanged.[28]

So to the *Hindutva* proponents Christianity, with its exclusive claims, falls short of a superior and more tolerant "pluralistic Hinduism." Thus it is a threat to communal harmony and peaceful coexistence.[29]

A Challenge to Multicultural Society

India is often described as "the epitome' of the world" due to its diverse socio-cultural and religious diversity. India is also known as the cradle of world religions. Although Hinduism constitutes the majority religion, India is home to a large number of religious minorities like

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[27] Chowgule, *Christianity in India*, 2–3.

[28] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 79.

[29] Sebastian Kim however sees a paradox involved in Hindu notion of religious tolerance. He argues that Hindu notion of tolerance has been limited when it comes to the question of religious conversion of Hindu's to other faiths. He notes that such an intolerance has been "revealed in actions including the Hindu personal laws, withdrawal of concessions for Scheduled Castes and Tribes, 'freedom of religion' legislation, and above all, physical attacks on Christian community by the Sangh Parivar." Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 187.

Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhist, Jain, Jewish, Parsee, animist communities and the like.

Even people marked under Hinduism are so diverse that not everyone follows a single creed or

culture. This diversity qualifies Hinduism to be called an 'umbrella religion". India also carries

much diversity in terms of racial groups. India's 1.2 billon population is basically composed of

three basic racial groups namely Indo-Aryans, Dravidians and Mongolians with numerous

subdivisions. The linguistic diversity of India is also notable. Although there are 22 official

languages in India, according to the 2001 Census, there are, in total 122 languages in India out of

which 22 languages are spoken by over one million people, while a remaining 100 languages are

spoken by more than 10,000 people.[30]

According to Gurpreet Mahajan "Unity in Diversity" is what India stands for. And "Unity

in Diversity" articulates the sentiment that India can be a strong and unified country while

simultaneously affirming its cultural diversity. "Cultural homogeneity is not, in other words,

seen as a necessary condition for forging a political identity as a nation state."[31] She further notes

that "when India gained independence in 1947, the political leadership and the framers of the

constitution took note of this diversity, and they deliberated on a framework that would provide

for a unified but culturally diverse nation state."[32] With the rise of militant *Hindutva*

nationalism, the cultural and religious diversity of the nation is at stake, because *Hindutva*

ideology is nothing but an attempt to create a corporate identity either by assimilating or

excluding the minorities in order to form a monolithic, homogenous Hindu culture under a

common Brahmanical construction of Indian nation.

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[30] Gurpreet Mahajan, "Negotiating Cultural Diversity and Minority Rights in India," http://www.idea.int/publications/dchs/upload/dchs_vol2_sec3_4.pdf (accessed December 20, 2014), 111.

[31] Mahajan, "Negotiating Cultural Diversity," 112.

[32] Mahajan, "Negotiating Cultural Diversity," 111.

Indian Christian Theological Responses to Political Hinduism

The influence of Political Hinduism, its concerns and challenges, either directly or indirectly, on Indian theological articulation cannot be ignored. Sebastian C. H. Kim, in his work on religious conversion in India, and his wife Kirsteen Kim, in her article on theological responses to political Hinduism in India, have noted different approaches taken by Indian Christian theologians in responding to Hindu fundamentalism. In this section, adapting and further developing from their respective works, I have classified Indian Christian Responses towards *Hindutva* into five major categories, namely, inculturationalist approach, secular approach, interreligious dialogue approach, liberation approach and evangelical approach. In addition to this, I will also discuss briefly the work of R. Sahayadas, who approached *Hindutva* from Luther's Ecclesiology.

Inculturation Approach

The concerns of inculturation theologies have always been to relate and express the Gospelin relation to religiocultural setting of Hinduism.[33] Some of the pressing questions

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[33] The roots of inculturation model in India can be traced back to the work of Roberto De Nobili (1577-1656), a Jesuit missionary who tried to relate the Gospel to Hindu tradition and beliefs. Having understood the problem of identifying Christianity with becoming a foreigner, he studied and adopted the customs and lifestyle of local people without compromising his religious faith. He adopted the life of a *sannyasi* and dressed in saffron robes. He also accepted caste system and encouraged Hindu converts to follow Indian social customs. Roberto De Nobili's innovations were not without controversies. He received opposition both from caste Hindu's and also from his denomination hierarchy. However Robin Boyd notes that his major achievement "is to be seen in his understanding and adaption of Hindu customs and ceremonies, in his pioneering study of Sanskrit and Tamil and his initiation of the essential task of evolving a Christian theological vocabulary for Indian languages." Robin Boyd, *An Introduction to Indian Christian Theology* (Madras, Christian Literature Society, 1969), 14. See also John C. England et al., eds., *Asian Christian Theologies: A Research Guide to Authors, Movements and Sources* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2002), 206-207. It should be noted that the Church in India is as old as Christianity itself. Most ancient tradition of Indian Church dates Christianity to AD 52 with the arrival of Apostle Thomas in Malabar. Moreover in 345 AD Thomas of Cana brought a group of Syrian settlers to Malabar. These early Christians have been culturally closely integrated with Indian society and fitted into caste structured society as a special caste. So it is often said about this community that they were "Hindu in culture, Christian in religion and Oriental in worship" (John C. England, 195). However there existed no effort from this community to develop a theology in Indian terminology which might aid for evangelism and witness. Two reason for this could be, most of these converts were from high caste and liked to maintain their privileges and secondly the language of liturgy was Syraic which most of the people could not understand. So as Robin Boyd Points out "The liturgy was preserved indeed, and was the focus of

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addressed were: (1) Can a person remain culturally a Hindu and while embracing Christianity as a religion? and (2) Should a person leave the Hindu community to become a Christian? At the heart of these questions also lies the *Hindutva* opposition to religious conversions and accusations against Christians abandoning/losing Indian culture for a foreign one. The attempts made by Inculturation theologians were to find continuity with Hindu religion and culture yet to remain faithful to the Christian faith as Indian citizens.[34]

Most of the Inculturation theologians rejected Henry Kraemer's exclusivist position, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*,[35] which argued for the discontinuity of Christianity with other faiths but appropriated in different ways the fulfillment theory articulated by J. Farquhar, *The Crown of Hinduism*.[36] Thus, they saw Hinduism as preparing men's hearts for Christ, and what is foreshadowed in Hinduism is perfected in Christianity.[37] Some of the important figures who tried to bring synthesis between Christianity and Hinduism include Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya (1861-1906), Sadhu Sundar Singh (1889-1929) and A.J Appasamy (1891 – 1975), Manilal C. Parekh (1885–1967),[38] Vengal Chakkarai (1880–1958) Pandippedi Chenchiah (1886–1959), and Raymond Panikkar (1918–2010).[39]

Brahmabandhav Upadhyaya was a Brahmin convert to Christianity, who became Roman

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Christian life, but such conditions, together with the lack of vernacular (Malayalam) translation of the Bible until the early 19th century, could not make for theological interest or discussion." Boyd, *Indian Christian Theology*, 8.

[34] For more discussion see also A. R. Victor Raj, *The Hindu Connection: Roots of the New Age* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1995), 120–49.

[35] Henry Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1956).

[36] Kirsteen Kim, "India" in *An Introduction to Third World Theologies,* ed. John Parratt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 55–56.

[37] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 114.

[38] For a brief summary of Manilal Parekh see M. M. Thomas and P. T. Thomas, eds., *Towards an Indian Christian Theology: Life and Thought of Some Pioneers* (Tiruvalla: Christava Sahitya Samithi, 1998), 159–63.

[39] For a brief summary of these theologians see John C. England et al., eds., *Asian Christian Theologies: A Research Guide to Authors, Movements and Sources* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2002), 224–28.

Catholic. He taught that it is possible to remain culturally a Hindu while embracing Christianity as a religion. He believed that Christianity came to India with its purity hidden under unfamiliar western terms and categories. He argued that the imported European garb of Christian truths made the Gospel unintelligible to the Hindus. He thought the Vedantic tradition would serve as a vehicle to present Christian truth. Upadhyaya's contribution was to develop the expression of Christian doctrine making use of advaita or non-dualistic Hindu philosophy, as taught by Sanakara in the eight century.[40]

Sadhu Sunder Singh was a convert from Sikh religion through a mystic experience with Christ. 'The water of life in an Indian cup' was the phrase often used to describe him. Sunder Singh was a lay theologian who viewed Christianity as the fulfillment of Hinduism. His inclination to Bhakti tradition had profound influence on A.J Appasamy who tried to relate the Gospel to the bhakti tradition of Hinduism. So as Upadhaya related to philosophical tradition of Hinduism, Appasamy made use of bhakti tradition, especially of Ramanuja.[41]

Manilal Parekh, a convert from Jainism, found Christianity and Hinduism as integrated in Jesus Christ. Hence, he advocated for a "Hindu Church of Christ," a fellowship of followers of Christ who remained within Hindu community and culture.[42] Chenchiah and Chakkarai, both converts from Hinduism, saw Hindu scriptures as God's chosen *praeparatio evangelii* for the people of India and subsequently tried to express Christian understanding using Hindu religious concepts.[43] Whatever the positive elements of the Church might be, both were skeptical of

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[40] Boyd, *Indian Christian Theology,* 63–85.

[41] In relating to bhakti tradition Appasamy viewed that "The Christian life is seen as one of loving devotion to God in Christ, and the goal of life-that moksa or release or salvation for which Hindu and Christian long-is to be found in faith-union with Christ. Not absorption into the divine but a loving personal union with him who said, 'Abide in me'–that is the chief end of man." Boyd, *Indian Christian Theology*, 119

[42] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 90.

[43] Boyd, *Indian Christian Theology,* 158.

institutionalized Church, because they saw it as a human institution tainted with an alien western pattern and colonial legacy. Chenchiah in particular was attracted to the ancient Hindu idea of the *ashram,* where a small community of people lived with greatest simplicity as disciples of a guru. He also thought that the *ashram* system would effectively cater to the spiritual needs of the Christian community instead of an institutionalized Church.[44] It has to be noted here that later *ashram* gained momentum both in the Protestant and Catholic mission approach. Chenchiah believed that "a Christian movement within Hinduism without its umbilical cord being cut is a decided advantage to the Hindu and the Christian."[45] In the backdrop of the Second Vatican Council and Karl Rahner's theology of "anonymous Christianity," Raymond Panikkar's *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism,*[46] tried to answer the relationship between Christianity and Hinduism. Panikkar argued that Christ is already there in Hinduism insofar as Hinduism is a true religion and that the Christian mission was to unveil the 'unknown Christ' in Hinduism.[47]

The inculturationalist approach met with serious objections from both the Christian community and *Hindutva* proponents. Sebastian Kim points out that the proponents of the Inculturation theologies were largely drawn from high caste background who wanted to retain their Hindu tradition.[48] Thus, their efforts to relate the Gospelto Brahmanical traditions of Hinduism and the desire to remain culturally as Hindus met with criticism from Dalit and tribal Christian theologies as "simply a Christian form of high caste hegemony."[49] Moreover,

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[44] Boyd, *Indian Christian Theology*, 159–60.

[45] Boyd, *Indian Christian Theology,* 164.

[46] Raymond Panikkar*, The Unknown Christ of Hinduism: Towards an Ecumenical Christophany* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1981).

[47] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 113.

[48] Sebastian C.H Kim, "Indian Christian Mission Ecclesiology: Models for Engagement with Hinduism–with Special Reference to Conversion," in *The Indian* Church *in Context: Her Emergence, Growth and Mission*, ed. Mark T. B. Laing (Delhi: CMS/ISPCK, 2005), 177

[49] Kim, "Indian Christian Mission Ecclesiology," 177.

inculturationalist theologies did not appeal much to Christians from Dalit and other outcast groups who saw conversion as a means of revolt and liberation from oppressive Brahmanical structure.[50] From the *Hindutva* side, many thinkers like Swami Devananda, Ram Swarup, and Sita Ram Goel vehemently rejected the inculturationalist separation of religion and culture, arguing that Hindu culture grew out of Hindu religion. In addition, they thought that such attempts were a "deliberate and calculated design" to implant the Christian meaning of Christ into Hindu culture to seek converts.[51] Moreover, they rejected "fulfillment theory" and the Christian *ashram* movement as an assault on Hinduism. They also questioned how Hindu practices and theological concepts could be adopted by Christianity without hypocrisy.[52]

The accusation of colonial legacy led Christians in India seriously think about developing an indigenous church, free from western legacy. This was a goal, in part, as several denominations came together to form the Church of South India in 1947 and later the Church of North India in 1970.[53] One of statements of the governing principles of the CSI made it clear that the Church desires "conserving all that is of spiritual value in its India heritage, to express under Indian conditions and in Indian forms the spirit, the thought and the life of the Church Universal"[54]

Secular Approach

If efforts for religious and cultural synthesis marked the Inculturationalist theologian's approach, theologians of the secular Gospel thought secularization and secular fellowships would

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[50] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 120–21.

[51] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 119.

[52] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 117–19.

[53] England et al., eds., *Asian Christian Theologies*, 196.

[54] Boyd, *Indian Christian Theology*, 207.

bridge the gap between Hindu and Christian Community. As the West was preoccupied with debates on "secular Christianity" with Paul van Buren's *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel*,[55] John Robinson's *Honest to God*,[56] and Harvey Cox's *The Secular City*,[57] the principles and theology of secular theology were developed for the Indian context by M. M. Thomas (1916–1996) and others.[58] In fact, Cox remarked that in the context of Hindu sacralization of India, Christians in India should not only accept but struggle for a secular state.[59]

M. M. Thomas, who shared the Nehruvian secular vision of India as a secular society, believed that secularism could override religious difference. In a context where the institutional Church was understood to be associated with colonial legacy and conversion to Christianity alleged to foster communalism, he rejected the Church as a legitimate "point of contact" and likewise rejected the need for people to convert to Christianity.[60] However, he perceived the need for the conversion of both the Christian and Hindu faiths into the common ground that he saw as "human *koinonia*," or, as he later called it, "the Christ-centered secular fellowship."[61]

Thomas rejected any dichotomy between salvation and humanization.[62] He believed that though salvation and humanization are not identical both are integrally related.[63] He thought that the purpose of Christian mission was to engage in the common struggle for fuller humanity along

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[55] Paul Matthews Van Buren, *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel, Based on an Analysis of Its Language* (New York: Macmillan, 1963).

[56] John A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963).

[57] Harvey Gallagher Cox, *The Secular City: Secularization and Urbanization in Theological Perspective* (New York: Macmillan, 1966).

[58] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 96.

[59] Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (London: SCM, 1965), 89.

[60] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 100.

[61] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 100.

[62] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 99

[63] Adrian Bird, *M.M Thomas and Dalit Theology* (Bangalore: BTESSC and SATHRI, 2008), 96.

with "men of many faiths and no faith."[64] He called on the Church to break the communal

structures and build up a new partnership of Christians and non-Christians, the "human

koinonia," and argued that since Christ was in all, he was to be found there too.[65] Thomas was

highly critical of 'minority consciousness's of Christians and encouraged Christians to overcome

their isolation from national mainstream.[66] He thought that such an isolation is a result of

adherence of Indian Christians to 'pietistic individualism' which emphasize an inner experience

of conversion and dogmatic belief.[67] Thomas advocated that 'Christian participation in the life of

the State is a moral duty, national obligation, and the demand of the enlightened self-interest"[68]

However he was a very influential figure to encourage Christian community not to organize itself

as a Christian political party to fight exclusively for its own communal interests.[69] In line with M.

M. Thomas's theology of humanization, several other ecumenical theologians also developed

theologies of economic development and social justice, especially through the Christian Institute

for the Study of Religion and Society (CISRS), Bangalore to demonstrate Christian commitment

towards nation building.[70]

Abraham Vazhayil Thomas, another important proponent of secular approach, in book

Christians in Secular India (1974),[71] gives a brief summary of CISRS theologians thinking in

relation to secularization.[72] To CISRS thinkers "In Indian context, secularism is not an anti-

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[64] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 93.

[65] Sebastian C. H. Kim, *Theology in the Public Sphere* (London: SCM, 2011), 92.

[66] Kim, *Theology*, 93.

[67] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 99.

[68] P.D Devanandan and M.M Thomas, eds., *Christian Participation in Nation Building* (Bangalore: NCCI and CISRS, 1960), 49.

[69] Devanandan and Thomas, *Christian Participation,* 49.

[70] Kim, "India," 52.

[71] Abraham Vazhayil Thomas, *Christians in Secular India* (New Jersey: Associated University Press, 1974).

[72] A.V Thomas points out that publications of CISRS are the products of consultations and conferences which

religious dogma but a means of building a common political community where people belonging

to different religions can cooperate and work together for common goals. This is called *open*

secularism, because it not only guarantees religious freedom but also welcomes useful insights

from religions."[73] Some of the Christian reasons for justifying secularization are:

1) God has given a measure of autonomy to society and secular institutions. This should be recognized by religion. The sovereignty of God should not be thought of as the sovereignty of religion and its domination of society.
2) The Church has the responsibility of reminding civil society of its true nature and destiny, and of the sovereignty of God over society. The Church will be able to do this only if it stands apart from society and when both are not completely integrated into each other.
3) Religious institutions (including Christian churches) often succumb to the temptation "to discover the unity of all things, and manifest it in a religious synthesis of society." Religious institutions (or any pseudo-religious system or dogma) in themselves cannot represent the true nature of God's order in its complexity, order, freedom, truth and so on.[74]

The 'CISRS' thinkers were also conscious about the dangers inherent in an extreme form

of secularism. They noted, "In endorsing the process of secularization we should be aware of the

danger that secularism itself may become as closed and idolatrous as any religious system. So the

kind of secularism which is desired is where 'the role of religions should be to inspire the secular

culture from within, so that it may not become self-sufficient but remain open to religious

insights."[75]

The theologians of secular approach should be commended for their effort to relate the

Gospel with contemporary issues. Through their efforts they explored the possibility of working

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features leading Christian theological thinkers (and also non-Christians) in India. So one could easily find a representation of leading ecumenical and theological thinking in India. Thomas's summary here is based on three issues of CISRS journal (Religion and Society), in 1962, 1964, and 1971, which explored the meaning of secular state and its relationship to Christian community in India. See Thomas, *Christians in Secular India,* 120.

[73] Thomas, *Christians in Secular India*, 121.

[74] Thomas, *Christians in Secular India*, 122.

[75] Thomas, *Christians in Secular India,* 122–23.

closely with people of other religious, non-religious, and secular persuasions for justice and

common good for all. In a context of *Hindutva* nationalism, they affirmed and encouraged

Christians to work with others, for a national community comprising of all, irrespective of caste,

creed, religion, language, where everyone is entitled to fundamental rights, religious freedom,

justice, and equality. The secular approach, however, is not without its short coming. Firstly, the

optimism of proponents of secular approach that secularization would eventually dissolve the

religious difference and communal interest in India did not bear much fruit. As Sebastian Kim

notes that M.M Thomas and others':

> [O]ptimistic predictions of the disappearance of difference between religious
> communities, the demise of religious fanaticism, and the placing of greater value on
> humanization over religious matters did not materialize. Instead, in spite of
> modernization, religious values, religious communities, the fundamentalist groups
> were to play an ever more important role in the daily socio-political lives of the
> Hindus.[76]

Secondly, as the secular approach tried to find genuine solutions for problems in the

society, it failed to be sensitive towards the socio-cultural and theological problems faced by the

Christians, especially the new converts. The secular proponents' advocacy for 'secular

fellowships' and failure to affirm Christianity community, due to a fear that such attempts may

be viewed as communal, created more problems for the converts than it solved. Kim points out

that in the context of *Hindutva*, Thomas's and others' approach " lead to an identity crisis for

caste Hindu converts and also for converts from a Dalit and outcaste background putting

themselves in a situation where they neither fully belong to Hindu community nor the Christian

one."[77] In addition, in a context where baptism and conversion brings in sociopolitical and

cultural isolation, "Christian converts would find themselves rootless individuals fearing that any

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[76] Kim, *In Search of Identity*, 105.

[77] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 106.

support of the Christian community would be understood as communal and therefore

unethical."[78] Finally as Leslie Newbigin, in his conversion with Thomas pointed out, conversion

and the Church are essential to the Christian faith. Therefore, "secular fellowship" could not be a

"substitute for the fellowship rooted in Christ's work as Savior."[79] To the *Hindutva* proponents,

secularization in general and the secular approach of Christian theologians are not acceptable

because the common identity as Indians must be based on the Hindu heritage alone. Hindu

nationalist movement cannot accept anything that is not compatible with their case for a

monolithic Hindu nationhood.[80]

Inter-Religious Dialogue

Stanley Samartha, who was the first director of the WCC's subunit for interfaith dialogue

was the pioneering figure who shaped the texture of inter-religious dialogue in India.[81] Samartha

was not supportive of any "fulfillment model" or syncretic approaches because he thought they

were open to serious misunderstanding since Hinduism is not 'Christianity in disguise'.[82] He was

impatient with secular approaches since they tend to play down the importance of religion in

people's lives. He was also intolerant towards evangelical approaches and accused them of

perpetuating colonial missiology, separatist attitudes, and religious supremacy. He also criticized

liberation theologians who claimed to take sides with the poor and provoke political ferment.[83]

He thought in the context of religious fundamentalism the path of interreligious dialogue would

pave a way forward to maintain peace and harmony between different religious communities in

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[78] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 107.

[79] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 100.

[80] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts,* 133–37.

[81] Kim, "India," 56.

[82] Kim, "Indian Christian Theological Response," 164–65.

[83] Kim, "Indian Christian Theological Response," 165.

India.[84]

Samartha was greatly influenced by Paul Devanandan (Founder-Director of CISRS, Bangalore) and M.M Thomas, who explored how Christians could work together with people of different faiths and secular ideologies for social liberation. Nimrot Rajagukguk notes that Samartha's approach of Inter-faith dialogue was built upon and was strengthened, "firstly, by Devanandan's idea that God's grace operates everywhere and that other religions may be possible ways of salvation, and secondly, by M.M Thomas's emphasis that common concern for the social change in the societies is more important and more relevant instead of individual salvation."[85] Samartha understands Christian mission as, "In a religiously plural world, Christians, together with their neighbors of other faiths, are called upon to participate in God's continuing mission in the world. Mission is God's continuing activity through the Spirit to mend the brokenness of creation, to overcome the fragmentation of humanity, and to heal the rift between humanity, nature, and God."[86] He believed that inter-faith dialogue is an effective tool towards this end. To Samartha, since salvation can also be found within other religions, the purpose of Christian mission should not be individual salvation but the mutual meeting between Christians and other faiths through dialogue made possible on the basis of a common humanity to work towards social liberation.[87]

Samartha's underlying assumption behind his inter-faith dialogue could be categorized in the terms of John Hick, as a 'truth- seeking dialogue' in which the Transcendent Being is

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[84] Kim, "Indian Christian Theological Response," 56–7.

[85] Nimrot Rajagukguk, "A Critical Analysis of Stanley J Samartha's Concept of Christian Dialogue with People of Other Living Faiths,and Its Relevance to the Indonesian Context" (PhD Diss., University of Western Cape, 2011), 95.

[86] Stanley J. Samartha, *One Christ- Many Religions: Towards a Revised Christology* (New York: Orbis, 1991), 149.

[87] Samartha, *One Christ- Many* Religions, 41.

mutually acknowledged by both partners to be infinitely greater than their own limited vision of it, and through dialogue they seek to share their visions in the hope that each may be helped towards a fuller awareness of the Divine Reality before which they stand.[88]

According to Samartha 'the increasing politicization of religions is a disturbing feature of contemporary India.'[89] He notes that "Politicization is the use of religion by political or religious leaders for the benefit of one community at the expense of other."[90] To him politicization of religion is not acceptable because 1) it is a hindrance to the task of nation building, 2) it is a threat to the secular, democratic, and socialistic character of the Indian state, and 3) it has global consequences, raising the possibility of the religious factor intensifying conflicts between nations.[91] Samartha identified *Hindutva* as an illegitimate politicization of religion.[92] He also saw *Hindutva* as the hardening of the core of Hinduism as it reacts to the question of conversion in Islam and Hinduism.[93] With regard to the challenges raised by *Hindutva* he noted that "The most serious threat to the secular character of the democratic state in India today comes from the Bharathiya Janata Party (BJP), which has put forward *Hindutva* ("Hindu-ness") as the political ideology for the state over against what is described as the "pseudo secularism" of the present state".[94] In suggesting an appropriate Christian response to political Hinduism, Samartha wrote:

> For the moment, the Christian responses to Hindu fundamentalism often seem to be knee-jerk political reactions reflecting the anxiety of a minority community. Far more systematic study of the historical, religious and cultural roots of Hindu claims is

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[88] Rajagukguk, "Analysis of Stanley J Samartha's Concept of Christian Dialogue," 4–5.

[89] Samartha, *One Christ- Many Religions*, 51.

[90] Samartha, *One Christ- Many Religions*, 51.

[91] Samartha, *One Christ- Many Religions*, 53.

[92] Kim, "Indian Christian Theological Response," 166.

[93] Bob Robinson, *Christians Meeting Hindus: An Analysis and Theological Critique of the Hindu-Christian Encounter in India* (Oxford: Regnum, 2004), 172.

[94] Stanley J. Samartha, *Between Two Cultures: Ecumenical Ministry in a Pluralist World* (Geneva: WCC, 1996), 139.

necessary before advancing any serious theological criticism of the *Hindutva* ideology. Without recognizing the *totality* of Hindu fundamentalism as an autonomous reality and its certain irreducible basis in religion and religious identity, and without exploring the entire ensemble of its social interconnectedness in India's economy, history, politics, ideology and culture, and without consciously relating the Christian struggle against it to the larger struggle of people of all religions in India for a better life, a genuinely secular and democratic state that can guarantee a life of freedom, self-respect and dignity to all its citizens will be beyond the reach of Indian people for many generations.[95]

Samartha's solution in the context of increasing politicization of religion is to work towards pluralism. According to him pluralism describes a situation "in which various religions, philosophies and ideological conceptions live side by side and which none of them holds a privileged status."[96] He envisioned inter-faith dialogue to be of great use in this regard. He noted that alarming politicization of religion should not be seen as a set back towards inter-faith dialogue initiatives, but rather 'should be regarded as an opportunity to enter more deeply into dialogue with our neighbors and to concentrate on vital issues in the life of the nation."[97]

The main contribution of Inter-faith dialogue initiates was to undertake a genuine attempt to make Christian faith relevant to a multi-religious context of India, strained by communal tensions. By promoting dialogues between different religious communities, they hoped for mutual understanding, harmony and cooperation towards the wellbeing of all. However inter-faith dialogue assumes a willingness and commitment by both parties to engage in conversation. To *Hindutva* exponents any talk of plurality outside the fold of Hinduism is not acceptable. Therefore unless so called 'religions of foreign origin' confirm to *Hindutva* pattern, inter-faith dialogue is not possible. To the proponents of Inter-faith dialogue the exclusive nature of Christian salvation and faith is problematic to an inclusive acceptance of others. Samartha notes:

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[95] Samartha, *Between Two Cultures*, 141

[96] Stanley J. Samartha, *Courage for Dialogue: Ecumenical Issues in Inter-Religious Relationships* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981), 17.

[97] Samartha, *Courage for Dialogue*, 135.

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What *is* foolishness, and what *is* a stumbling block to neighbors of other faiths, is the Christian claim that *only* in Jesus Christ has God been revealed *once-for-all* to redeem all humanity. This claim has isolated Christians from their neighbors of other faiths in India, led to their theological alienation and spiritual improvishment, and in a religiously plural society has made it difficult, if not impossible, for Christians to cooperate with their neighbors for common social purposes.[98]

Samartha revised Nicene Christology using historical critical methodology to cater to his pluralistic project. To Samartha, Jesus of Nazareth should be understood as divine but not God. And incarnation is 'best understood not solely in terms of "deity", but in terms of "divinity".[99]

Liberation Approach

The liberation theologies in India emerged in conversation with Latin American liberation theologies of 1970s. Indian liberation theologians were aware of the limitations of Marxist analysis in dealing with the complex religiocultural context of Indian society. Therefore, eventually they developed their own strand of liberation theologies, drawing upon the indigenous cultural tradition and experience for the sociopolitical liberation in Indian context.[100] The liberation theologians usually see sociopolitical and economic uplifting as the visible manifestation of redemption in the historical context. They understand and welcome religious conversion as a search for social justice and social protest by the oppressed castes in the face of sociocultural and political discrimination.[101] The liberation theologians are critical of any form of inculturation and dialogue that tends to relate with Brahmanical Hinduism. However, they try to appropriate indigenous spiritual resources outside the "elitist" traditions for sociopolitical liberation.[102] Dalit theology, tribal theology, feminist theology, and various forms of eco-

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[98] Samartha, *One Christ- Many Religions*, 118.

[99] Samartha, *One Christ- Many Religions*, 118.

[100] Kim, *Theology,* 100.

[101] Kim, *Theology,* 103.

[102] Kim, "India," 53.

theologies are some of the strands of liberation theologies in India.

Among liberation theologies, Dalit theology is the one which came in direct confrontation with *Hindutva*. Dalit theology arouse from a dissatisfaction with prevalent Indian Christian theologies which failed to focus on the struggles of Dalit Christians who constitute the majority of Indian Christian population.[103] Dalit theologians consistently point out that traditional Indian Christian theologians, in their efforts for inculturation, inter-faith dialogue, or nation building have often related the Gospel to Brahmanical philosophical concepts. Peniel Rajkumar notes that it is no surprise that with the upper caste upbringing of these theologians what emerged was 'the cross-fertilization of caste Hindu and caste Christian theological efforts which produced a Brahminic-based Hindu-Christian Theology."[104] To Dalit theologians such a dialogue with Brahmanical tradition is problematic mainly for two reasons. Firstly because of the oppressive and discriminatory caste structure these traditions promote and secondly such traditions do not represent majority of Christians who are from Dalit background.[105] So as Kirsteen Kim puts it, Dalit theology "is vehemently anti-*brahmin* and therefore seek to move Christian theology out of its 'Sanskristic captivity' and recover the alternative pre-Aryan oral traditions of the *dalits* as a resource for theologizing."[106]

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[103] Peniel Rajkumar, *Dalit Theology and Dalit Liberation: Problems, Paradigms and Possibilities* (Surrey, Ashgate, 2010), 35.

[104] Rajkumar, *Dalit Theology*, 36.

[105] Rajkumar, *Dalit Theology*, 36–38.

[106] Kirsteen Kim, "India," 53–54. Dalit theology is often described by its proponents as a theology "of the Dalits, by the Dalits, for the Dalits". Adrian Bird notes a methodological exclusivism present among many of the first generation Dalit theologians which raises the concern that it could lead to a theological isolation. However, Bird quotes A.P Nirmal, often referred as the father of Dalit theology and points out that "A.P. Nirmal did not interpret methodological exclusivism to mean theological exclusivism. Nirmal notes that Indian Christian theology should not be looked upon as a "separatist movement which has completely cut itself off from the rest of the theological world", but rather be viewed as "continuous with and in dialogue with other theologies in the Christian world." Adrian Bird, *M.M. Thomas*, 9. Adrian Bird also brings to the attention James Massey's suggestion that Dalit theology is to be viewed not in absolute terms as a counter theology, but rather as a theological expression written by Dalits who are subjects of their own history. Thus it is to be understood more as a contextual theology. Adrian Bird, *M.M. Thomas*, 9. However Peniel Rajkumar, a new generation Dalit theologian, in his intra-Indian Christian

Samuel Rayan and Sathianathan Clarke are among the few theologians who engaged in conversation with *Hindutva*. Samuel Rayan, a Jesuit priest, was one of the first people to interact with liberation theology from Latin America. Taking side with the cause of Dalits and other marginalized people in India, he rejected political Hinduism. To him Brahmanical Hinduism is irredeemably oppressive. He preferred to use resources from grassroots religious traditions of India in his struggle for justice and liberation.[107]   Sathianathan Clarke notes that *Hindutva*, which drives on Brahmanical Hinduism, is a threat to the life and existence of religious and ethno-cultural minorities in India.[108] This is so because *Hindutva* operates with a comprehensive project to liquidate the distinct cultural and religious variance of the Ethnocultural minorities and absorb them into their imagined homogenous identity.[109] He also maintains that *Hindutva* persecution towards Christians exists because of the latter's social development work among the Dalits and Adivasis, which is perceived as an effort to thwart the homogenizing aim of *Hindutva*.[110]

Situating his thrust of theology along liberation lines, Clarke argues that, in order for Christian theology to be relevant in India, it should relate itself to the experience and struggles of Dalits and Tribals which represents the majority of Christian population. In the context of *Hindutva*, he finds the task of Christian theology to not only repudiate *Hindutva* as a paradigm

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theological critique notes the need for Dalit theology to formulate a more inclusive theological paradigm which would involve both Dalits and non-Dalits in the task Dalit liberation. Rajkumar notes "From our analysis of Dalit theology we can say that there has been a failure to recognize the paramount importance of engaging both Dalits and 'non-Dalits' as partners in liberation combined with the apparent passivity in articulating inclusive models of praxis. This polemic attitude has been manifest in the negativity of Dalit theologians (with the exception of Massey) towards theologies articulated by non-Dalit Brahminic theologians. We need a paradigm that will facilitate a bipolar conversion by way of which Dalit theology will assume pertinence to both the Dalits and non-Dalits. The proposal for a more inclusive theological paradigm increases the possibility for concrete and dialogical action for transformation." Rajkumar, *Dalit Theology,* 69.

[107] Kim, "Indian Christian Theological Response," 171–73.

[108] Sathianathan Clarke, "*Hindutva*, Religious and Ethnocultural Minorities, and Indian-Christian Theology," *Harvard Theological Review* 95 (April 2002): 225.

[109] Clarke, "*Hindutva*, Religious and Ethnocultural Minorities," 200.

[110] Clarke, "*Hindutva*, Religious and Ethnocultural Minorities," 208.

but also affirm "alternate models that legitimate and empower multiple religious, cultural, political, and social self-expressions of the various communities that make up the Indian nation."[111] In this regard, he finds the worldviews embedded in the culture and oral traditions of tribals and Dalits to be much resourceful. Because he argues that their worldviews are more amiable to plurality and thus less hostile to difference.[112] The plurality it promotes "is not an absorbing of the Other, so that the Other is assimilated into the Self. Rather, there is willingness in this form of pluralism to allow difference to remain even while participating in each other's activities."[113] So according to Clarke, in the context of assimilative Brahmanical *Hindutva*, Christian theology should tap into the liberative motifs embedded in the dynamic worldviews of ethno-cultural minorities (Dalits and Tribals) in formulating and promoting paradigms that are relevant for collective life at a national level.[114]

One of the significant contributions of Dalit theologians and Liberation theologians in general was to identify traditions outside Brahmanical fold to dialogue with the *Gospel*. They were also able to relate the significance of the Gospel to the experience and struggles of Dalit and Tribal Christians who form the majority of Christian population in India. Unlike the majority of other approaches which downplayed religious conversion, liberation theologians were quick to affirm it as a means of social protest and liberation in face of oppressive religious structures.

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[111] Clarke, "*Hindutva*, Religious and Ethnocultural Minorities," 209.

[112] Clarke, "*Hindutva*, Religious and Ethnocultural Minorities," 209.

[113] Clarke, "*Hindutva*, Religious and Ethnocultural Minorities," 212.

[114] Clarke, however do not promote an uncritical appropriation of non-Christian world views. He acknowledges that although God is at work in liberative movements in any religions, however our criteria to discern the liberative dynamic "emerge from within the Christian community through a dialogical discernment of the working of God as it is outlined by the life and teaching of Jesus. Thus, using the key of the life and teachings of Jesus, Christians tend to decide continuously which religio-cultural beliefs and practices represent the God dynamic and which do not…For example, native beliefs and practices, which exclude persons on the basis of caste, race, color, and gender, are not reflective of the presence and activity of God as revealed by Jesus, whereas symbols, rites, and religious motifs that challenge such exclusions are in continuity with the transformation characteristic of the God dynamic expressed in Jesus." Clarke, "*Hindutva*, Religious and Ethnocultural Minorities," 215.

Moreover in anti-conversion calls they identified a Brahminic, elite or the upper caste hegemony in operation rather than the perspective of the subjects of conversion. However one major criticism leveled again the liberation account of religious conversion is that it tends to reduce it to a socio-political phenomenon. Sebastian Kim, points out that a sociological interpretation of conversion is insufficient because by reducing conversion to a "structural question," it fails to reflect the complex process involved in a religious conversion. Moreover, it gives only "limited recognition to the religious awareness of the converts and the religious appeal of the missionary message."[115] In the context of *Hindutva*, this becomes problematic for two reasons. Firstly, "it provides validity to Hindu accusations that conversion of Dalits is political rather than religious. Hindus can argue that conversion, especially mass conversion, lacks spiritual motives; it is merely a means to escape injustice or a social protest."[116] Secondly, such interpretation seems to suggest that Dalits are motivated only by the desire for their own material betterment. "The obvious inference is that Dalits lack spirituality. Hence conversion itself is seen negatively as opportunism and not as the outcome of an active and considered search by a community for an answer to a spiritual quest."[117]

Evangelical Approach

Kirsteen Kim presents C. V. Mathew and his work *The Saffron Mission: A Historical Analysis of Modern Hindu Missionary Ideologies and Practices*[118] as a representative of an evangelical approach towards political Hinduism. Mathew's tradition calls for the centrality of

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[115] Kim, *Theology,* 106.

[116] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 130. In fact in the context of mass conversion in south Tamil Nadu in 1980s, *Hindutva* proponent Devandra Swarup argued that these mass conversion were not the result of individual "inner faith and spiritual quest" on the part of dalits. See Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 130.

[117] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 130.

[118] C. V. Mathew, *The Saffron Mission: A Historical Analysis of Modern Hindu Missionary Ideologies and Practices* (New Delhi: ISPCK, 1999).

the proclamation of the Gospel and call to conversion in Christian mission. He rejects the

Hindutva allegation that conversion to Christianity would weaken one's commitment to the

nation and argues that his experience of conversion only strengthened his desire to seek his

nation's welfare. He argues that Hinduism is as much a missionary religion as Christianity,

Buddhism, or Islam. He argues that a desire to share one's faith experience is a natural sign of a

healthy religion and welcomes all traditions to do the same.[119]

Mathew regards *Hindutva* as the "minority complex of the majority" and finds difficulties

in accepting its missionary agenda to create a unitive and homogenous Hindu nation in India

using aggressive methods.[120] In the face of *Hindutva*, he exhorts that "persecution is not an

exception but a norm for Christians (John 15:20). Christians should accept God's purpose in

allowing suffering since 'it will result in joy, prayer and unity' (John 17), and 'it would scatter

the believers from the mission compounds to give more opportunities for preaching (Acts

8:4).'"[121] He also wants the Church to engage in self-criticism and repentance in the midst of

opposition from *Hindutva*.[122]

Some of the evangelical Christians took the apologetic task seriously in the face of threats

from *Hindutva*. Vishal Mangalwadi's work *India: The Grand Experiment*[123] is one such example.

In response to a *Hindutva* intellectual Arun Shourie's pro-*Hindutva* book, *Missionaries in India:*

Continuities, Changes and Dilemmas[124] which accuses missionaries and Christian's in India of

being unpatriotic and enemies of the country, Mangalwadi argues that "India's independence

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[119] Kim, "Indian Christian Mission Ecclesiology," 167.

[120] Kim, "Indian Christian Mission Ecclesiology," 168.

[121] Kim, "Indian Christian Mission Ecclesiology," 168.

[122] Kim, "Indian Christian Mission Ecclesiology," 168.

[123] Vishal Mangalwadi, *India, the Grand Experiment* (Surrey: Pippa Rann, 1997).

[124] Arun Shourie, *Missionaries in India: Continuities, Changes and Dilemmas* (New Delhi: ASA, 1994).

resulted from the struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi, but India's freedom is the product of the Gospelof Jesus Christ. Our individual, intellectual, religious, economic, legal, municipal, press and political freedoms are the result of a grand experiment undertaken by the followers of Jesus Christ."[125]

A Lutheran Critique from an Ecclesiological Perspective

Apart from the above-mentioned five approaches, it is important now to look briefly at R. Sahayadhas's work entitled, *Hindu Nationalism and the Indian Church: Towards an Ecclesiology in Conversation with Martin Luther*.[126] In this work, Sahayadhas, a Lutheran clergy and professor at United Theological College, Bangalore, reflects on the nature and mission of the Church in the context of Hindu nationalism from Martin Luther's ecclesiological point of view. After providing a comprehensive overview about Hindu nationalism, he rightly identifies it as a "hate filled ideology of nationalism"[127] rooted in Brahminic Hinduism with an exclusive aim "to create a Hindu nation through assimilation or exclusion of minorities."[128] He also rightly points out that Christians are viewed with suspicion, persecuted, and denied their rightful place in the nationhood.[129] Unlike several secular or inculturation approaches, he finds the Church and its mission integral to Christian faith and theology. He dismisses accusations about religious conversion as "a bogey used by *Hindutva* forces to intimidate Christians and polarize communities for political gains"[130]

In the context of *Hindutva*, he proposes that the Church should not be understood

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[125] Mangalwadi, *India*, 25.

[126] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*.

[127] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism,* 5.

[128] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism,* 5.

[129] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism,* 6.

[130] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 118.

primarily as an Institution but as a *communion* of saints brought by Word and Sacraments.[131] To

him, this c*ommunion* should be understood in terms of a *perichoretic communion of the people*

of *God*.[132] Sahayadhas places the basis of this *perichoretic communion* of the Church on to the

perichoretic communion of the Trinity. He explains that "*Perichoretic* intimacy is rooted in the

communion of the persons of the Trinity with their fundamental characteristics of

consubstantiality, co-equality, and coeternity, and harmony of will and purpose.[133] He further

notes that:

> Thus the fundamental doctrine is that the persons in the Godhead stand in a unique
> relationship to each other by virtue of the mode of origin of each person in the same
> substance of the Godhead, and it is this relation that constitutes them distinct persons.
> This relation between the persons in the Trinity is called *perichoresis*, which is an apt
> model for us to emulate in our ecclesial communion. The Trinity never engages in
> ostracism and corresponding insight is that ecclesia is an occasion to embrace and
> celebrate differences; perpetuate intimacy; and live in harmony.[134]… Thus, if the
> Trinitarian understanding of God represents the inner relationships of the persons of
> the Trinity; if the *Logos,* one of the persons of the Trinity, became enfleshed; and if
> the Church is the body of the enfleshed Word, then Church as the communion of the
> faithful has to represent the *Trinitarian-perichoretic-communion-in-relationship* to
> the world.[135]

In the context of *Hindutva*, Sahayadhas argues that the understanding of *Perichoretic*

communion equips the Church with a unique vision for its mission. It provides a vision to

transcend narrow particularisms and embrace multiplicity, differences and plurality both within

the church, and to extend the scope of its vision "beyond the boundaries of the Church even to

reach out to those who hatch hatred against the Church."[136] The Church "as a veritable sign and

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[131] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 7.

[132] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 323.

[133] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 396.

[134] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 333.

[135] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 327.

[136] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 325.

instrument of transformation in this world"[137], should continue the ministry of reconciliation and "foster the perichoretic relationship among people transcending all that perpetuates division in the society."[138] In carrying out this mission, according to Sahayadhas, the Church should not engage in retaliatory ethics in face of *Hindutva* violence nor aspire for temporal power. However, as informed by Luther's two kingdom theory, the Church while maintaining the proper distinction between the state and spiritual authority, should not be silent but offer a critical voice in the midst of injustice, brokenness and oppression.[139]

Sahayadhas's proposal to translate the vision of '*perichoretic reality*' of the '*communion of believers*', the Church, to our collective life in the society is both intriguing and relevant in the context of *Hindutva*. But an important question which needs to be asked here is how can this *"perichoretic communion"* operative in the Church, contingent upon faith, be operate in the society? Or can such "*perichoretic communion*" be possible in a society without faith in Christ and ministry of the Word and Sacraments? Or is there a fundamental difference envisaged in the actualization of this vision in the Church and society? One cannot find satisfactory answers to these questions in Sahayadhas's work. I think, while remaining faithful to theological rationale of Sahayadhas, there could be two theological situations in which his vision for *"perichoretic communion"* in the society could become a viable option. First is the conversion of entire society to faith in Christ's redemptive work on the cross, whereby "perichoretic communion" becomes a reality. But, this possibility runs counter even to the Reformers' understanding of the society, because to Luther the world will always have unbelievers who reject Christ. Sahayadhas too does not envisage such a rationale. The second option is to explore a different theological foundation

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[137] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 366.

[138] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 343.

[139] Sahayadhas, *Hindu Nationalism*, 364.

to base our common humanity with others in the society under God.

Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, we saw that although Indian Christian theologians of various approaches identified and dismissed *Hindutva* as an illegitimate politicization of Hindu religion, nevertheless they took seriously the concerns raised by them. The struggle of Indian Christian theologians has always been to be sensitive towards Hindu culture, to find the rightful place of Christians in the nationhood, and to prove their patriotism in the face of *Hindutva* allegations. Most of the approaches (except liberational and to some extent the evangelical approach) approached *Hindutva* non- confrontationally and even self-critically. The theologians of inculturation tried to relate the Gospel to Hindu traditions and explored how Christians could find continuity with Hindu culture yet remain faithful to the Christian faith. Post-independence theologians belonging to secular and inter-religious dialogue saw the need of Indian Christian theology relating to the task of nation building and addressing the challenges raised by religious pluralism. From the 1980's, Dalit theologians belonging to liberationist strand challenged the Brahminic hegemony of *Hindutva* and also of Indian Christian theologians while working towards the liberation of Dalits. Though the Indian theological academia was dominated single handedly by ecumenical and liberation theologians, the voice of evangelical theologians also began to emerge during the past few decades.

One of the serious drawbacks latent in many of these approaches is the pursuit of a solution at the expense of basic Christian faith and identity. Some of the cardinal elements of the Christian faith, which include the Christian Church, the proclamation of the *Gospel*, and religious conversion, were either dismissed or given a new interpretation. For example, the need for religious conversion and proclamation of the Gospel are downplayed in interreligious

dialogue and the secular approach. The liberation approach, on the other hand, does not downplay either religious conversion or the proclamation of the Gospelbut reinterprets them socio-politically. In addition, the doctrine of Church is found to be communal and scandalous by the inculturationalist, interreligious, and secular approaches respectively. As Sebastian Kim has rightly suggested, such a dismissal of the fundamentals of Christian faith contribute only towards a crisis of identity among Christians in India[140] and thereby seriously affects the theological strength in responding to various issues. Thus, in order for our conversation to move forward, an approach is needed that has the strength to take seriously our Christian faith (exclusive in nature) and at the same time embrace all humanity, both Christian and other, (inclusive in nature) as we live and work together for the common good.

The evangelical approach and Sahayadhas work from Luther's ecclesiological perspective are such perspectives that take seriously the Christian faith and identity in finding points of contact with others. However one big criticism levelled against the evangelical approach is the "instrumental mentality" implicit in its approach. Charitable work and any kind of social interaction are seen solely as instruments for evangelizing or Christianizing the other. Apart from this, the evangelical approach has no interest in establishing common ground with those of other faiths. Sahayadhas proposal for the church's engagement in the society to work towards a *perichoretic communion*' which would embrace plurality and support a vision for a multicultural texture for Indian society is a welcome attempt. However, his approach falls into methical difficulties as he makes a superficial jump from a theological reality existent in the Church to be translated unqualified in the society. So what is called forth is to base our vision for a society, where Christians could work together with others for common good, in a theological

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[140] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 107.

foundation, where we could share a common humanity with others. For this, I believe, there does exist in Luther's thought, theological resources helpful for us. I propose that a robust understanding of Luther's Two Realms doctrine would provide a rich resource in this regard, to further strengthen and refine Indian Christian theological voices in responding to the challenges raised by the *Hindutva*. Luther's understanding of God's left-hand realm and God's activity in this realm as our Creator God under whom entire human beings, with all their plurality and heterogeneity, share a common humanity is a good starting point. So in the next chapters we shall explore in great detail, Luther's understanding of God's Two Realms and its relevance, in our attempt to find an inclusive theological rationale for Christians to cooperate and work with others for common good, as responsible citizens of the country. This will also highlight the purpose of the State/government as an instrument of God the creator to ensure the common good, justice, prevention of evil, and external peace for all irrespective of one's religious, caste, class, cultural, or linguistic identity.

CHAPTER FOUR

AN INTRODUCTION TO LUTHER'S UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S TWO REALMS

The main purpose of this chapter is to introduce and to provide a brief background on

Luther's understanding of God's Two Realms. I will place Luther's understanding of God's Two

Realms in its *Sitz im Leben* by identifying some of the influential sources for Luther and how his

two-fold concept stands in relation to different conflicting views regarding temporal and spiritual

authority which existed during his time. Building upon this foundation, I will then provide a brief

introduction of Luther's understanding of God's Two Realms. However any mention about

Luther's understanding of Two Realms is not borne without difficulties. This is mainly because

of the misinterpretation, misunderstanding and consequent application which came to be

associated with this teaching in the past centuries. I shall begin our discussion with a brief

overview about some of those distortions with an explicit intention to dissociate my work along

those lines and provide further clarity to our foregoing discussion.

Historical Distortions and Challenges in Relation to the Two Realm Teaching

There has been much written in the recent past about the history of abuse, misinterpretation

and conflicting views about Luther's understanding of the Two Kingdom doctrine in the last two

centuries.[1] It is not desirable for the purpose of this study to enter into a detailed discussion of

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[1] For a detailed discussion on the history and development of the spurious doctrine of two realm doctrine in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries see, William J. Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding of God's Two Kingdoms: A Response to the Challenge of Skepticism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010), 17–43. Per Frostin, *Luther's Two Kingdoms Doctrine: A Critical Study* (Lund: Lund University Press, 1994), 1–48. And also Scott Travis Kline, "A Genealogy of a German-Lutheran Two-Kingdoms Concept: From a German Theology of the Status Quo to An Eastern German Theology of Critical Solidarity" (PhD diss., MC Gill University, Canada, Feb 2001).

each view, but four such instances are of relevance to our present study.

Eigengesetzlichkeit, the Concept of the Autonomous Laws of Each Sphere

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw the association of *Eigengesetzlichkeit*, or

concept of autonomous laws of each sphere of worldly life to the concept of Two Kingdom

teaching. Wright captures this distortion thus, "the essence of this perverted doctrine was the

idea that the world, human institution, politicians, and everyday people were free from the power

and the laws of God, because the world had its own rules and ethical norms, which were

produced by processes internal to the world."[2]

Wright, along with others,[3] identifies theologian Ernst Troeltsch and sociologist Max

Weber as two major figures responsible for advancing the concept of autonomy. Wright notes

that "Troeltsch talked about the autonomy of the various zones of value,"[4] and that in Luther's

view, "the Decalogue and the natural law were opposed to one another."[5] In his writings,

Troeltsch argued that "Luther promoted a dual morality for Christians; that is, one Christian

moral law over against a worldly moral code under autonomous reason."[6] Wright, while

explaining Max Weber's contribution, points out that "Weber adapted Luther's two-kingdom

concept and his distinctions between the inner and the outer man to the distinctly modern idea of

public political life versus private religious life."[7] Wright adds that Weber then further extends

this spurious distinction to economic, aesthetic, erotic and intellectual spheres of life, claiming

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[2] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 21.

[3] Some of the writers who advanced this concept includes Rudolf Sohm, Friedrich Naumann, Wilhelm Hermann. Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding*, 25. And Karl H. Hertz ed., *Two Kingdoms and One World: A Source Book in Christian Social Ethics* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1976), 86–91.

[4] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 26.

[5] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 26

[6] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding, 26. .*

[7] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 29.

that each of these spheres have the "inner *Eigengestzlichkeiten*" of their own.[8]

Wright, while dismissing Luther's misrepresentation by Troeltsch and Weber, notes that such an autonomy concept is alien to Luther's original thought in the sixteenth century but has its roots elsewhere. In responding to Troeltsch, he argues that such a concept could be found in the writings of Niccolo Machiavelli and the idea of reason of state in the sixteenth century, as well as in some modern day philosophers. Wright thus argues:

> We must not let it escape our attention that Troeltsch identified Luther's teaching with Machiavellianism. At the same time, he connected Lutheranism with the conservatives of his era. But Troeltsch erred in this claim. Luther was neither a proponent of reason of state nor or Machiavellianism for he did not assert that the state must preserve itself and promote its welfare above all other things. Luther's understanding of the two kingdoms represented a way to avoid the extremes of monastic withdrawal from the world as well as Machiavellian worldly autonomy from God's rule and law (*Eigengesetzlichkeit*). In addition, it has been noted that *Eigengesetzlichkeit,* or the moral autonomy of institutional life, may also be found in the works of Jean Bodin, Rene Descartes, Immanuel Kant, Adam Smith, Karl Marx, the Social Darwinists and most classical liberals. The idea of determining laws in nature, which are independent of Divine control, was an essential ingredient of Darwinism and the physical sciences generally.[9]

Responding to misreading of Luther by Max Weber, Wright similarly states, "As Pawlus recently noted, there is something 'almost laughable' in Weber's attempt to claim Lutheran origin for the modern Adam Smithian ethics based on self- interest. The latter was 'an almost grotesque antithesis' to Luther's ethic based on serving God and neighbor."[10] But whatever the origin, the negative consequence of this spurious teaching became evident with the Nazi use of this concept during the time of Hitler.[11] This led Karl Barth to allege the intellectual ancestry of

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[8] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 30.

[9] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 26–7.

[10] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 31.

[11] Wright argues that even though Luther's two kingdom doctrine assumed a perverted form, still it did not automatically lead to Nazism. Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 33. In the same way, Hanz Schwarz also argues that "it must first of all noted that Adolf Hitler's first denominational support came from Catholicism. Further one must point out that the Lutheran nations of Scandinavia, albeit with little success, sought to offer resistance to the Nazi occupation. Indeed, so many factors came into play with the rise of the Third Reich that one cannot simply

Adolph Hitler to Luther, via Bismarck and Frederic the Great.[12] In the same way, this also led

Reinhold Niebuhr to portray Luther "as an archconservative with an overwhelming fear of

anarchy and a pessimistic view of life who prepared the way for German tyranny."[13] In the

present times, the argument for strict separation of religion from the state and the dismissal of

religion as a private affair, as having no positive and constructive role in the public sphere, could

be traced to this concept of autonomy of each spheres.

Two Kingdom Teaching [14] as Church and State Reductionism

Another common confusion is to treat and equate the Two Kingdom teaching to a Church

and State relationship teaching. Such a perspective is a reductionist reading of Luther's

understanding of Two Realm Teaching. As Gerhard Ebeling notes, "But anything like

separation of Church and State, which is what people usually have in mind, is a totally

inadequate picture of the scope of Luther's doctrine of the two kingdoms."[15] It is true that distinct

concerns relating to Church and temporal authority comes under the purview of Two Realm

teaching, but the scope of Two Realm teaching moves beyond that. As Robert Kolb points out,

Luther's Two Realm teaching is "a part of the Lutheran conceptual framework, for it is more

than an individual doctrine. It is a presupposition which permeates the whole of our thinking

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lay the blame directly on the Lutherans." Hanz Schwarz, *True Faith in The True God: An Introduction to Luther's Life and Thought* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1996), 87–88. For a detailed discussion on the same see Lowell C. Green, *Lutherans Against Hitler: The Untold Story* (St.Louis: Concordia, 2007).

[12] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 35.

[13] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 29.

[14] Two Realm teaching is also alternatively known as the doctrine of the Two Kingdom or the Twofold Rule of God. At various places in this chapter I use the term "Two Kingdom" because various authors I interact with mostly use Two Kingdom instead of Two Realm. The reason for my usage of Two Realm instead of Two Kingdom is stated in the foot note 10 of Chapter 1.

[15] Gerhard Ebeling, *Luther: An Introduction to His Thought*, trans. R.A Wilson (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970), 178.

about how God works in His world and the entire life to which He has called us."[16] But it should

be noted that Luther did not advocate a separation of Church and state but only wanted its

respective roles and functions to be distinguished for each other.[17]

Two Kingdom Teaching as a Guardian of Status Quo and Quietism

The two kingdom teaching has been invariably criticized for promoting quietism and

supporting the status quo. Duncan Forester, in his work on *Caste and Christianity* narrates how

early Danish Lutheran missions in India, headed by Ziegenbalg shaped largely by pietism and

Luther's doctrine of two kingdoms, operated differently from other missions during that time.

He points out that under the influence of Luther's two kingdom teaching, Lutheran missionary

approaches were limited in their ability to understand and interact with the local realities by

treating "'politics, culture, even forms of Church government' as irrelevant to Christian faith."[18]

Forester identifies in early Lutheran missionaries two kinds of attitudes towards caste. The first

one is to ignore it as irrelevant since it has nothing to do with one's religious profession. The

second one is to accommodate it as a national or civil institution, which need not to be

disturbed.[19] Other protestant missionaries took a different approach, in which they identified

caste not merely as a civil distinction but as an evil which stands in direct conflict with the

Gospel, which should not be tolerated among Christians.[20]

Missouri Evangelical India Mission (MELIM)'s approach was not radically different from

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[16] Robert Kolb, "Christian Civic Responsibility in an Age of Judgment," *Concordia Journal* 19 (January 1993): 18–19

[17] Steven E. Ozement, *The Age of Reform 1250–1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 268.

[18] Duncan B. Forrester, *Caste and Christianity: Attitudes and Polices on Caste of Anglo-Saxon Protestant Missions in India* (Dublin: Curzon, 1980), 17.

[19] Forrester, *Caste and Christianity,* 18.

[20] Forrester, *Caste and Christianity,* 18.

other early Lutheran missions, however, MELIM missionaries saw caste as evil but not

necessary sinful. Elmer Griesse a former LCMS missionary notes "Lutheran churches no doubt

recognized the breaking down of caste distinctions as an ideal, but did not necessarily favor an

abrupt setting aside of these social distinctions. In any case they did not favour a forcible

disruption of the method of living that had through the centuries become crystalized in the caste

system."[21] In this regard, Luther Meinzen, a LCMS missionary to India, quotes Prof. Rajarigam

that Lutheran missions hoped that "by bearing with it for a while it would gradually be dispelled

by the strong light of the Gospel shining upon their hearts".[22] Lutheran missionaries' approval of

the status quo might be a result of their effort to distinguish between the civil and religious

elements in the caste system. However as Forrester points out

> [S]uch efforts did not find much support from Hindus, who agreed with the majority
> missionary opinion that caste and the Hindu religion were so intimately wrought
> together that the one could barely be distinguished from the other. Hinduism provided
> the religious sanctions and the religious legitimation for caste, while caste was the
> classic example of a social order providing the iron frame for a religion. Two stood,
> or fell, together.[23]

The Lutheran approach thus was thought to be naïve, quietist, and was largely criticized by

later native Lutheran leaders and other mission societies.[24] In this regard B.H Jackayya, the first

native general secretary of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC), believes that early

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[21] Elmer Griesse, "Lutheran India Missions" (Master's Thesis, St.Louis, 1945), 37.

[22] Luther W. Meinzen, *A* Church *in Mission: Identity and Purpose in India* (Vaniyambadi: Concordia, 1981), 48.

[23] Forrester, *Caste and Christianity,* 198.

[24] However it would be inaccurate to asses that MELIM missionaries were indifferent and detached to caste struggles its members went through. From the beginning MELIM missionaries saw education to be a great means to bring social awareness and upliftment among the downtrodden. By 1952, MELIM already had 99 schools with 273 Indian teachers out of which 232 were members of the Lutheran Church. Apart from this missionaries also acted as social protectors and financial supporters of the Lutheran Christians who came from depressed castes. So although MELIM missionaries did not employ a head on confrontational approach to social issues, still they hoped to bring change through a gradualist policy, mainly with the help of education and pure teaching of the *Gospel.* See Sam Thompson, *Evolving an Ethical Critique in Relation to the Leadership Crisis of the India Evangelical Lutheran* Church *(IELC) with Particular Reference to the Trivandrum Synod* (Masters in Theology Thesis, Bangalore, 2008), 14–15. And D. Christudas, *Tranquebar to Travancore* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2008), 73–77.

Lutheran missionaries' approval of the status quo, had a negative effect on the Sambavar pastors, belonging to so called lower castes according to Hinduism.[25] Similarly, D. Christudas quotes, the *Christian Patriot*, a journal of Christian and social progress, which sums up well other mission societies' criticism that "Lutheran mission is worshipping caste instead of treading it."[26]

To some extent, it could be argued that the mission practice of Lutheran mission in India is also reflective its parent church, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Robert Benne notes that "the Missouri Synod's history in America is marked by fewer ventures in direct public theology than that of other major Lutheran bodies."[27] And that the "Missouri Synod also stands alone in its commitment to indirect methods of affecting the public order."[28] Similarly Charles Arand and Joel Biermann, admitting certain quietism in LCMS's public theology, note that "And so during the past one hundred and fifty years, many Lutherans in America have quietly and contentedly raised families and contributed to the economy through their labor. But when it came to the matter of larger social and political matters (especially those requiring service within the government), American Lutherans of German descent have often been invisible and their voice unheard by the larger community."[29] Taking this criticism seriously, in the past two decades, several scholars including Robert Kolb, Charles Arand, Joel Biermann, and William Schumacher at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis have addressed the relationship between faith and the public sphere. Arand and Biermann note "A renewed appropriation of the two kinds of righteousness can revitalize our thinking on God's twofold rule so as to encourage Lutherans to be more active

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[25] Meinzen, *A* Church *in Mission*, 47.

[26] D. Christudas, *Tranquebar to Travancore,* 83.

[27] Robert Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision: A Public Theology for the Twenty-First Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 131.

[28] Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision,* 131.

[29] Charles P. Arand and Joel Biermann, "Why the Two Kinds of Righteousness?," *Concordia Journal* 33 (April 2007): 133.

participants in the civil realm." Far from quietism or indifference, the Two Realm teaching, properly understood, does not discourage Christians from an active involvement in the world, but rather clarifies their distinctive role and frees them to be innovative and proactive to work in the civil realm (the left-hand realm).[30] The present dissertation is also undertaken to contribute towards this end within an Indian context.

The Nature of Luther's Political Thought

Any discussion pertaining to the nature of Luther's political thought contains within it conflicting perspectives. While some scholars tend to see Luther as a consistent political theorist,[31] others try to limit his area of concern to the ecclesial sphere.[32] It is true that Luther was primarily a theologian, reformer, and a pastor and not a statesman or political philosopher. As Jarrett A. Carty rightly notes "Luther was not a political philosopher such as Thomas Hobbes or John Locke; he never considered himself called to such a task, for his life was preoccupied with theology and Church reform in all its complexity."[33] Substantiating this fact further, Heinrich Bornkamm notes:

> For this reason it is not easy to fit him into political history and to label him and his views. An investigation will, moreover, show a wide deviation of his principles from those of political philosophers. Luther's pronouncements on questions of political and national life are all spiritual counsel, the application of the Word of God to the activities of men sharing in the order of civic life; they do not lend themselves to being pieced together into systematic whole.[34]

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[30] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 134.

[31] See L. H Waring, *The Political Theories of Martin Luther* (New York: Kennikat, 1910), W.D James Cargill Thompson, *The Political Thought of Marin Luther* (New Jersey: Barnes and Noble, 1984) and also *Joshua Mitchell, Not by Reason Alone: Religion, History, and Identity in Early Modern Political Thought* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 1–3.

[32] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 38.

[33] Jarrett A. Carty, *The Political Writings of Martin Luther: Divine Kingdom, Holy Order* (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2012), 4.

[34] Heinrich Bornkam, *Luther's World of Thought*, translated by Marting H. Bertram (Saint Louis: Concordia,

It is misleading, however, if we remove any political significance embedded in the numerous writings of Luther and picture him as apolitical. Luther himself wrote about his unique theological insight in relation to politics. In his pamphlet *Whether Soldiers Too Can Be Saved* Luther writes, "I must boast here, that since the time of the Apostles the temporal sword and government have never been so clearly described or so highly valued as by me, as even my enemies must admit," [35] and elsewhere in *On War against the Turks* he noted "No other teacher has written so nobly or so usefully about temporal government since the time of the Apostles, unless it be St. Augustine."[36] Bornkamm notes about Luther and Politics thus:

> However within the confines of his dominant line of thinking and writing Luther was such an ardent political being, i.e., a man who was deeply moved by the fate of his people; and the influence of the reformation was in so large a measure not only religious but also historical-political, that the question regarding Luther's political views-correctly understood-suggests itself very spontaneously. It goes without saying that the counsel he gave his contemporaries as spiritual adviser must also contain some views on a proper political life.[37]

Although Luther's theological ideas carry profound political implications, it is important to note his point of departure from secular political philosophers. Bornkamm and Cargill Thompson note that Luther's concerns, questions, and interests in politics were much different from those of conventional political philosophers. Luther, unlike political theorists, was not interested in the mechanics or inner working of politics. He was not concerned with questions pertaining the best or the ideal form of government. Nor did he attempt to analyze different constitutions to suggest one method of governance over another. [38] Bornkamm notes, 'he did not draft and device an

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1958), 237.

[35] Martin Luther, "Whether Soldiers Too Can be Saved," In *Vol. 6 of Luther's Works, The Christian in Society III*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 95.

[36] *LW* 6: 163.

[37] Bornkam, *Luther's World of Thought*, 238.

[38] Bornkam, *Luther's World of Thought*, 240. And Thompson, *The Political Thought of Marin Luther,* 4–15.

outline of an ideal state; he did not regard it as his duty to make revolutionary proposals, but in the main he worked toward an amelioration of the system which he found.'[39]

Luther's interest in politics was theological and ethical. He was concerned with the moral nature of the state and the demands of moral behaviors upon rulers and subjects seen in relation to God's overall purpose for His creation. In this regard, Luther's moral demands came directly from his theological commitments. Thus David Whitford notes:

> Luther's political judgments and opinions cannot be separated from his theological positions and presuppositions and are in fact only truly understood when placed within his theological framework…..for Luther the Bible remained normative. Within this framework, we can discern three theological motifs that had lasting implications for Luther's political thought; the distinction between the law and the *Gospel*, the two kingdoms doctrine, and his understanding of authority. All derive from his commitment to preach the Gospelin the midst of an ongoing struggle between God and the devil (between order and chaos).[40]

Sitz im Leben of Luther's Two Realm Thought

Luther's Two Realm thought cannot be understood in a vacuum. Luther's thought was no doubt influenced by some of the early two fold conception. The purpose of this section is to identify some of the influential sources for Luther and how his Two Realm thought stands in relation to some of the conflicting views regarding the nature and relationship between the temporal and spiritual realms of his times.

Augustine's well known work, *City of God* (426)[41] is often credited as an influential source

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[39] Bornkam, *Luther's World of Thought*, 256.

[40] David M. Whitford, "Luther's Political Encounters," in Donald K. Mackim, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 180.

[41] The immediate context for the writing *The City of God* (354-430) was the sack of Rome by Goths under the king Alaric in 410. The fall of Rome, once thought to be invincible and intact from any foreign invasion, was received with utter astonishment and dismay. In such a situation a recognizable size of educated pagans blamed Christianity, the favored religion by then, for this unthinkably shocking event. Two allegation made by them is as follows "first, the moral teaching of Christianity, especially on meekness and forgiveness of enemies, had undermined the strength of the people; and second, the pagan gods were punishing Rome for the gradual decline in sacrifices and for ending the official worship of these gods in the empire." See, Saint Augustine, *Saint Augustine City of God Vol I*, (London: Dent, 1957), viii. In 412 the pagan writer Volusianus addressed these arguments against

to Luther for his two kingdom thought. To Augustine, the two cities namely, the *civitas terrena* (earthly city) and the *civitas Dei* (city of God)[42] "are not two sociological associations (state and church), but intangible communities of persons."[43] According to Augustine the two cities can be best understood by their common love or loyalty. The earthly city consists of those who live according to man (*secundum hominem*) and self-love, but the heavenly city consists of those who live according to God (*secundum Deum*) and the love of God.[44]

Some of the concerns embedded in Augustine's two cities which one finds reflected in Luther are as follows. Augustine finds state as the guardian of peace and order although it is limited and not perfect. The final peace is a post historical reality which is to be realized by the members of city of God. While on earth they are to cooperate with others in human concerns and

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the new religion to Marcellinus, an important Christian official in Africa, who in turn requested Augustine to compose a defense of the Church. The work of City of God consists of twenty two books which started in 413 and finished in 426. Although the sack of Rome was the immediate context, for about 12 years before Augustine began to write, he had been reflecting on the meaning of human society in general and the community which constitutes the Christian church. The first five books refutes the argument that human prosperity depends upon the worship of numerous Roman pagan gods and that evils which confronts them is because Rome has abandoned its ancient gods for Christianity. The next five books is directed to refute arguments such as mortal men can never be free from evils and that worship of many gods and the sacrifices which accompany that worship are a valuable investment against life after death. Of the remaining twelve books first four contain an account of the two cities, the city of God and the city of this world. The second four books describe their growth or progress and the final four are concerned with their proper ends. See Jacquess Rossel, *The Roots of Western Europe* (Bangalore, Asian Trading, 2001), 565. And Benedict J. Groeschel, *Augustine, Major writings* (New York, Cross Road, 1995), 132–33.

[42] According to Augustine, the city of God is the city of righteousness, a city pervaded by a system of right relations, which unites God and His angels and the saints in heaven with the righteous in earth. It is a city of universe yet not of whole universe, for it excludes fallen angels, souls of unrighteous, and the unrighteous who are living on earth. It is an invisible society: it cannot be identified with any visible society. Although it has closest approximation with church, it cannot be, in strictness, be identified with the Church, because Church on earth contains baptized members who belong to its society, yet are not righteous, and cannot therefore belong to the society of City of God . The earthly city is also no formal, visible, enumerable society and although it has closest approximation with political empires, it cannot be identified with any actual organized society. Because it is something more, as it includes fallen all angels as well as men excluding the righteous. See Augustine, *City of God*, xvii.

[43] Heinrich Bornkamm, *Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms in the Context of His Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966), 22.

[44] Bornkamm, *Two Kingdoms,* 20.

for the sake of earthly peace to fulfil their citizenship obligation.[45] Moreover to Augustine a person's membership in the 'City of God' destroys neither his patriotism, nor his civic or social involvement or responsibilities. Instead these are reinforced it by elevating them to the rank of religious obligation. According to Augustine all history can be understood as the interplay and comingling of both cities. Augustine believed that throughout all history these two cities live together side by side and intermixed, until the last winnowing and the final separation in the day of Judgement where doom is in store for those do not belong to the City of God.

The difference between Luther and Augustine is also obvious. Luther do not speak in terms of "*two civitates*" but rather Two Realm*s*, which carries distinct meaning for him. Oswald Bayer notes, "Luther does not speak in the main about two separated *regions,* but rather about two *realms*. Whereas Augustine uses a theology of history to describe two '*cities*,' each of which has different individuals and groups of individuals, Luther maintains that every Christian takes part in both governing units; the differentiation between the two realms goes at the same time right through each person."[46] Another difference, Bornkamm notes is, Augustine views the state ontologically, on the basis of its nature, whereas Luther includes it in God's salvatory will. Thus "That which Luther describes as God's activity in the secular government has almost no counter-part in Augustine."[47] Next, Bornkamm notes that Augustine was more ascetic in orientation and thus reflected more of a flight from the world. Luther reflected more on the Christian's activity and distinguished between one's action as a private and public person, a distinction which is

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[45] Hunter P. Mabry, Christian Ethic- *A Introductory Reader* (Trivandrum: Indian Theological Library, 1987), 401

[46] Oswald Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology: a Contemporary Interpretation*, trans. Thomas H. Trapp (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 310–11.

[47] Bornkamm, *Two Kingdoms*, 21.

lacking in Augustine.[48] Finally one could also find in Augustine "an embryonic form of the idea of a Christian state,"[49] which to Luther is problematic.[50]

Another important person, worthy of mention is William of Ockham (1280–1349) who presented a powerful counter position to the Papal claim to temporal authority. In his defence of Franciscan vows of poverty against papal assault, he questioned the temporal superiority of the papacy over the emperor and other temporal authorities.[51] Limiting the Pope's power to ecclesial realm, he rejected as heretical the view that "the pope has fullness of power from Christ in such a way that in both temporal and spiritual he can do by right all things not against natural or divine law."[52] He also rejected the view that temporal authority is entrusted to the Pope for qualified delegation to the civil magistrate. Ockham affirmed that "the power of the emperor comes from God, not through the pope but through the people."[53] It should be noted, however, that Ockham was not against the papacy as such but only a distorted conception of papal power. He affirmed that the "papacy exists not by the choice of Christians, still less by the choice of the secular ruler, but by divine institution."[54] Ockham's view of the power of the emperor parallels his account of the power of the Pope. Because "both are limited by the rights of free subjects and by the requirement that whatever is imposed be for the common good."[55] To Ockham, "the emperor is

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[48] Bornkamm, *Two Kingdoms*, 23–4.

[49] Bornkamm, *Two Kingdoms*, 24–5.

[50] Bornkamm, *Two Kingdoms*, 24–5.

[51] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 108.

[52] David VanDrunen, *Natural Law and The Two Kingdoms: A Study in the Development of Reformed Social Thought* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 37.

[53] John Kilcullen, "The Political Writings," in *The Cambridge Companion to Ockham,* Paul Vincent Spade edited (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006), 317.

[54] Kilcullen, "The Political Writings," 315.

[55] Kilcullen, "The Political Writings," 318.

bound not only by natural and divine law but by the law of nations."[56]

Another important earlier source is the "original 'two swords' doctrine," set forth by Pope

Gelasius I (died 496) in 494.[57] In his writings, Gelasius [58] made a clear institutional distinction

between the civil and the ecclesiastical powers. His primary concern in his letter addressed to

Emperor Anastasius was "to protect the Church jurisdiction from that of state usurpation."[59]

According to him, the world is ruled by two, the sacred authority of the priesthood and the royal

power.[60] To Gelasius, Christ distinguished between the powers of both offices. Thus the Church

is concerned with matters of divine affairs and salvation, and the emperor is to be concerned with

public order and temporal affairs.[61] And in "divine affairs, emperors were to 'submit' to bishops,

while in 'the sphere of public order' bishops were to 'obey' the emperor's law."[62] Gelasius notes

"Thus the humility of each order would be preserved, neither being exalted by the subservience

of the other, and each profession would be especially fitted for its appropriate functions."[63]

The two sword doctrine as propounded by Gelasius underwent radical change during the

medieval period leading to Luther's time. Boniface VIII (1235–1303) rearticulated and

reformulated the two swords doctrine in the course of his conflicts with French King Philip IV.[64]

Boniface VIII's famous papal bull, *Unam Sanctam*, of 1302, noted that both swords belong to

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[56] Kilcullen, "The Political Writings," 318.

[57] VanDrunen, *Natural Law and the Two Kingdoms,* 33. VanDrunen notes that this claim can be found in Harold Berman, *Law and Revolution: The formation of the Western Legal Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), 92.

[58] The two writings of Gelasius which are of significance are *Letter to Anastasias* (496) and *On the Bond of Anathema* (498). For its English translation see Brian Tierney, The Crisis of Church and State: 1050-1300 (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964), 13–15.

[59] VanDrunen, *Natural Law and The Two Kingdoms,* 33

[60] "Letter to the Emperor Anastasius" in Tierney, *The Crisis of* Church *and State*, 13.

[61] "Letter to the Emperor Anastasius," 14.

[62] VanDrunen, *Natural Law and The Two Kingdoms,* 33

[63] "On the Bond of Anathema " in Tierney, *The Crisis of* Church *and State*, 13.

[64] For more discussion on these conflicts, see Tierney, *Crisis of Church and State*, 172–75, 180–85.

church. VanDrunen summaries Boniface VIII's articulation thus:

> The church, however has delegated the material sword to the state, though not at all absolutely or irrevocably: "The one is exercised for the church, the other by the church, the one by the hand of the priest, the other by the hand of kings and soldiers, though at the will and sufferance of the priest. One sword ought to be under the other and the temporal authority subject to the spiritual power".[65]

During Luther's time, this papal bull (*Unam Sanctam*) of Boniface VIII, which asserted the supremacy of the power of the Pope over the spiritual and temporal world, was renewed by Pope Leo X in 1516 before a session of the Lantern Council.[66] During Luther's time, the medieval two-sword theory represented a political and sociological interpretation of *Corpus Christianum*, or Christendom, wherein Christian society was understood in terms of an institutional entity, rather than a theological one. In this hierarchically arranged political structure, the pope and emperor were God's lieutenants on earth and the pope as the vicar of Christ, stood above the emperor with the *jus novum*, the new law; the canon law.[67] Wright sums up the political workflow of such an arrangement based on two-sword theory thus:

> The clergy ruled this Christian body, through the canon law that applies to all Christians. It was administered by bishops and the papacy, as well as the ecclesiastical courts, even though temporal rulers and lords (nobles) were technically in charge of administrating physical, temporal matters. In spite of this separation of

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[65] VanDrunen, *Natural Law and the Two Kingdoms,* 35. Sentiments articulated in Boniface VIII were also echoed in other medieval theologians. For example Innocent III noted "As the moon receives her light from the sun and is inferior to the sun, so do kings receive all their glory and dignity from the Holy See. As quoted in Hebert E. Hoefer, *Church-State-Society: Issues of Mission in India from the Perspective of Luther's Two Kingdom Principle.* Abraham Maplan Lectures, 1981 (Madras: Christian Literature Society, 1982), 13. Similarly Bernard of Clairveaux wrote, "The fullness of power over the entire Church throughout the entire world is a unique prerogative which is granted by the apostolic see. Whoever resists this power resists the ordinance of God (Romans 13:2….Both swords belong to Peter, the one standing at his command, the other to be drawn forth by his hand as often as is necessary." Karl H. Hertz eds., *Two Kingdoms and One World: A Source Book in Christian Social Ethics* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1976), 48–49.

[66] Richard Wigginton Thompson, *The Papacy and the Civil Power* (New York, Harper and Brothers, 1876), 665.

[67] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 107. Wright further notes that the Christian community was also then arranged hierarchically and Neo platonically. Thus the clergy who lived more moral and Christ like lives than the laity (both nobles and commoners), were considered higher up or closer to God….The laity, who only followed the Ten Commandments (many of them interpreted through the Seven Deadly Sins), were…further from divine perfection." Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 107.

powers, temporal rulers and lords were all subject to the canon law and censure by the ecclesiastical courts, bishops, and the papacy (the most famous censures being the excommunication and interdict).[68]

In his articulation of his Two Realm teaching, Luther clearly rejected the medieval conception of two-sword theology. Luther showed that the medieval conception had clearly confused the function and objectives of the temporal and spiritual spheres.[69] Contrary to two-sword theology, Luther emphasized that Church is not a law-making authority and that the formal temporal authority lay with the state and not with the cleric.[70] To him, the Christians in the world are to be understood as the Corpus Christi (the body of Christ) and not Corpus Christianum (the body of Christians).[71] Luther also rejected the medieval hierarchal theory of human society based on moral qualification. He affirmed that in the temporal realm God ordained three basic forms of authority (family, Church and the state), none of which are hierarchically arranged but are instituted to resist the power of sin and the devil in the earthly kingdom.[72]

Luther's Two Realm theology departed also from many of the other protestant reformers conception of the relation between temporal and spiritual power. In this regard, Luther rejected any inclination towards establishing a biblicistic theocracy. He contended against legalist Andreas Karlstadt who was determined to build an ideal Christian city based on the Law of Moses[73] and the political activist Thomas Müntzer who was determined to take over the

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[68] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 108.

[69] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 108.

[70] John Witte, JR., *Law and Protestantism: The Legal Teachings of the Lutheran Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 8. However to Luther, Witte notes "…Church officers and theologians must be vigilant in preaching and teaching the law of God to magistrates and subjects alike, and in pronouncing prophetically against injustice, abuse, and tyranny." Witte, *Law and Protestantism*, 8.

[71] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 108.

[72] Witte, *Law and Protestantism*, 6–7.

[73] Michael A Mullett, *Historical Dictionary of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation* (Maryland:

machinery of state towards Christianization of social and political life.[74] Luther's two realm

theology departed also from Calvin of Geneva's and Zwingli in Zurich's distinction between two

realms. In the course of his reformation in Zurich, Zwingli did distinguish between temporal and

spiritual government, but he proposed that they should not be seen as separate entities. Unlike

Luther, he found the purpose of both in working together for the Christianization of the society

and establishing a theocracy. To Zwingli, both preacher and prince are servants of the kingly rule

of God, and the community consisted of both Church and political community under the same

rule of God. Within the city, the minister and the magistrate have different tasks and functions,

one preaching and the other ruling, but both related to and submitted to the kingship of Christ,

help reinstate Christ on the throne.[75] Bruce Gordon sums up Zwingli's approach thus:

> Zwingli understood 'reformation' to mean the reform of the community or
> congregation. The agents of reform were magistrates. Since human communities
> reformed by the Word of God were to reflect the divine law by which they were
> governed, there could be no distinction between the religious and political life of the
> community; to belong to the state was to belong to the church. Thus magistrates were
> charged with administering justice in accordance with Scriptural authority, and
> further, they were responsible for the spiritual welfare for their people.[76]

Scarecrow, 2010), 64.

[74] Mullett, *Historical Dictionary of the Reformation,* 215. Müntzer thought that "the basic distinction between secular and spiritual government was itself a manifestation of the corruption of Christian society." Müntzer wanted the temporal authorities to play an active role in the Christianization of the society. In his famous *Sermon to the Princes* (1524), Müntzer noted, "Now, should you want to be true rulers, then you must begin government at roots, as Christ commanded. Drive his enemies away from the elect, for that is your appointed task." See Michael G. Baylor, translated and edited, *Revelation and Revolution: Basic Writings of Thomas Müntzer* (London, Associated University Presses, 1993), 19 and 111.

[75] A.W.G Raath and S.A. de Freitas, "Calling and Resistance: Huldrych Zwingli's (1484–1531) Political Theology and His Legacy of Resistance to Tyranny", *Bulletin for Christian Scholarship*, 2002, Vol 67, Issue 1, 49. Zwingli does distinguishes between human and divine righteousness. To him, human righteousness is the direct concern of temporal government, whereas divine righteousness is the concern of the preachers of God's word. Magistracy works towards securing human righteousness, which cannot make men righteous before God and it applies compulsion. However compulsion does not belong to divine righteousness. The preaching of God's word serves the temporal government, because it helps rulers and subjects by teaching them what is good and what is evil. Raath and Freitas, "Calling and Resistance," 49–53. For more discussion on Zwingli's Theocracy, Robert Culter Walton, *Zwingli's Theocracy* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1967).

[76] Bruce Gordon, "Switzerland," in *The Early Reformation in Europe,* ed. Andrew Pettegree (Cambridge:

Calvin more or less followed the pattern of Zwingli in his treatment of two kingdoms

theology. Identifying Calvin's approach, Ralph Hancock notes that "In every fundamental

question that he addresses, Calvin rigorously distinguishes between and the union of the secular

and the spiritual in order to join them fast together."[77] Thus in Calvin we find "the task of joining

the spiritual and the political is made especially precarious by the danger of joining them too

closely, of destroying the distinction between them."[78] Unlike Luther, Calvin envisaged a

religious republic, which is both theocratic and theonomic.[79] To this end, Calvin finds the Church

and state working together, "but separated by a porous membrane- a membrane dividing their

respective functions into spheres, one sphere focusing on the spiritual, the other on temporal."[80]

To him, the state and Church are mutually religious, and both, according to their respective mode

of operation, are committed to oppose the evil whether it is spiritual, social, doctrinal, moral, or

temporal. To Calvin, "the state's vision and raison d'etre derives from the church."[81] And the

civil magistrate should be competent to enforce both tables of the Ten Commandments, that is,

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Cambridge University Press, 1992), 76.

[77] Ralph C. Hancock, *Calvin and the Foundations of Modern Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 25.

[78] Hancock, *Calvin*, 27. Although Calvin in his practical outworking of his theology fails to keep the distinction intact, nevertheless he warns against the error of unwisely mingling these elements, "which have a completely different nature from one another." See Hancock, *Calvin*, 27.

[79]In a theocracy, God rules the state and God rules the church. In theonomy, all law derives from God's law. See G. Joseph Gatis, "The Political Theory of John Calvin," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 153 no 612 (Oct - Dec 1996), 452.

[80] Gatis, "The Political Theory of John Calvin," 453.

[81] Joseph Gatis notes that "Calvin's view of the relationship uniting Church and state is neither Erastian nor 'ecclesiocratic', since both schemes deny reciprocity. Erastus advanced the notion that the Church is an arm of the state, along the lines of Henry VIII's Act of Supremacy. In an ecclesiocracy, however, the state is an arm of the church." Gatis, "The Political Theory of John Calvin," 453. Gatis further notes "Calvin did not insist, however, that all Mosaic judicial law should be enacted and enforced. Instead he denounced totalitarian theonomists of his day who insisted that the "political system of Moses" was mandatory for civil government. If those who represented Geneva's citizenry voted to enact the entire "political system of Moses," Calvin would not have opposed them, since he saw the "political system of Moses" as an ideal but not mandatory requirement for a Reformed state. Calvin viewed the Mosaic political system as ideal because it was inspired by God." Gatis, "The Political Theory of John Calvin," 452.

"to the enforcement of *pietas* as well as *aquitas* and external righteousness."[82] They also have the responsibility to "defend the sound doctrine of godliness (*pietas*) and the order and standing (*status*) of the church." [83] In this regard, unlike Luther "Calvin was known to mean that persistent heretics and blasphemers should be punished by death"[84] by the state.

Luther's Two Realm theology in its understanding of the purpose of the state stands in sharp contrast to Calvin's understanding. As we shall see later, although Luther wants the state to protect religion for sake of public order and common good, nevertheless he does not see the state's role to judge and protect true doctrine against heresy, or the state to partner with the Church in Christianization of the society. Moreover to Luther, unlike Calvin, the secular government can function quite independently of the Christian faith and the emperor need not be a saint or even a Christian.[85] However, unlike the Anabaptists who wanted Christians to sever their relationship with the secular world,[86] Luther, along with other reformers, affirmed the temporal realm and authority as the arena in which Christians are called for active service and participation.

Luther was not only influenced by the strands of traditions we have discussed so far, but he was also shaped by his faithful effort to interpret and relate the Scriptures to Christian life. In fact, Luther's two realm distinction came to the forefront as he tried to reconcile various scripture passages which seem to promote conflicting demands in the life a Christian in society.

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[82] Harro Hopfl, *The Christian Polity of John Calvin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 172.

[83] Hopfl, *The Christian Polity of John Calvin,* 172.

[84] Hopfl, *The Christian Polity of John Calvin*.172.

[85] John R. Stephenson, "The Two Governments and the Two Kingdoms in Luther's Thought," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 34 (1981): 3.

[86] Hans-Jurgen Goertz notes that Anabaptists, "retreated into their community which was comprised only of those who, in Luther's formulation, "seriously wanted to be Christians" and who refused the directives of every secular authority. They refused to take the oath of allegiance, to do military service, and to assume positions of secular authority." For more discussion see Hans-Jurgen Goertz, "Radical Religiosity in the German Reformation," in *The Companion to the Reformation World*, R.Po-chia Hsia ed., (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 70–85.

For example, at one hand, some prominent scriptural passages seems to teach Christians not to resist evil and that secular rights and laws have no validity at all to the believers. Thus Jesus on the Sermon on the Mount taught to love your enemies, turn the other cheek and not to resist an evil doer (Mathew 5:25, 39). Elsewhere Jesus taught that his kingdom is not from this world (John 18:36). On the other hand, the apostles Paul and Peter upheld the divine sanction of secular authority and urged everyone to be subject to governing authorities (Romans 13:1, 4; 1 Peter 2:13).[87] Luther sought to relate these different instructions to one another and to that extent as Hans-Martin Barth argues, "one can rightly say that he as elsewhere, as an exegete made a distinction between the two kingdoms"[88]. And as Jarret A. Carty notes:

> Luther's conception of the two government came directly from the fact that neither the advice of Paul to submit to authority nor the commands of Christ to turn the other cheek could be disregarded. The two governments were the manifestation of two divine gifts, though seemingly contradicting one another, but In fact complementing each other as two distinct ways in which God directed human beings on earth. In the spiritual government, the Gospel of Christ ruled; in the temporal regiment, God ruled through law and worldly authority and demanded obedience.[89]

To conclude our discussion thus far, Luther's doctrine of Two Realms or kingdoms emerged in opposition to the medieval concept of supremacy of the Church and pope over temporal things, it critiqued Anabaptist tendency to withdraw from the society and refusal to assume positions of secular authority, and stood in sharp contrast against the vision of theocratic and theonomic vision of society of other reformers like Zwingli and Calvin. Luther's conception of Two Realm theology also is based upon, but moves beyond, some of the early two fold conceptions of reality, like that of Augustine's two cities, Gelasius I's original two sword theory,

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[87] Hans-Martin Barth, *The Theology of Martin Luther: A Critical Assessment* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013), 318.

[88] Barth, *The Theology of Martin Luther,* 318.

[89] Jarrett A. Carty, *The Political Writings of Martin Luther: Divine Kingdom, Holy Order* (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2012), 12.

86

and Ockham's critique of papal authority. Equally essential for Luther was his effort to be

faithful towards the biblical witness which teaches a distinction between two realms of God's

activity.

The Contours of Luther's Understanding of God's Two Realms

Luther's understanding of God's two realms is often understood as his basic framework for

understanding the Christian reality.[90] William J. Wright refers to Luther's Two-realm framework

as his reformation worldview or *Weltanschauung*, which is essential for clarifying all of his

views.[91] Similarly, Robert Kolb calls it "a part of the Lutheran conceptual framework, for it is

more than an individual doctrine. It is a presupposition which permeates the whole of our

thinking about how God works in His world and the entire life to which He has called us."[92] In

this regard, John R. Stephenson points out that Luther's two-realms understanding "could be

used as a kind of conceptual clotheshorse on which to spread out the whole of his theology."[93]

To Luther, the realm of the right hand refers to the spiritual or heavenly realm where God's

concern is the redemptive/restorative work through the *Gospel*.[94] In this realm, God reigns as the

Redeemer and Sanctifier. Charles Arand thus elaborates: "The right hand kingdom refers to

God's work in bringing about a new creation, a new community of people . . . and . . . in doing

so, the Spirit gathers the Church." [95] Here the Church refers not to the Church as an organization

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[90] See Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 17–43.

[91] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 15.

[92] Robert Kolb, "Christian Civic Responsibility in an Age of Judgment," *Concordia Journal* 19 (January 1993): 18–9.

[93] Stephenson, "The Two Governments," 2.

[94] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 134.

[95] Charles P. Arand, "The Christian's Calling in the Political-Social Realm: Theological Reflection of the Lutheran Reformation," http://concordiatheology.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Arand-essay1.pdf (accessed January 20, 2014), 4.

or institution but as the assembly of all true believers "who are scattered throughout the world but share the same Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit. As such, it is visible only to God; it remains hidden from the physical view of human beings."[96]

The left-hand realm refers to the earthly realm or the realm of God's creation. As Arand notes, "we are dealing with the realm of creation, namely, the first article of the creed."[97] God reigns here as the Creator and Preserver, and thus His concern here is to preserve and protect His fallen creation from falling apart. The focus then is to foster the well-being of the whole creation, especially human communities in the midst of the destructive presence of sin.[98]

At the heart of Luther's two-realms understanding lies the distinction between God's mode of rule or government in human life. In the words of Martin Luther,

> For this reason, God has ordained two governments: the spiritual, by which the Holy Spirit produces Christians and righteous people under Christ; and the temporal, which restrains the un-Christian and wicked so that—no thanks to them—they are obliged to keep still and to maintain an outward peace.[99]

Thus, to Luther, the spiritual government ("*das giestliche Regiment*") is operated through God's word and exists in the right hand. The temporal government ("*das weltliche Regiment*") of the sword, rules the left-hand realm. Luther drew a sharp line of distinction between God's modes of rule in the two realms. John Meyers elaborates the difference and unity in the mode of operation thus:

> The spiritual realm is without external power. Its power is exercised by God Himself through the Word and the preaching office. The secular realm is subject to human reason, and its authority is exercised by men who have the power to enforce laws, etc. It is God Himself who is active in both realms, and thus they are united. In the

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[96] Arand, "*Christian's Calling,*" 4.

[97] Arand, "*Christian's Calling,*" 4.

[98] Arand, "*Christian's Calling,*" 5.

[99] Martin Luther, "Temporal Authority: To What Extend It Should Be Obeyed," in *Vol. 45 of Luther's Works, The Christian in Society II*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 91.

spiritual sphere God works through the Gospel to save men, and in the secular He works through the Law and impels men to live in a certain way, to do good and avoid evil.[100]

To Luther, human life operates within these two fundamental realms or arenas. We live before God (*coram Deo*) in the right-hand realm and before the world (*coram Mundo*) in the left-hand realm. However, we inhabit both realms simultaneously. Thus, "we live in God's presence and at the same time in community with one another where we have responsibility for fellow creatures."[101] As Luther put it, "We inhabit two worlds as it were, one of them heavenly and the other earthly."[102]

It is important to note here that to Luther God maintains and uses both realms against the kingdom and work of the devil. As Gustav Aulen has demonstrated, according to Luther, the fundamental scriptural conception of history is a cosmic fight between good and evil, and between God and devil.[103] Luther elaborates thus:

> For Christians know there are two kingdoms in the world, which are bitterly opposed to each other. In one of them Satan reigns, who is therefore called by Christ "the ruler of this world" [John 12:31] and by Paul "the god of this world" [II Cor. 4:4]. He holds captive to his will all who are not snatched away from him by the Spirit of Christ, as the same Paul testifies, nor does he allow them to be snatched away by any powers other than the Spirit of God, as Christ testifies in the parable of the strong man guarding his palace in peace [Luke 11:21]. In the other Kingdom, Christ reigns, and his Kingdom ceaselessly resists and makes war on the kingdom of Satan. Into this Kingdom we are transferred, not by our own power but by the grace of God, by which we are set free from the present evil age and delivered from the dominion of darkness.[104]

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[100] John R. Meyer, "Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms," 9.

[101] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 118.

[102] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 118.

[103] Gustaf Aulen, *Christus Victor: An Historical Study of the Three Main Types of the Idea of the Atonement* (New York, Macmillan, 1969), 101–122.

[104] Martin Luther, "The Bondage of the Will," in *Vol. 33 of Luther's Works, Vol. 33: Career of the Reformer III*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 287.

At the heart of Luther's realms theology lies the reality of this cosmic fight against the kingdom of the devil. God employs his worldly and the spiritual government, *adversus Diabolum, carnem et mundum*. As Gustaf Wingren points out, should the both realms "be left to themselves for a moment, they would be overthrown by the power of evil and destruction."[105]

In order to better understand the Christian reality Luther envisages in relation to two realms, it is now important to discuss briefly two important theological distinctions Luther makes, which find their fullest expression under the rubric of his Two-Realm perspective. For our purpose, we shall briefly look at the distinction of Law and Gospel and the Saint-Sinner (*simul justus et peccator*) dialectic. In addition, the distinction of the two kinds of righteousness is key to understand the identity and performance of the Christian living in two realms, which will be the concern of chapter 6.

Law and Gospel in Relation to Two Realms

The distinction Luther made between Law and Gospel is key to understanding God's rule in both realms. Robert Kolb explains this relation thus:

> Within the two realms exist distinct forms of governance, exercised through God's two words: the Gospel governs the relationship between God and his children, the law governs relationships among his creatures, as his plan for life which prescribes proper human behavior. The Gospel does, however, motivate Christian service in the horizontal, the law prescribes human trust with mind and heart in the vertical relationship. Behind his words of both Gospel and law stands God, revealed in the vertical relationship in Jesus Christ, sometimes revealed, at others hidden, in the course of horizontal relationships. [106]

Law is often understood as the "embodiment of eternal will of God."[107] As Kolb and Arand

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[105] Gustaf Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, trans. Carl C. Rasmussen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1957), 24.

[106] Robert Kolb, *Confessor of the Faith,* 177.

[107] Schwarz, *True Faith in True God,* 103.

put it "The law is God's prescription for human life."[108] In this sense, it could also be understood as "universal common sense of the human race." Moreover "it is a sign of God's love for his creatures that for them he designed a life with a framework and boundaries."[109] In this sense, law is also commonly termed as the divine law, natural law, or the law of creation, and, according to Luther, finds its clearest expression in the Ten Commandments.[110] Moreover "Luther used the Ten Commandments, as found in Exodus and Deuteronomy, because when taken as a whole they are an 'unsurpassed summary of the natural law'."[111]

Luther understands Law as the "eternal will of God" and finds its theological use in the right-hand realm. Here it reveals the root of all sin and all its fruits; it accuses, frightens, and judges the conscience. However, this primary use of the law, which then is God's alien work (*opus alien*), prepares people for the hearing of the *Gospel*. However, the law cannot make a sinner alive, and it cannot establish his relationship with God.[112] But this is precisely what the Gospel accomplishes in the right hand realm. Here God's Spirit works through the *Gospel*, God's "word of promise," to create faith in a person, to passively receive God's forgiveness and salvation. This work of the Gospel is often referred to as God's "proper" work (*opus proprium*).[113] In the right-hand realm, the law precedes the *Gospel*, however it is the Gospel alone which establishes one's identity before God, and thereby carries out God's proper work (*opus proprium*). Thus the right hand realm properly is the realm where God works through His *Gospel*. In this realm, God works through the ministry of Word and Sacraments to open up the

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[108] Robert Kolb and Charles Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 149.

[109] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology, 149.*

[110] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 66.

[111] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 67.

[112] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 151–53.

[113] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 153–55.

fountains from which people can truly receive forgiveness of sins, identity, purpose and motivation to live before God (coram Deo) and in his left hand realm (coram mundo).[114]

The left-hand is the realm wherein God rules through His law. In the left-hand realm, the law finds its "civil use" and acts a curb to restrain evil to maintain peace and justice.[115] To Luther, this 'civil use' of the law proceeds directly from the fact that God is Creator.[116] As Wingren notes, God "has created the whole world, and cannot remain a passive onlooker while evil and earth become firmly entrenched in the world. He sets up a barrier against the onward course of evil, and restricts its effects."[117] To Luther, since natural law is woven into the very fabric of creation, it is universally accessible and applicable to everyone through human reason and hence remains no secret.[118] Luther maintains that although fallen human reason cannot lead one to the saving knowledge of Christ, it still has a God-ordained role in the left-hand realm because it helps humanity understand the requirements of the natural law for civil life.[119] Thus to Luther, although human reason and natural law are both written in man's heart, yet tainted with sin, they play an important role in the left-hand realm to keep society from destruction.[120] To Luther, the left-hand realm is primarily the realm of the Law. However, the Gospel is indirectly related to the left-hand realm inasmuch as it shapes the identity, ability, and motivation of Christians to perform the tasks entrusted to them for the preservation of His creation.[121]

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[114] Barth, *Theology of Martin Luther*, 144.

[115] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 129.

[116] Gustaf Wingren, *Creation and Law,* translated by Ross Mackenzie (Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 1961), 151.

[117] Wingren, *Creation and Law,* 152.

[118] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 149.

[119] Hoefer, *Church-State-Society*, 27.

[120] Steven A. Hein, "Reason and The Two Kingdoms: An Essay in Luther's Thought," *The Springfielder* 36 (Spring 1972): 140.

[121] Hein, "Reason and The Two Kingdoms," 140.

Saint-Sinner Dialectic *(simul justus et peccator*) in Relation to Two Realms

To Luther, Justification is not a process but an act, a declaration, whereby through faith, sinners are declared to be forgiven and to be perfectly right with God. This declaration which is whole and complete makes one a perfect saint in God's sight. This does not, however, mean that a baptized person, when judged by God's law, does not continue to be sinners.[122] As Cargill Thompson further clarifies:

> For Luther it is of the essence of the Christian's position on earth that he is a divided person. He has two natures: he is flesh and spirit, old man and new man; and these two natures are constantly rising against one another within him. Hence it is fundamental in Luther's view of the Christian on earth, that he remains a sinner. Justification does not remove original sin. At best it simply gives the Christian power to resist sin, but his saved in spirt of his sins, not because of his ability to avoid them. In practice original sin remains as strong in the Christian as in other men; he is constantly tempted to commit sins and, even with the gift of faith, he cannot totally resist sin.[123]

Kolb and Arand explain the implication of this dialectic relationship thus, "Luther's *simul justus et peccator* means that in this life a person is a sinner in the eyes of the law, the world, and oneself, while at the same time completely a saint in the eyes of God on account of Christ."[124] As Luther puts it "Though I am a sinner in myself, I am not a sinner in Christ." Luther's *simul*, should not be understood that a person is partially a sinner and partially righteous. But "The Christian is completely and totally righteous in the eyes of God, even as the believer is completely and totally sinful when considered in and of oneself."[125]

Luther's assertion that a Christian is simultaneously a saint and sinner carries much relevance towards our understanding about God's activity in the two realms. Since we are both saint and sinner throughout every moment of our life, we always stand in need of God's work

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[122] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 49–50.

[123] Thompson, *The Political Thought of Marin Luther,* 21.

[124] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 49.

[125] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 49.

through His right and the left-hand government. Thus through God's activity towards us in the right hand realm, through His word of law and *Gospel*, we are reminded each day about our sinfulness and the need to live a life of repentance. Each day the Gospel restores our trust in Christ and renews our new identity as His child whom God created in justification.[126] Moreover, through His activity in the right hand realm, God's spirit instructs us through His Law[127] and Gospel provides us with the identity, motivation and strength to perform in the left-hand realm for our neighbors' good.[128] Still because of their sinful nature, God continues to use His left hand regiment to restrain, guide and check the evil inclination of His baptized children and saints in Christ. Thus Luther's affirmation of the reality of saint-sinner dialectic (*simul justus et peccator*) points towards the reality that a Christian is simultaneously a spiritual person and a temporal person. And as a temporal person due to sin, he needs the disciple of the government.[129] Thus God's rule in the left-hand realm is a loving service to all people, including Christians for the preservation of His creation and common good for all.[130]

Conclusion

The attempt made in this chapter was to briefly introduce Luther's understanding about God's two realms in its theological and historical context. This effort was made with an intention to further build upon and elaborate on the concept of state and Christian involvement in society

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[126] Robert Kolb, *Confessor of the Faith,* 130.

[127] Apart from its theological and civil use, a third use of the law is often identified as the educational, didactic or pedagogical use of the law. Here Law serves to teach those who have already been justified by faith, to perform good works that please God and benefit one's neighbor. Although Luther did not explicitly expound this use as the third use of the law as Melanchthon did, still he recognized and found it valuable that "those who are justified by faith remain sinful and in need of God's constant instruction through the law." For more discussion see Witte, *Law and Protestantism*, 103–104.

[128] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 157–58.

[129] Thompson, *The Political Thought of Marin Luther,* 24.

[130] Hoefer, *Church-State-Society,* 22–3.

in the context of Luther's understanding of God's two realms in the later chapters. Towards that end, this chapter attempted to locate Two Realm theology in relation to some of the earlier two-fold conception of reality and how it differs from some of the other competing theological perspectives. In the course of our discussion we have noted that the whole of humanity, irrespective of whether they are Christians or non-Christians, stands in need of God's two-fold rule in this world. Moreover, God's rule through His law in the left-hand realm, is a sign of His love towards His creation. The purpose of His left-hand realm is to keep order in the world, provide justice, and to restrain evil so that people may obtain a stable, orderly, and peaceful life.[131] For that reason God has ordained certain structures or institutions in the left-hand realm. The temporal authority, particularly the state, is one such institution in the left-hand realm. Our concern in the next chapter is to undertake a detailed study of the God ordained institutions in the left-hand realm, and particularly the concept of state in the backdrop of Luther's two realm theology.

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[131] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 131.

CHAPTER FIVE

LUTHER'S CONCEPT OF STATE: ITS PURPOSE, FUNCTIONS AND LIMITS

The purpose of this chapter is to undertake a study on God ordained structures or institutions in the left hand realm for the preservation of His creation. Our special focus will be on the functions and limitation of the institution of the State against the backdrop of Luther's Two Realm perspective.

God Ordained Structures or Institutions in the Left-hand Realm

Luther's teaching on divinely ordained intuitions in the left hand realm and people acting through these structures to carry out God's will for His creation is fundamental to his teaching on God's two realm theology.[1] Luther affirmed that God has created and placed human beings in community for each other. In this community God has ordained "comprehensive spheres or structures of life (*genera vitae*), which might be called created orders or walks of life."[2]

Luther's understanding of the structures of life in the left hand realm was drawn from and was adapted from the prevalent medieval social theory of his times. Robert Kolb elaborates it thus:

> All Western European societies in the Middle Ages presumed a division of labor among the Church (*ecclesia*), which consisted of priests, monks, and nuns; the leadership of society (*politia*)\and the household, in which family and economic life took place (*oeconomia*). The great mass of the population fell into this third category. These "estates"—the usual translation of the German *Stand* and the Latin *status*—

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[1] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 130.

[2] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 59. Different authors uses a variety of terms while discussing this concept. For example, Robert Kolb uses "Situations" See Robert Kolb, "God's calling", 5. And Robert Benne "Places of Responsibility" See Robert Benne, *Ordinary Saints: An Introduction to the Christian Life* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1988).

embraced all people in their individual metaphorical locales in which life unfolds each day. This social theory also posited that in each of these situations or walks of life (as we might better translate the term) individuals have "offices " — *Amt* in German, *officium* in Latin—that define the roles and the functions which are imposed upon each person in their respective *Stände* or walks of life. A better translation for *Amt* might be, if you will pardon the misspelling, "response-ability," for these "offices" give human beings the ability and obligation to respond to the needs of others for the smooth functioning of the community and its individual members.[3]

Luther's account of the God ordained structures finds a systematic treatment in his Genesis Commentary.[4] Luther notes, "These, then, are the three hierarchies we often inculcate, namely, the household, the government, and the priesthood, or the home, the state, and the church". [5] Luther further explains, "The first is that of the parents, who should maintain strict discipline in their house when ruling the domestics and the children. The second is the government, for the officers of the state bear the sword for the purpose of coercing the obstinate and remiss by means of their power of discipline. The third is that of the church, which governs by the Word."[6] Luther notes that "with this threefold authority" God protects "the human race against the devil, the flesh, and the world, to the end that offenses may not increase but may be cut off." [7]

Luther's rejection of the traditional view, which made a hierarchical distinction between

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[3] Robert Kolb, "Called to Milk Cows and Govern Kingdoms Martin Luther's Teaching on the Christian's Vocations," *Concordia Journal* (Spring 2013): 133–34.

[4] Luther articulated his understanding about the institutions in the left-hand realm at several other places also. Another good place where he offers a comprehensive treatment about the same is in his explanation on the forth commandment in the Large Catechism. Here he organized the created structures using the category of "four fathers." The first group includes biological parents, where the order of marriage and family life comes (*domus*). The second group includes fathers and mothers of the household as employers (*patres et matres familias*), which comes under the order of economic life (oeconomia). The third group are fathers of the nation (*patres patriae*) which includes magistrates, princes or people who are in temporal authority. This arena of temporal authority of the state (civutas/politia). Finally comes the spiritual fathers such as pastors and bishops. This area of religious life) has to do with the Church ((*ecclesia*). See "Martin Luther, Ten Sermons on the Catechism, 1520," in *Vol. 51 of Luther's Works*, *Sermons I,* ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 143–49.

[5] Martin Luther, "Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 26-30," in *Vol. 5 of Luther's Works, ed*. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999), 139.

[6] Martin Luther, "Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 15-20," in *Vol. 3 of Luther's Works,* ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999), 279.

[7] *LW 3:*279.

the sacred and profane spheres of human activities in the world, resulted in his application of these three structures in the left-hand realm, in a way that radically differed from the medieval spiritualizing world view of the medieval Christianity. Luther overturned the view that sacred activities, whether it includes formal liturgies, monastic life or daily spiritual practices, were more God-pleasing and holy than the so called profane activities which includes the ordinary and common tasks of daily life.[8] Luther's rejection of this distinction was based on his contention that "God's bestowal of passive righteousness, which comes through the Holy Spirit's pronouncement of forgiveness and the resulting faith in Christ, determines the core identity of those whom the Spirit turns to Jesus through the re-creative word of life and salvation on the basis of Christ's death and resurrection."[9] To Luther "all activities performed by the faithful people of God as a result of their trust in him are equally holy, and equally without influence in determining that his people are his people."[10] Thus as Edward Cranz rightly observes, "Luther maintains that there are three "holy rules." The house father and the prince exercise an office which is equally God ordained and holy with that of the clergy, and accordingly the office and estate of the clergy is as such no higher than that of the two other hierarchies."[11]

Luther's articulation of God-ordained threefold structures, could be translated into a modern context, firstly, as the order of daily life, which includes marriage, family life and livelihood. (*domus*, *oeconomia or parentum*); secondly, the temporal government or state (*civitas/politia*) and third; the Church and religious life (*ecclesia*). [12]

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[8] Kolb, "Christian's Vocations," 134.

[9] Kolb, "Christian's Vocations," 134.

[10] Kolb, "Christian's Vocations," 134.

[11] Edward Cranz, *Essay on the Development of Luther's Thought on Justice, Law and Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), 174.

[12] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 58–9. And Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 130.

Oswald Bayer finds three different aspects of our modern life coming under the first order of daily life. They are, the family and marriage, business, and education and academic study.[13] Luther finds the order of the family as "the foundational and the first order of the human life."[14] All other orders, namely that of government and the church, stand in service of the family.[15] To Luther, "all authorities derive their authority from the office of the parent-and not the other way around."[16]

Kolb and Arand note that in the modern context the economic dimension of the created order of life could include the production and consumption of goods and services, our work place environments, our roles as owners, workers, employers and employees.[17] And "by means of the workplace and marketplace, God provides us with the goods and services necessary to sustain our physical life and community."[18] The economic life during Luther's time was different from ours, as the economy of medieval Europe was largely shaped by an agrarian culture.[19] Nevertheless as Bernhard Lohse points out, the latter part of the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries was also a time of radical change where economic practices of early capitalism developed.[20] Although the complex globalized economic structure of the modern times was unknown to Luther, his basic ethical perspective towards the economic life of a society, holds relevance to our modern economic context largely shaped by self-interest, an attitude of profit at

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[13] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 142. Bayer bases this interconnection noting the fact to Luther rooted in Aristotelian tradition, finds economy (*oeconomia*) as coming from the house (*oikos*), from the way a household operates. Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 142.

[14] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 60.

[15] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 60.

[16] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 60.

[17] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 61.

[18] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 61.

[19] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 61.

[20] Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther: An Introduction to His Life and Work* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 7.

any cost, and moral emptiness.[21] Kolb notes that Luther had definite convictions about economic

life and throughout his life he encouraged believers to demonstrate and execute God's providing

care through their economic sphere of life.[22] Luther, critiquing various unjust economic practices

during his time, "recognized no mammonistic autonomy in business, whether by grand capitalists

or pretty tradesmen, just as he recognized no 'Machiavellian autonomy of politics'. All who

served the public did so at God's call and behest and were obliged to do according to his rules."[23]

Luther placed great value on education.[24] He found, the school to be an extension of the

home, since to Luther, 'the basis of both the State and the Church is found in the family, in

which the young are trained for civil life and the Kingdom of God."[25] The two reasons which

stands out in Luther's writings for the establishment of schools "were the welfare of the Church

and the needs of the State."[26] In Luther's thinking, schools help the Church by training children

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[21] Mark Lutz a well accomplished economist defines the character of modern economics thus, "Modern economics is the science of self-interest, of how to best accommodate individual behavior by means of markets and the commodification of human relations . . . In this economic world view, the traditional human faculty of reason gets short-changed and degraded to act as the servant of sensory desires. There is no room for logic of human values and rationally founded ethics. Human aspirations are watered down to skillful shopping behavior and channeled into a stale consumerism. One would think that there must be an alternative way to conceptualize the economy. As quoted by Kamran Mofid "The Roots of Economics and Why it has Gone So Wrong", http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=3143 (accessed on 20th July 2015). Similarly Amartya Sen, the 1998 Nobel Prize winning economist in his writing warns about the growing distance between economics and ethics which has already brought some major deficiencies in the contemporary economic theory and practice. Sen believes that modern economics could become more productive by paying greater and more explicit attention to the ethical considerations and welfare for all. Amartya Sen, *On Ethics and Economics* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1987), 78–89.

[22] Robert Kolb, *Martin Luther: Confessor of the Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 184–85. For more discussion on Luther's thought on trade and economics see Luther's *Appeal to the German Nobility* (1520) and *Trade and Usury* (1524). And also Luther Hess Waring, *The Political Theories of Martin Luther* (New York: Kinickbocker, 1910), 205–20.

[23] Kolb, *Martin Luther: Confessor of the Faith*, 185. See also Robert Benne "The Calling of the Church in Economic life," in Carl E. Braaten and Robert W.Jenson edited, *The Two Cities of God: The Church's Responsibility for the Earthly City* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 95–116.

[24] Luther enunciated most progressive ideas about education of all German protestant reformers. Some of his important work in this regard includes *Letter to the Mayors and Aldermen in Behalf of Christian Schools* (1524*)* and *Sermon on the duty of Sending Children to School* (1530)

[25] Franklin Verzelius Newton Painter, *Luther on Education: Including a Historical Introduction and A Translation of the Reformer's Two Most Important Educational Treatises* (Saint Louis, Concordia, 1889), 114.

[26] Painter, *Luther on Education*, 131.

to become useful teachers and heads of families, and raise godly ministers to preach and defend the *Gospel*.[27] Painter rightly points out that it is a mistake to assume that Luther was interested in education solely for the sake of the Church.[28] Painter quotes Luther from the *Letter to Mayors and Aldermen in Behalf of Christian Schools* (1530):

> Even if there were no soul, and men did not need schools and the languages for the sake of Christianity and the Scriptures, still for the establishment of the best schools everywhere, both for boys and girls, this consideration is of itself sufficient, namely, that society, for the maintenance of civil order and the proper regulation of the household, needs accomplished and well-trained men and women. Now such men are to come from boys, and such women from girls; hence it is necessary that boys and girls be properly taught and brought up.[29]

Luther placed great value on civil government and found it to be a divinely ordained structure for social order and human welfare. He believed that the welfare of the State depends on the intelligence and virtue of its rulers and citizens. Schools and educational structures serve an explicit purpose in the human welfare by providing well educated and socially responsible people for the State.[30]

Before we discuss in detail the order of the temporal authority, it would be profitable for us to discuss here briefly about the institution of the Church in the left-hand realm. In Luther's thought Church is the only institution which finds its existence both in the right and the left hand realm. In this sense the Church is different from other orders in the left-hand realm. Arand put this two dimensional nature of the Church thus:

> In one sphere the Church lives in relation to God under the Word, and in the other sphere the Church lives in relation to other human creatures as the Word flows into human affairs. The Church coram Deo lives from the Word of God, and it lives coram mundo to deliver the Word of God to others. It lives in the presence of God as a creature and recipient of His Word and in the midst of human society as an agent

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[27] Painter, *Luther on Education,* 132.

[28] Painter, *Luther on Education*, 134–35.

[29] Painter, *Luther on Education,* 135.

[30] For more discussion see Painter, *Luther on Education*, 135–146.

that delivers life and salvation through preaching and absolution, through the Sacraments, and through the mutual conversation and consolation of Christians with one another. At its core, the Church is a spiritual reality, but a reality that has a sociological/empirical expression in the world.[31]

In Luther's thought, the Church is understood as a human institution because "God had entrusted the spiritual work of the Church to people."[32] While the church's spiritual work is governed directly by Christ, the Church as a human institution has physical and temporal responsibilities. This not only includes worldly responsibilities such as paying pastor's salary, maintaining accounts or repairing the sanctuary, but also effectively ordering those activities which are directly related to the Church *coram deo,* through which God builds His church, namely the ministry of the Word and Sacraments.[33]

Thus while the Church is *una sancta*, the assembly of believers belongs in the right-hand realm, and the Church as an institution belong in the left-hand realm.[34] This two-dimensional understanding means that while the Church as the spiritual government[35] of the right-hand realm operates to bring God's forgiveness and salvation to man, the Church as an institution that operates in the left-hand realm is also concerned with the extension of law and justice within that

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[31] Charles P. Arand, "A Two-Dimensional Understanding of the Church for the Twenty-First Century," *Concordia Journal* (April 2007): 147.

[32] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding*, 139.

[33] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding*, 139. In the horizontal dimension of the Church as it exist in the left-hand realm, Luther recognized two important but unequal kinds of activities which are important to the life of the church. They are those activities which are commanded by God (*de iure divinó*), which are directly related to the Church *coram Deo*. And secondly those activities which are carried out using human reason and imagination (*de iure humanó*) for the purpose of carrying out the ministry of Word and Sacraments. These includes human traditions, human orders, and adiaphora. Although these activities are not directly related to the definition of the Church *coram Deo*, "but they do contribute to the way in which the Word is delivered by human beings and the effectiveness in which God's people carry out God's will within the world. We can distinguish between these two activities in that the former deals with the "what" we are given to do by God; whereas, the latter deals with "how" we carry them out." For more discussion see Arand, "Two-Dimensional Understanding", 149. And Charles P. Arand, "What are Ecclesiologically Challenged Lutherans to Do: Starting Points for a Lutheran Ecclesiology," *Concordia Journal* (January-April 2008).

[34] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 30.

[35] See Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, 25 and Kolb, *Confessor of the Faith,* 177.

realm.[36] Thus within the left-hand realm the Church has a moral responsibility to preach the

wrath and law of God "in such a way, by audible and visible words, as to combat the world's

decline towards nothingness."[37]

Luther finds the establishment of the church, before the household and the state.[38] God's

Word to Adam to eat of all trees in Paradise except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

(Genesis 2:16-17) established the church.[39] Luther notes "God gave Adam Word, worship, and

religion in its barest, purest, and simplest form, in which there was nothing laborious, nothing

elaborate…. Only this He wants: that he praise God that he thank Him that he rejoice in the

Lord."[40]

Hans –Martin Barth notes that the "sense for 'worship of God' as built into the "order of

creation," "cannot mean 'church' in the proper sense, but only a social form of religion

belonging to it as a reality in the society."[41] Oswald Bayer further elaborates this form of general

religion, which is not uniquely a Christian one as follows:

> The first Word of God to the human being, according to the non-Priestly creation
> story, is the promise of life (Gen 2:16): "You may freely eat…!" This promise of life
> is protected by a threat (Gen 2:17): "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
> you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." About this promise
> and threat Luther observes concisely in his 1535 Genesis lecture: "This is the
> establishment of the church, before the household and the state existed"; no special
> church, but general one: "without walls," it exists in Word and in faith—in that God
> calls the human beings to life, "preaches" to him in this way, "sets his Word before
> him," and thus "desires only that he praises God, offers him thanks, so that he will

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[36] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 131–32.

[37] Braaten and Jenson edited, *The Two Cities*, 6.

[38] See Martin Luther, "Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 1-5," in *Vol. I of Luther's Work.* ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999), 103.

[39] *LW* 1:103.

[40] *LW* 1:106.

[41] Hans, *The Theology of Martin Luther,* 328.

rejoice in the Lord. It seems astonishing at creation" and is not a uniquely Christian institution.[42]

This observation opens doors to discuss the implications of the nature and role of other religions in the left hand realm. The first argument is that there does exist the impulse to reach out to the true God in other world religions, though it might be darkened and distorted through sin. Kolb and Arand note "Although Adam and Eve fell into sin by being pulled away from God's word, the human religious impulse was not destroyed. Instead, it became distorted so that humans invented religions to replace the true knowledge of God that they had lost."[43] Oswald Bayer further elaborates the nature and limitations of human religious impulse as present in other religions:

> From the primeval promise of life that is valid for every person (Gen.2:16), together with the self-revelation of God: "I am the Lord, your God!" (Exod. 20:3), which uses the threat of death to protect the promise of life (Gen. 2:17), an appropriate "natural theology" comes forth, and concurrently, a religious phenomenology. In the sense that it is used in Romans 1:18-3:20, it assumes that there is a relationship with God that is lived out by every human being, but which is actually and in practice always a failure; it is a broken relationship. Reason-not primarily the theoretical, but rather the practical variety that is guided by the power of the imagination-is grasping for God already, but always misses the mark, so that Luther (concerning Jon.1:5: "Then the mariners were afraid, and each cried to his god") can formulate the concise statement "that these people in the ship all knew about God" "but had no certainty of God." To make God the true and certain God is the office of Jesus Christ.[44]

Secondly, from this perspective we could also affirm that other religions do record certain truths about God's nature and law which are useful for a peaceful and orderly life in the left-hand

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[42] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 126–27. In this way, a need and sense for worship is already build into creation (First Article). However fall radically corrupted this sense of worship built into creation and human beings lost the true knowledge and relationship with God, and invented their own religion and gods to their imaginations to continue with. However the church, as an unique reality although having its continuation in the realm of creation before fall as an order of creation, should be properly understood in the realm of redemption (Second and Third Article), where true knowledge of God is restored once again, through Jesus Christ and God's Word, and fallen human being are redeemed and resorted their relationship with God, through faith, by the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ. In this sense Church stands apart from the general sense worship build into creation which was distorted with fall.

[43] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 63.

[44] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 127.

realm.[45] In this sense Luther could affirm with Paul that God's "deity and power" are evident to anyone in the natural order of things (Rom 1:20). Similarly the evidence of God's goodness in the bounty with which He replenishes the earth (Acts 14:16-17) is evident to everyone. Moreover it can be alluded that the voice of God's law is also present in different religions since the requirements of God's law is written on everyone's heart (Rom 2:5).[46] In the right-hand realm, the affirmation of God's truth in other religions may be theologically deficient, because it does not confess saving faith in the true, triune God revealed in Jesus Christ.[47] World religions, however, with regard to their ceremonial righteousness, have relevance in the left-hand realm contributing towards building order, external peace and justice.[48] Thus non-Christian religions do have a positive voice and role to play for the sake of common good in the left-hand realm.

Luther's Perspective on State and Temporal Authority

The purpose of this section is to undertake a detailed study on the nature and function of the State or Civil government in Luther's thought. We shall also discuss the role of reason and natural law in relation to the State and further explore the dynamic relationship between Church and State as a two God ordained institution in the left-hand realm, fulling His purpose for His creation. Luther was a not a political philosopher but a biblical theologian and a religious reformer. Hence, his perspective on temporal authority was profoundly theological in nature.[49]

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[45] Hoefer, *Church-State-Society,* 75.

[46] See Martin Luther, "Lectures on Jonah," in *Vol. 19 of Luther's Works, Minor Prophets II: Jonah and Habakkuk,* ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999), 53–54, Martin Luther, "Lectures on Romans," *Vol. 25 of Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999), 180–81., Oswald Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,*126–39. And Hoefer, *Church-State-Society,* 75.

[47] William W. Schumacher, "Civic Participation by Churches and Pastors: An Essay on Two Kinds of Righteousness," *Concordia Journal* 30 (July 2004): 175.

[48] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 63.

[49] Ernest K. Pasiciel, "Martin Luther's Theology of the Civil Authority," *Didaskalia* 11 (Spring 2000): 38–39.

Lewis W. Spitz notes "Luther did not understand the concept of the "state" as a legal, political and social entity in the modern sense.[50]Thus Cargill Thompson further elaborates that Luther did not have a "highly developed sense of the state in the modern sense of the term."[51] To Luther, political authority was not an abstract institution but "something which is vested in individuals, in rulers or collectively in magistrates."[52] So his political theory was always conducted in personal terms, for example, "obedience is something which is not given to an abstraction, but to a person-like king or prince, or to the collective magistrates of a city."[53]

Luther's vocabulary to denote political communities includes "*respublica*", "*politia*", "*civitas*" and "*Reich.*"[54] His key-word to denote political authority was "*Oberkeit*" or "*Obrigkeit*", with its Latin synonymous "*magistratus*", which then was an umbrella term "to denote political authority in general and which can be applied equally in the political context of Germany to the Emperor, the princes or the town governments."[55] Some of the important works of Luther on temporal authority includes: *Temporal Authority: To What Extent it should be Obeyed (*1523*), On Whether Soldiers Too Can Be Saved* (1526),

Origin and Purpose of State/ Civil Authority

In Luther's estimate, civil authority is a divine institution and its authority in the left-hand realm primarily rests not on "an autonomous will to power," or "man's natural social drive and impulse," nor in "the consent of the governed," but in the divine will of God for the preservation

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[50] Lewis W. Spitz, "Luther's Ecclesiology and His Concept of the Prince as N*otbisc*h," Church *History,* 22, no.2 (June 1953): 115. Spitz further notes that the State in the modern sense of the terms seems first to have come into common usage in the last half of the sixteenth century from Italian sources via French jurists. See Spitz, "Luther's Ecclesiology," 115.

[51] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 62.

[52] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 62.

[53] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 62.

[54] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 62.

[55] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 62–63.

of the fallen world.[56] Luther writes:

> First, we must provide a sound basis for the civil law and sword so no one will doubt
> that it is in the world by God's will and ordinance. The passages which do this are the
> following: Romans 13, "Let every soul [*Seele*] be subject to the governing authority,
> for there is no authority except from God; the authority which everywhere
> [*allenthalben*] exists has been ordained by God. He then who resists the governing
> authority resists the ordinance of God, and he who resists God's ordinance will incur
> judgment." Again, in I Peter 2[:13–14], "Be subject to every kind of human
> ordinance, whether it be to the king as supreme, or to governors, as those who have
> been sent by him to punish the wicked and to praise the righteous."[57]

Luther viewed temporal rulers not just as delegates to whom God has entrusted the exercise

of temporal government: but also in a more positive sense, as the actual instruments or "masks"

through which God exercise his temporal governance in the left-hand realm.[58] In this sense

Luther could affirm that "The hand that wields the sword is not the hand of man, but the hand of

God."[59] Although Luther affirms the divine character of the office of temporal authority, he was

well aware of the possible abuse by the rulers who actually occupy the office. In Luther's

thought one could trace at least two reasons responsible for this fate; temptation, which comes

along with the office and Satan's ploy to overthrow God's rule in the two realms. Cargill

Thompson rightly sums up Luther's perspective in this regard:

> Indeed, Luther sees rulers as being particularly exposed, by the nature of their office,
> to temptation. For the possession of authority encourages them to abuse their office
> and to use their power to advance their own selfish interests instead of those of their
> subjects. Standing as they do above their subjects, they are inclined to treat their
> subjects as their serfs or as their private property and to believe that they are entitled
> to do whatever they wish. Moreover- and here one returns to the doctrine of the
> conflict between "*Reich Gottes*" and "*Teufels Reich*"- they are particularly exposed to
> the attacks of Satan. For one of the Devil's constant aims is to overthrow the Two
> Regiments or to gain control of them for himself, and one of the easiest ways he has

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[56] Pasiciel, "Martin Luther's Theology," 39.

[57] *LW* 45:85–86.

[58] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 63–64.

[59] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 63–64.

of doing this is to tempt the offices of the temporal regiment to abuse their authority and to use it for their own selfish needs to neglect and oppression of their subjects.[60]

Although the possibility of abuse of temporal office is real, still Luther does not believe this abuse destroys its divine character, but "it merely means that Satan is being (temporarily) successful in his efforts to undermine God's government. For God turns evil to good and He uses evil rulers for His own ends."[61]

In Luther's writings one could find at least two perspectives regarding the origin of the state. In the first perspective, sees the state not as an order of creation but rather as an order of necessity. In his Genesis Commentary Luther notes "…Moreover, there was no government of the state before sin, for there was no need of it. Civil government is a remedy required by our corrupted nature."[62] In this sense, to Luther the state is a postlapsarian necessity.[63] And it is primarily a "*forma et remedium peccati*"[64] or "a necessary antidote against the ruined natural world."[65] The power of the state is, then, a coercive authority. The purpose of the state is to punish sins and to save people from the effects of the sin. This coercive power of the government is essential to the left-hand realm because as Luther notes "no one is by nature Christian or righteous, but altogether sinful and wicked"[66] and without the sword of the government wicked men would destroy each other. In this sense Luther's perspective on government is Hobbesian, since according to Hobbes the life of man on earth would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and

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[60] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 65.

[61] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 65.

[62] *LW* 1:104.

[63] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 61.

[64] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 65.

[65] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 146.

[66] *LW* 45:89.

short"[67] in the absence of the government. Oswald Bayer sums up Luther's thought, "…the

power of coercion is primary in the state. It alone hinders random actions; it alone restrains

animal instincts, in situations where it is one against the other for survival; it alone can deal with

Cain, the murderer of his brother; it alone subdues the battle of everyone against everyone else in

a life-and-death struggle for mutual recognition." [68] Although to Luther temporal government is a

postlapsarian necessity, an eye of faith can alone still see it as a divine gift of God which

evidences God's continuing mercy to his creation.[69]

Although Luther at times treats temporal government as being a product of fall, still there

are other times wherein Luther treats it as an original act of creation along with other institutions.

For example, Luther finds the political estate coming "from Adam's paternal authority and from

God's gift to Adam of rule over all the beasts of the field."[70] To Luther the political estate is

rooted within the economic or household estate. Oswald Bayer clarifies, "Thus, the explanation

of fourth commandment in the large catechism reads; 'All other authority flows and spreads out

from the authority of the parents.' And at another point: 'The household is the source of all

public affairs.' To this extent, Luther relativizes his strict theological assessment that the political

estate had to be established because of sin."[71] Kolb and Arand clarify that in the later years

Luther "recognized the human need for organization in society. And so, against some

Anabaptists of the sixteenth century, the Lutheran reformers stressed that "legitimate civil

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[67] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 67.

[68] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 148.

[69] Thompson, *Political Thought,* 66. To a non-believer temporal authority can appear to be simply oppressive or a necessary evil at best. But to a Christian with an eye of faith can find the merciful provision of God behind temporal authority, just like a true believer can see behind the suffering of the cross, Christ victory over sin and eternal salvation. Thompson, *Political Thought,* 66.

[70] Thompson, *Political Thought,* 66.

[71] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 148–49.

ordinance are good creations of God and divine ordinance."[72] To Luther state has its origin along with other institutions in the left-hand realm as a natural and necessary part of divine economy, to foster and enhance the collective life of God's creation in the left-hand realm.

Oswald Bayer notes that each perspective concerning the origins of the state brings along with it particular political options. If we fail to balance our views or lean towards one at the expense of other, a distorted view on the temporal authority would result. The first perspective on state as postlapsarian necessity lend to the view that the state needs to be a coercive authority. If taken to the extreme, this perspective could envisage a police state. In such a scenario, "opportunities to settle public matters by vote, to contribute to understanding the common will, are going to be distrusted in principle; one fear mob rule in such system."[73] However, if we proceed from the assumption that state is an order of creation, then we could affirm an optimistic view about the natural law and human capabilities in the left-hand realm. From this view one could positively affirm that "human beings can strive for a consensus that will eventually be cosmopolitan, a consensus of all peoples to be achieved by their powers of reason…"[74] This resonates with Luther's affirmation that "God created human beings so that they could get along together in a friendly and peaceful way."[75] However taken to extreme, one weakness inherent in this approach is the failure to take seriously sin and its effect in human beings. So if the first perspective of state as a coercive authority is deficient in its theology of creation, then the second perspective of state is deficient concerning a theology of sin.[76] The task ahead is not to treat these two perspectives as competing or conflicting with each other, but rather as revealing two facets

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[72] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 61.

[73] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 149.

[74] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 148.

[75] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 148.

[76] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology*, 148.

of the same human reality—human sin which needs to be checked, as well as the need to affirm the goodness still left in God's creation though distorted, and God's design for humanity to live in fellowship marked with justice, peace and good order.

From the above discussion, it is essential to grasp at least two affirmation Luther makes regarding the secular government. Firstly, the state carries a divine mandate, with its coercive authority to contain lawlessness and violence which marks sinful human nature and disturbs peace and order in the temporal realm. Secondly, the state as an order created in the left-hand realm, has a positive role to play to promote and foster those conditions conducive for a peaceful, just and harmonious human existence in this world.

<p style="text-align:center">The Modus Operandi of the State</p>

To Luther, the three most important elements which constitute the effective functioning of the State are its coercive authority (sword), natural law and human reason. Together these three, help the state to carry out its task of promoting life and curbing sin and its effects in the left-hand realm.

For Luther, the power of the government is the power of the sword. The power of the sword could be interpreted as the "law grounded on the power of punishment" [77] or "the just, orderly use of power."[78] The sword never is without a master and its master is the legitimate temporal authority. Thus in Luther's thought there is no place for street justice or private individuals taking law into their hands.[79] The state is divinely called to preserve the civil order and peace by both issuing laws and legislations which promote life and thus diminish the

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[77] Heinrich Bornkamm, *Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms,* trans. Karl H. Hertz (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1966), 8.

[78] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 315.

[79] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 151.

possibility of lawlessness and the powerful exploiting the weak. However taking human sinful

nature seriously, laws are useless unless there is an authority that can compel its citizen's to

follow it. Thus the state is vested with its coercive authority. The state functions to carry out

retribution and make use of appropriate force to enforce its laws and thereby to contain

lawlessness and violence that disturbs civil order and peace.[80] Luther thought that in absence of

such a coercive temporal sword, the wickedness of the world would lead to mob rule and

eventually to the destruction of humanity. Luther succinctly sums up his rationale:

> There are few true believers, and still fewer who live a Christian life, who do not
> resist evil and indeed themselves do no evil. For this reason God has provided for
> them a different government beyond the Christian estate and kingdom of God. He has
> subjected them to the sword so that, even though they would like to, they are unable
> to practice their wickedness, and if they do practice it they cannot do so without fear
> or with success and impunity, In the same way a savage wild beast is bound with
> chains and ropes so that it cannot bite and tear as it would normally do, even though it
> would like to; whereas a tame and gentle animal needs no restraint, but is harmless
> despite the lack of chains and ropes. If this were not so, men would devour one
> another, seeing that the whole world is evil and that among thousands there is
> scarcely a single true Christian. No one could support wife and child, feed himself,
> and serve God. The world would be reduced to chaos. For this reason God has
> ordained two governments: the spiritual, by which the Holy Spirit produces
> Christians and righteous people under Christ; and the temporal, which restrains the
> un-Christian and wicked so that—no thanks to them—they are obliged to keep still
> and to maintain an outward peace. Thus does St. Paul interpret the temporal sword in
> Romans 13[:3], when he says it is not a terror to good conduct but to bad. And Peter
> says it is for the punishment of the wicked [I Pet. 2:14].[81]

In Luther's thought the coercive authority of the state is to be guided by the natural law.

The sword stands ready for the enforcement of the civil law which comes from the natural law.

The sword and the natural law works together for the proper functioning of the State.

It is important to note here that the natural law tradition is not unique to Luther's thinking.

It was a common conviction of theologians and philosophers from "Plato and Aristotle to

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[80] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 151.

[81] *LW* 45: 90–91.

Aquinas and Bonaventura, as well as from Luther and Calvin to Kant and Hegel."[82] Carl Braaten

notes that "the bare bones of this common tradition entail the belief that the natural law is

grounded in the eternal mind of God and knowable by human beings through reason and

conscience. The unwritten natural law is universal, the same for everyone and everywhere. The

universal natural law is the norm and standard of all laws enacted in society."[83]

Luther's concept of natural law is traditional in many ways. He could concur with the

medieval articulation of the natural law that "there is a universal moral law, which is binding on

all men-irrespective of whether they are Christians or not-since it is laid down by God and the

knowledge is planted by God in men's hearts."[84] In Luther's thought natural law is integrally

connected to divine law or it is a poorly understood form of it. In his *Romans lectures* (1515) he

makes it explicit that the content of the natural law consist of the Ten Commandments and the

love of God and of neighbor enjoined. [85] Further he conceived the natural law as epitomized in

the golden rule set forth in Mathew 7:12: "Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so

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[82] Carl E. Braaten, "A Lutheran Affirmation of the Natural Law," in *Natural Law: A Lutheran Reappraisal*, ed. Robert C. Baker and Roland Cap Ehlke (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2011), 5.

[83] Braaten, "A Lutheran Affirmation of the Natural Law," 5. It is also important at this point to note briefly what natural is not. Budziszewski offers a helpful summary thus:The natural law is not "innate," for we are not born knowing it–although as soon as the child is capable of understanding what is meant by "murder" and by "wrong," he is capable of recognizing that murder, Infact, is wrong. The natural law is *not* mere biological instinct–although it does take account of certain biological realities, for the practical requirements of love in the context of family life would no doubt be somewhat different among being who had only one sex or whose young were ready to assume the responsibilities of adulthood as soon as they hatched out. The natural law is not mere custom-although the customs of almost all times and places more or less acknowledge it. The I natura11aw is not just a deceptive name for moral law as known through the Bible-although biblical moral law acknowledges it, conforms to it, and extends it. The natural law is not the same as the theories that philosophers construct about it-rather it is the reality which the theories attempt, with greater or lesser success, to describe. And the natural law is not a law of nature in the same sense that gravitation is a law of nature-indeed, principles like gravitation are "laws" only by distant analogy, for a falling apple is not freely and rationally conforming its behavior to a rule which it knows to be right. J. Budziszewshi, *What We Can't Not Know: A Guide*, Dallas: Spense, 2003), 14–5. Budziszweki argues that natural law can be termed as universal common sense of the human race, as well as the foundation of its uncommon sense. He further notes "It makes difference that they are right for all; otherwise there would be nothing for moral reasoning and persuasion to be about. It makes a difference that they are known to all; otherwise, even though moral reasoning and persuasion would be something, they could never get started." Budziszewshi, *What We Can't Not Know,* 15.

[84] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 86.

[85] *LW* 25: 180.

to them; for this is the Law and the Prophets."[86]

Luther is also explicit in his Roman lectures and elsewhere that God's law is given to all

people, though differently to Jews and Gentiles. Luther finds support from the scriptures that the

divine law was given directly to Jews in the form of the Ten Commandments whereas to gentiles

"the law was written namely, with the finger of God, on their hearts."[87]

Luther's conception of natural law stands distinct from classical[88] and medieval Christian

articulation[89] of natural law in many sense. To classical natural law theorists "nature" refers to a

self-contained and self-sustaining order within creation and all persons embody this natural order

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[86] *LW* 25:180.

[87] *LW* 25:19.

[88] There exist varying nuances to natural law thought represented by classical philosophers like Plato, Aristotle or Cicero etc. Still one could find a general consensus as Pearson sums up thus "First, there is a natural moral order to the universe that is teleological in character; that is, all things in the cosmos, including human beings, seek to fulfill their basic and created purposes and functions, and doing so represents what is the "good" for each thing including human beings. Second, this teleological order is discernable in fundamental behavioral inclinations or tendencies in things…Third, these inclinations, and the way they promote the genuine "good" for things, are rational and can discovered by human reason. Indeed, the principles (or "precepts") of the natural law are embedded in our human reason-they are "written on the heart"-so that we "can't not know" them. Fourth, because the moral precepts of the natural law are also the moral precepts of human reason, expressed not only within individuals but also collectively, the civil laws and legal procedures of a "good" society will be derived from the precepts of the natural law." Thomas D. Pearson, "Luther's Pragmatic Appropriation of the Natural Law Tradition," in *Natural Law: A Lutheran Reappraisal*, ed. Robert C. Baker and Roland Cap Ehlke (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2011), 42. For a detailed discussion see also Jean Porter, *Natural and Divine Law: Reclaiming the Tradition for Christian Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 63-71.

[89] Thomas Aquinas is often referred as most representative of scholastic school of thought. For Aquinas, God is essentially reason and God's will is both informed and directed by His reason. The natural law is the representation of God's rational nature which then is revealed in creation. As God's creatures we can know him through His eternal law which then is made accessible through natural law. The natural law is derived from God's eternal law. And the "eternal law" refers to God's providential ordering of all created things to their proper end. Since God has made us rational creatures, through human reason we can engage the structure of the natural law and can discern its precepts. To Aquinas "synderesis" or the power of conscience is the most critical faculty endowed to us to intuit into the precepts of natural law. So if natural law is written on the heart, then it is synderesis that reads the heart. According to Aquinas we reconcile to God rationally through submission to His eternal and natural law. Although human reason sufficient to engage the rational structure of natural law, God's grace is needed for humans to move towards accomplishing demands of natural law to be reconciled to God. And Christ provides this grace so that we mature into fully realized human beings in the image of God and can be reconciled to God. It is to be noted here that Aquinas do not think that sin might disturb or contaminate the metaphysical tranquility of this system. He views sin more in terms of failure of human beings to acknowledge the natural law and thereby making mistakes or succumbing to human weakness. For a detailed discussion see Pearson, "Natural Law Tradition," 44–5. Gifford A. Grobien, "What is the Natural Law?: Medieval Foundations and Luther's Appropriation," in *Natural Law: A Lutheran Reappraisal*, ed. Robert C. Baker and Roland Cap Ehlke (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2011), 20–32. And also Porter, "Natural and Divine Law."

within themselves and strive to fulfill their created purpose. To Luther human beings are fallen creatures and only in and through Christ we can overcome our sinfulness and fulfill our created purpose.[90]

Luther's articulation also departed from the medieval understanding of natural law where Christ distributes grace through His sacraments to perfect one's sinful nature to conform one God's requirements as revealed in the natural law for the one's salvation. Luther makes a clear distinction about the purpose and function of law in both realms. In this regard as Thomas D. Pearson observes, "Natural law functions for Luther as an ingredient in maintaining the integrity of the left-hand kingdom of civil order, but not as a fit subject on which to ground theological discourse within the kingdom of the right." [91] Luther with his two realm distinction could clearly affirm that the natural law has its significance only in the temporal realm and "it is the law of the "*weltliches Reich*"-one cannot be saved by observing it."[92] To Luther the purpose of the law in the right hand or spiritual realm is only to show men their sinfulness and to prepare them to accept the promise of the *Gospel*. Thompson rightly sums up Luther's thought in this regard as thus:

> To fulfill the law for the purposes of the spiritual "*Reich*" it is not enough that men observe the law externally, that they refrain from theft, murder, adultery- it is necessary that they keep the law in their hearts, and this they are incapable of doing, Natural law, on the other hand, represents the law in its temporal role. For in the temporal "*Reich*" all that is required is that man should observe the precepts of the moral law externally. In order to maintain peace on earth, it is enough if men refrain from killing, theft and so on. Thus whereas the law is related to the spiritual righteousness of the spiritual "*Reich*", natural law is related to the temporal or external righteousness of the "*weltliches Reich*".[93]

In Luther's thought along with Natural law, human reason plays a pivotal role in left-hand

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[90] Pearson, "Natural Law Tradition," 43.

[91] Pearson, "Natural Law Tradition," 42.

[92] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 86.

[93] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 87–88.

realm and especially for the smooth functioning of the state. Luther's perspective on human reason can appear to be contradicting at first. At times Luther completely rejects reason and calls it "the Devil's appointed whore"[94] and in other places he affirms it as a divine gift and says, "that reason is the most important and the highest in rank among all things and, in comparison with other things of this life, the best and something divine.[95] One important question that arise at this point is, Can Luther's divergent views on reason can be reconciled? A careful study on this topic would reveal that, in order to truly understand Luther's estimate about human reason, it is important to place it within the frame work of his understanding of God's two realm. Luther holds specific conviction regarding the scope and limitation regarding the human reason within the framework of his Two Realm theology.

To Luther reason has only a minimal role in the spiritual kingdom. This is because it fails to comprehend spiritual things and cannot help someone to become righteous before God. In this sense reason is totally ignorant about the Gospel which is a "right-handed knowledge" of God. Because "reason cannot know the depths of sin or the riches of the *Gospel*, but it can know and speak of Christ in an historical sense. This, however, is not saving faith." [96] Knut Alfsvåg further notes two defects of reason when employed in the spiritual realm:

> According to Luther, "Reason believes in God's might and is aware of it, but it is uncertain whether God is willing to employ this in our behalf, because in adversity it so often experience the opposite to be true" (WA 19: 206.15-18; AE 19: 54). In other words, reason can never on its own solve the problem of *Anfechtung*, or anxiety, which leads Luther in *De servo arbitrio* to conclude that the approach of natural reason, when honest to itself, has to end in despair before the *Deus absconditus* (W A 18: 719.4—35, AE 33: 190). The other defect is that reason can never "identify God properly; it cannot ascribe the Godhead for the One who is entitled to it exclusively"

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[94] For more discussion see, Hein, "Reason and Two Kingdoms," 138–48.

[95] Martin Luther, "The Disputation Concerning Man (1536)," in *Vol. 34 of Luth*er's *Works, Career of the Reformer IV*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 137.

[96] Steven A. Hein, "Reason and Two Kingdoms," 141.

(WA 19: 206.31-32; AE 19: 54), namely, Jesus Christ. Natural reason can never fathom the mystery of the incarnation.[97]

Thus as Wright points out, to Luther, "reason then is not the part of the spiritual kingdom, but rather the kingdom of the world,"[98] Reason in the right hand realm is an "enemy of God" and a "source of mischief." It is "carnal" and "stupid."[99] Commenting on Psalm 2, Luther states, "There is the place where our reason works, provides, and runs as if on its own race track, as much as it can. But in the presence of God all these things are nothing, nor do they count for anything, for here a better righteousness and a greater power than ours is required."[100]

Despite all his negative comments concerning reason in the right hand realm, Luther was confident about the ability of the human reason in the left-hand realm. Luther referred to the earthly kingdom as the "Kingdom of Human Reason."[101] As Steven Hein points out to Luther, "Reason, free will, and power are present even after the fall for man to conduct his household affairs, to handle the proper administration of government, and to perform other earthly tasks over which God has given him dominion."[102] Further explaining Luther's estimate about human

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[97] Knut Alfsvåg, "Christians in Society: Luther's Teaching on the Two Kingdoms and the Three Estates Today," *Logia* 14 no. 4 (Reformation 2005): 17–18.

[98] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 122.

[99] In this regard Luther thought that Aristotle with his philosophy is the "destroyer of pious doctrine," an "inventor of fables" and "the ungodly public enemy of the truth." Hein, "Reason and Two Kingdoms," 139.

[100] Martin Luther, "Psalms 3," in *Selected Psalms I, Vol. 12 of Luther's Works,* ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999), 21. However it is important to note that Luther's negative approach towards reason in spiritual matters did not mean that reason had no place in theology and in the service of ministry. Luther held consistently that a regenerated reason was a "handmaiden" of faith. As Brain Gerrish notes to Luther "Reason, indeed, may be of service even in spiritual matters, provided it is kept subordinate to faith and is first illuminated by the Holy Spirit." Brain Albert Gerrish, *Grace and Reason: A Study in the Theology of Luther* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962), 81. Gerrish further notes Luther never thought that there no intellectual element in faith. Because 'Faith is, indeed, for Luther a mode of cognition-though not only this, nor even primarily was certainly not suspicious about the intellectual element in faith." Gerrish, *Grace and Reason,* 82. So it is then clear that Luther does not attack reason *per se*, but only the misuse of it and to Luther "reason is misused when it is set up as the final and supreme judge in matters of theology." Gerrish, *Grace and Reason,* 84. See also Hein, "Reason and Two Kingdoms," 141–43.

[101] Hein, "Reason and Two Kingdoms," 140.

[102] Hein, "Reason and Two Kingdoms," 140.

reason in relation to two realms, B.A Gerrish notes:

> Luther is even ready to grant that man's natural powers remain largely uncorrupted by the fall. Again it is simply a matter of making careful distinctions: "I make a difference between *naturalia* and *spiritualia*." The *spiritualia* (or spiritual endowments) are certainly corrupt, so that no man loves God or keeps His Law; but the *naturalia* (natural endowments) are sound.[103]

Gerrish further summarizes the function of reason in relation to temporal authority:

> Reason is able to found kingdoms and common wealth's, to fence them in and make them firm with useful laws, to direct them and govern them with good counsel and sound precepts, to prescribe many things indispensable for the preservation of the commonwealths and of the human society (*soceitatis humanae*- virtually 'civilization). Reason, in fact, is the 'soul of law and mistress of all laws.' The philosophy of government rests upon the principle of that reason (in a sufficiently liberal amount) is the possession of the few, whilst law prescribed by reason must serve for many.[104]

According to Luther, reason is to be employed to bring order and positive development in the temporal life. It was Luther's conviction that force alone is not sufficient to run the temporal authority. Luther notes "Everything runs smoother with wisdom than with force. It is necessary for men to rule with reason and not with power alone, as is already now the case, for sheer power without reason cannot last long and keeps the subjects in a state of everlasting hatred against authority, as all history loudly testifies."[105] Thus 'in "earthly government," the affairs of state, reason is to be exercised in its best possible fashion for providing a stable government and promoting civil righteousness".[106]

Luther finds natural law and natural reason key to the founding of civil law through which the state/civil government operates. Luther did not claim that Christians have, based on the

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[103] Gerrish, *Grace and Reason,* 73.

[104] Gerrish, *Grace and Reason,* 13.

[105] As quoted in Scott Travis Kline, "A Genealogy of a German-Lutheran Two-Kingdom Concept: From a German Treology of the Status Quo to An East German Theology of Critical Solidarity" (PhD Diss., McGill University, 2001), 57.

[106] Hein, "Reason and Two Kingdoms," 140.

Gospel, a special knowledge or special insight into problems which confront society. Luther

valued the reasoning abilities of non-Christians and non-Christian rulers alike.[107] Kolb and Arand

note that Luther advised that:

> whoever wants to rule his land well and be learned in secular government should read
> Homer, Virgil, Demosthenes, Aristotle, Cicero, Livy, and others who Luther called
> God's pagan "prophets" and "apostles" in secular affairs, even as Moses, Elijah,
> Isaiah, and others were his prophets in spiritual affairs. Rulers should also learn from
> the example of exemplary rulers (endowed with wisdom and courage) of worldly
> governments, such as Alexander the Great, Philip his father, Augustus, Trajan, and
> others, who were the Davids and Solomons of the pagans. One difference between
> pagan and Christian rulers consisted in the fact that the former attributed their success
> to the goddess Fortuna whereas Christian rulers recognized their success as a gift of
> God. Such divine direction is especially necessary in secular governments, for rulers
> like David and other God-fearing Christian princes serve God and govern the
> people.[108]

To Luther the secular government can function quite independently of the Christian faith

and the "emperor need not be a saint or even a Christian."[109] However, this does not mean that

the state/civil government is autonomous with respect to the rules of God as people like Ernst

Troeltsch and Max Weber thought. [110] Hans Schwarz rightly points out that Luther's conception

of natural law and natural reason does not correspond to an Enlightenment notion that human

reason is an autonomous possession of humans. "For Luther, even natural reason is a gift of

God."[111]

Luther's affirmation of the universality of natural law and reason carries much significance

to our discussion. Firstly as Christians, who seek to work with others in the left hand realm for

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[107] Arand, "The Christian's Calling," 5.

[108] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 71.

[109] Stephenson "The Two Governments," 3.

[110] For more details Chapter 4 "*Eigengesetzlichkeit*, the Concept of the Autonomous Laws of Each Sphere" and also Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 25–30.

[111] Schwarz, *True Faith in True God*, 85.

the common good, we are not required to introduce the world to God and His law.[112] There is no

such realm of life from which God is absent, because "God is always present in the world

beforehand through the law engraved in the nature of the things He creates. God is universally

present as the authority that drives people to do what they must do to sustain life, to administer

justice, to play by the rules, and to care for their families and communities."[113] Thus "the

universality of law provides a common ground for us to cooperate with all those who share

respect of law, regardless of their theological conviction."[114] Secondly a positive affirmation of

the natural law and of human reason in Luther's thought also presents with us possibilities to

work towards strengthening, sustaining, and deepening human fellowship and finding solutions

in dealing with various social problems which disrupts peace and justice. As Knut Alfsvåg points

out "Fellowship based on reason as an important (but not the ultimate) goal of human activity is

the proper role for the political estate according to Lutheran understanding.[115] Thirdly a positive

affirmation of natural law and human reason also help us avoid being tossed away by the wind of

moral and cultural relativism in our ethical decision making. Carl Braaten affirming the

importance of natural law notes:

> They all oppose cultural relativism, the notion that laws are mere moral conventions
> that vary among societies, with no transcendent ontological claim to being universally
> valid all binding. To the contrary, those who hold to the natural law believe that for a
> law to be just, it must conform to the structure of reality itself and it should not
> depend on the shifting opinions and preferences of human beings. The law must be
> the same for all human beings and at all times, so 'that if murder is morally wrong in
> America, it is equally so in Asia and Africa, if torture is to be condemned as evil in
> Jerusalem, it must be equally so in London and Tehren.[116]

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[112] Braaten, "A Lutheran Affirmation of the Natural Law," 10–11.

[113] Braaten, "A Lutheran Affirmation of the Natural Law," 10–11.

[114] John R. Meyer, "Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms," 10.

[115] Alfsvåg, "Christians in Society," 18.

[116] Braaten, "A Lutheran Affirmation of the Natural Law," 12.

This does not mean that human beings will not experience a certain amount of ambiguity with regard to how best to carry out the demands of natural law and civil law. God has created us with a "rich complexity that enables us to accomplish goals in more than one way in many aspects of life."[117] Difficulty in making concrete ethical decisions is further "exacerbated by the sin and evil that infects all systems and roles".[118] In this regard Kolb and Arand notes that in those situations involving ambiguity, Luther calls for the use of *sapientia*, which could be translated as "wisdom," "equity," "fairness," or "reasonableness," because a good judgement often does not come straight from law books but "rather from common sense (*aussz freyem synn*)."[119] And "guided by love, such 'wisdom' has to make an 'educated guess' about the best course of action in many instance. This means that we will make mistakes: we just dare not worship them but must confess them and turn away from them."[120]

Finally, it should be noted that a Lutheran affirmation of natural law is different from a purely secular philosophical assessment of the same which fails to take into account the effect of sin on creation and human reason. From a Lutheran theological perspective, political proposals which reason tries to make are only proximate achievements at best. "That is to say, on this side of eternity, reason will never find the 'perfect solution' or utopia."[121]

The Proper Limits of the State

In Luther's thought one could easily discern that in its existence and function, the State does have proper limits. Although the state has an integrity, authority and rationale of its own,

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[117] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 71.

[118] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 71.

[119] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 72.

[120] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 72.

[121] Arand, "The Christian's Calling," 11.

nevertheless it is not absolute and it always stand under God's sovereignty and judgment as God's creation. Moreover, "the business of government at all levels is to patch up and preserve a non-ideal reality," and it carries only a penultimate purpose. That means, "God preserves the human community from utter destruction that he may accomplish his right-hand work of ushering in his new creation and a new community, namely, the body of Christ."[122] To Luther the proper sphere of the state is only the temporal realm because the worldly government is able only to compel an outward righteousness on earth. The state is unable to remove evil from the heart, since only the Gospel can provide the cure for evil. [123]

The basic affirmations made above carry significant implications for the state as it comes in contact with various spheres of life in the society. The first area of significance concerns one's obedience to the secular authority. Luther noted that no secular authority is entitled to unquestioning obedience. In his *Treatise on Good Works* (1520) Luther taught that the duty to obey earthly rulers (whether it is secular or ecclesiastical authority) rests on the supreme authority of the Decalogue and it is qualified by the teaching of Peter that "We must obey God rather than men" [Acts 5:29]. Luther notes:

> But if, as often happens, the temporal power and authorities, or whatever they call themselves, would compel a subject to do something contrary to the command of God, or hinder him from doing what God commands, obedience ends and the obligation ceases. In such a case a man has to say what St. Peter said to the rulers of the Jews, "We must obey God rather than men" [Acts 5:29].[124]

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[122] Arand, "The Christian's Calling," 5.

[123] Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, 84–85.

[124] Martin Luther, "Treatise on Good Works (1520)," in *Vol. 44 of Luther's Works, The Christian in Society I*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 100. John Stephenson notes that Luther gives the same counsel in *On Secular Authority* (1523*)* and then repeats it in a pamphlet on the ethics of war published in 1526. "The reason given in the latter for not performing military service 'when you know for sure that [your lord] is in the wrong' has an unmistakably Martinian ring: 'for in this case you can have no good conscience before God.' Nor was this principle forgotten by the aged Reformer who, in a letter of 7th April 1542, urges the soldier caught in an unjust campaign to 'run from the field . . . and save his soul." Stephenson "The Two Governments," 7.

The second area of significance concerns beliefs and religious tolerance.   In the second

part of *On Temporal Authority* (1523) Luther dealt with the proper limits of secular government

in terms of religious beliefs. The immediate context for the reformer to reflect on these issues

was "the outbreak of a bloody persecution of 'evangelicals' which marked the beginning of the

Counter-Reformation."[125] John Stephenson elaborates:

> 1st July 1523 saw the Augustinian friars Henricus Vos and Jan van den Eschen
> burned at the stake in Brussels marketplace; and meanwhile, nearer home, Luther's
> bête noire Duke George had forbidden the sale of his translation of the New
> Testament in local Saxony and demanded the surrender of those copies already
> distributed. Against this background Luther inquires 'how long the arm [of secular
> government] may extend and how far its hand may reach, lest it should overreach
> itself by assaulting God in his *reych und regiment.*'[126]

Expounding the proper limit of the State in this context, Luther wrote, "The temporal

government has laws which extend no further than to life and property and external affairs on

earth, for God cannot and will not permit anyone but himself to rule over the soul. Therefore,

where the temporal authority presumes to prescribe laws for the soul, it encroaches upon God's

government and only misleads souls and destroys them."[127] Thus Luther made it clear that since

the worldly government is able only to compel an outward righteousness on earth but it is unable

to remove evil from the heart, [128] the proper sphere of competence of secular authority is limited

to the temporal realm. This is so because only the Gospel can provide the cure for evil. So the

task of the government is limited to keep order, protect property, enforce the laws of the land,

care for the poor, punish the wicked and generally maintain those conditions conducive to the

happiness and well-being of all people in the temporal realm. If the government exerts the

authority to judge, regulate or enforce religious beliefs, it is overstepping its God ordained realm

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[125] Stephenson "The Two Governments," 6.

[126] Stephenson "The Two Governments," 6–7.

[127] *LW* 45:105.

[128] Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, 84–85.

of activity.

Luther stated clearly that faith is a free act and cannot be forced. The legal coercive power

of the temporal authority should not be used for imposing matters concerning faith or religion.[129]

Luther notes,

> How he believes or disbelieves is a matter for the conscience of each individual, and
> since this takes nothing away from the temporal authority the latter should be content
> to attend to its own affairs and let men believe this or that as they are able and
> willing, and constrain no one by force. For faith is a free act to which no one can be
> forced. Indeed, it is a work of God in the spirit, not something which outward
> authority should compel or create.[130]

To Luther, though a verbal affirmation can be coerced, the certainty of the *Gospel*'s truth

cannot be, since coercion can "never generate the inner, free certainty that constitutes faith."[131]

The government cannot regulate the realm of faith and should not try to do so.[132] When the

government tries to force its subjects to a particular faith, Christians are free to disobey the will

of the government. Notger Slenczka elaborates Luther's view:

> Christian should not comply with the will of the government when it tries to force its
> subjects to faith. Luther had the opinion, for example, that Bible translations should
> not be handed over by Christians if the government commanded them to do so—that
> was of significant concern during that time. Without resisting, the Christian should
> instead endure possible violent treatment by the government and consider it God
> himself to be causing the suffering.[133]

Luther recognized that there will always be different sects and people with different

religious ideas living together in a society. However, he consistently maintained that the

distinction of true from false doctrine is per se no concern of the secular authorities."[134] Since

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[129] Pasiciel, "Martin Luther's Theology," 13–14.

[130] *LW* 45:108.

[131] Notger Slenczka, "God and Evil: Martin Luther's Teaching on Temporal Authority and the Two Realms," *Lutheran Quarterly* 26 (2012): 15.

[132] Slenczka, "God and Evil," 15.

[133] Slenczka, "God and Evil," 15.

[134] Stephenson "The Two Governments," 7.

heresy is a spiritual matter, not the temporal rulers but the ministers of the Word should be

responsible in restraining it. Luther strongly believed that force and legislation is futile in

restraining heresy but exhorted that one should let word of God engage in battle. In this regard

Luther maintained that "'burning heretics is not to my liking."[135] Luther notes:

> Heresy can never be restrained by force. One will have to tackle the problem in some other way, for heresy must be opposed and dealt with otherwise than with the sword. Here God's word must do the fighting. If it does not succeed, certainly the temporal power will not succeed either, even if it were to drench the world in blood. Heresy is a spiritual matter which you cannot hack to pieces with iron, consume with fire, or drown in water. God's word alone avails here, as Paul says in II Corinthians 10[:4–5], "Our weapons are not carnal, but mighty in God to destroy every argument and proud obstacle that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and to take every thought captive in the service of Christ.[136]

Luther also recognized that, we may not always be successful in our effort to contain

heresy. Those instance do not provide an excuse for temporal rulers to intervene and use legal

coercion. Luther would admit secular rules to intervene only in those instance where disputes

cause public unrest and disturbance of peace. Stephenson reiterates this point further when he

reference to Luther's approach to Thomas Müntzer's preaching, which according to Luther,

'leads souls to destruction'. Although Luther had the favor of the Saxon princes, he remained

true to his principle of toleration.[137] Stephenson explains Luther's position:

> In his open letter of 1524 *Against the seditious spirit*, Luther refrains from invoking the assistance of the secular arm against the enthusiastic preaching of Thomas Müntzer. Even though the latter's teaching leads souls to destruction, it can only be countered by spiritual weapons; and the Saxon princes should intervene in Allstedt only in the event of a breach of the peace: 'Simply let them preach with vigour and confidence… against whom they will. For as I have said, there must needs he sects (cf. 1 Cor. 11:19) and the Word of God must take to the field and engage in battle. . . . If their spirit is genuine, it will have no fear of us and will endure; and if ours is genuine, neither will it fear them or anyone. Let the Spirits go at it hammer and tongs. Should some souls be led astray in the process, so be it, this is the way of war. Some

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[135] Stephenson "The Two Governments," 7.

[136] *LW* 45:114.

[137] Stephenson "The Two Governments," 7–8.

are bound to fall and suffer injury where battle is waged, but anyone who fights with integrity will receive a crown. Should they wish to do more than fight with the Word, however, that is, should they wish to smash and smite with their fists, then Your Graces ought to intervene.' As Heinrich Bornkamm comments, 'These words are of epochal significance in the history of toleration.' [138]

Some have suggested that Luther moved from his initial practice of tolerance to an increasing intolerance later in life. Cargill Thompson argues that although in 1523, Luther stood against the use of force for the suppression of private masses, later in *Of the Abomination of the Private Mass* (1524) he called upon the Elector to take steps to suppress private masses both in Wittenberg and throughout the Saxony. Luther's reasoning was that the private mass represented a public blasphemy against Christ because it denies the sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross.[139] In his *exposition of Psalms 101* Luther did appeal to the magistrate to suppress the public teaching of the Anabaptists since it contradicts the basic doctrines of Christian faith as contained in the Creed and hence is a blasphemy.[140]

However it should be noted that Luther never thought his appeal to the secular authorities in either case ran counter to his principles of toleration and distinction between two realms. He consistently held to his conviction that faith cannot be forced, and magistrates should not interfere in matters of personal beliefs. However, as exemplified in the above cited cases, Luther made an important distinction between blasphemy and false belief. Luther held blasphemy to be a public offense against God because it runs counter to the natural law and causes civil discord. Since natural law is identical to the Ten Commandments and since blasphemy is against the First table of law, magistrates carry the responsibility to punish the same without confusing between

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[138] Stephenson "The Two Governments," 7–8.

[139] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 158–60.

[140] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 160–61.

God's two regiments.[141]

Given the fact that Luther was criticized for being inconsistent at times in applying his own theology of religious toleration to concrete situations, it is questioned whether Luther's principles still hold relevance in a religiously pluralistic modern society, especially one such as in India. Mary Jane Haemig exemplifies one beneficial approach to this problem, "The fact that the possibilities for tolerance in the Lutheran heritage were generally not realized in the sixteenth century should not discourage us from thinking about them today."[142] Although the sixteenth century was not generally thought of as a religiously tolerant century, it cannot be discarded that Luther's distinction of two realm theology does provide us with "a frame for tolerance that went far beyond the actual practice of sixteenth-century Lutheran lands."[143] As Haemig rightly puts it:

> …the recognition that the Church and state have different jobs allows the state to be "non-Christian" and still do its job. Similarly, the high but limited valuation of human reason and civil righteousness means a non-Christian neighbor may be valued for these qualities. We can even see God at work in these qualities of our non-Christian neighbors. Furthermore, the doctrine of creation enables us to see all humans as God's creations. Because God creates and sustains all humans, every human has worth. God protects all people with his commandments. The structures (orders) of creation provide a place for each human. Thus every human has a God-given place, and the daily life and the work of Christian are not inherently more valuable than those of the non-Christian. The Lutheran perspective provides a framework for tolerance and appreciation of the non-Christian neighbor.[144]

To conclude, in Luther we do not find support for a theocratic state, a godless temporal authority, or an autonomous entity detached from God's law but the state/civil government as an institution ordained for the preservation and wellbeing of all in the temporal realm, irrespective

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[141] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 158–62. Here one should bear in mind that Luther's appeal and advice to magistrates to contain blasphemy was in no sense backed with coercion from his part, but he was appealing to magistrates who were Christians and as the leading members of his congregation, from a pastoral sense.

[142] Mary Jane Haemig, "The Confessional Basis of Lutheran thinking on Church-State Issues," in John R. Stumme and Robert W. Tuttle edited, Church *and State: Lutheran Perspectives* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 18.

[143] Haemig, "The Confessional Basis," 17.

[144] Haemig, "The Confessional Basis,"17.

of one's religious or cultural persuasion.

Church and State Interaction in the Temporal Realm

Luther brought with the reformation a significant changes in the prevalent Church and state

relationship practice shaped by medieval two sword theology. As already noted, Luther's Two

Realm theology clearly rejected the hierarchically arranged political structure in which the

Church and clergy controlled the state. Erwin R. Gane summaries Luther's contribution towards

this as follows:

> Luther's concept of the ministry, the bishopric, the sacraments, and the priesthood
> of believers implies that the Church is in no sense superior to the state in temporal
> matters, nor are the clergy a special class who may justly be exempt from those
> secular controls to which all other Christians are subject. Luther vehemently opposed
> the canon law stipulation that a bad pope could not be punished or deposed by secular
> authority. In his address *To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* he urges that
> temporal matters should be left to temporal authority and not referred to Rome.
> Bishops' courts, he argued, should deal only with "matters of faith and morals, and
> leave matters of money and property, life and honor, to the temporal judges." Luther
> deplored sentences of excommunication passed by bishops' courts in cases in which
> questions of faith and morality were not involved. Luther denied that the pope had
> any authority above the emperor except in spiritual matters, and then only by virtue
> of office, not by virtue of superior sanctity or sacerdotal privilege.[145]

In Luther's view the Church should not rule the State, nor should it be ruled by the State.

This does not mean that Luther envisaged a strict separation where these two distinct paths never

crossed in fulfilling God's purpose for His creation. As Gane notes "in Luther's theory there is

much greater interaction between the two swords without one ruling the other."[146] This

interaction is unavoidable because of the underlying unity between these two intuitions for at

least two reasons. Firstly although Law and Gospel establishes and affirms the distinction

between Church and state, God's sovereign rule over His both realms establishes an underlying

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[145] Erwin R. Gane, "Luther's View on Church and State," *Andrews University Seminary Studies*: 8: no. 2 (1970): 127.

[146] Gane, "Church and State,"142.

unity and, "this unity is and always will be visible only to the eyes of faith."[147] Secondly as

already noted a two-dimensional understanding of the Church which situates the Church as an

institution operating in the left-hand realm also makes it genuinely concerned with the extension

of law and justice in that realm.[148] Thus as John Stephenson notes, "Martin Luther's doctrine of

the two kingdoms manages to combine the insight that the Church's prime duty is to publish

abroad the message of both the forgiveness of sins for Jesus sake and the future restoration of our

vitiated human nature in eternity with the acknowledgement of the essential God-pleasingness of

the performance of provisional secular tasks in faith."[149] In this way the Church shares with the

state a responsibility to promote civil righteousness in the society. In line with this conviction

Luther thought that a duly called minister of the Word has not only "the right but also the solemn

duty to remind the bearer of the sword of his duty before God: 'If a preacher in his official

capacity says to kings and princes… "Consider and fear God and keep his commandments," he is

not meddling in the affairs of secular authority (*weltlich Oberkeyt*). On the contrary, he is

thereby rendering service and obedience to the supreme authority (*hohesten Oberkeyt*)."[150]

To Luther the state carries a distinct purpose and function from the church. Nevertheless,

the state carries a solemn responsibility towards the welfare of the church. In this regard Luther

called upon secular rulers to be actively involved in the reform of the Church and to establish

proper relationship between the Church and State.[151] In the preface to the *Instructions to the

Visitors* and in his *Address to the Christian Nobility* (1520) Luther brought in the Christian

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[147] "Render unto Caesar and unto God: A Lutheran View of Church and State" (A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod. St. Louis, 1995), 53.

[148] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 131–32.

[149] Stephenson "The Two Governments," 9.

[150] Stephenson "The Two Governments," 4 Luther himself wrote to princes regarding the proper conduct as they carry out their calling. The third part of *On Temporal Authority* and the expositions of *Psalms. 82* and *Psalms. 101* etc. are few examples for the same.

[151] Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding,* 133.

prince as *Notbischof-* an emergency bishop and urges the German princes "to break the power of

a cramping episcopate by calling a general council, by refusing to support so many cardinals, by

repudiating payment of annates, by passing laws against the papal months and by restoring to the

German bishops "their right and responsibility to administer the benefices in the German nation

to the best of their ability." [152] Luther was well aware that such a reform of the Church properly

belonged to the clergy alone. However "such was the political involvement of the late medieval

papal Church that only legal, governmental interference was sufficient to relegate to their rightful

provinces the secular and spiritual kingdoms."[153] In such an emergency situation, a Christian

prince's position in the secular society made him well placed to undertake this task. Luther thus

argues:

> Therefore, when necessity demands it, and the pope is an offense to Christendom, the
> first man who is able should, as a true member of the whole body, do what he can to
> bring about a truly free council. No one can do this so well as the temporal
> authorities, especially since they are also fellow-Christians, fellow-priests, fellow-
> members of the spiritual estate, fellow-lords over all things. Whenever it is necessary
> or profitable they ought to exercise the office and work which they have received
> from God over everyone. Would it not be unnatural if a fire broke out in a city and
> everybody were to stand by and let it burn on and on and consume everything that
> could burn because nobody had the authority of the mayor, or because, perhaps, the
> fire broke out in the mayor's house? In such a situation is it not the duty of every
> citizen to arouse and summon the rest? How much more should this be done in the
> spiritual city of Christ if a fire of offense breaks out, whether in the papal
> government, or anywhere else![154]

Luther did impose clear limits and conditions for such an intervention by secular

authorities as *Notbischof.*[155] Firstly, Luther did not think that such an arrangement ought to be a

permanent arrangement. He clearly stated that once the Church revert to normal, "the prince

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[152] Gane, "Church and State," 138.

[153] Gane, "Church and State," 139.

[154] Martin Luther, "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation Concerning the Reform of the Christian Estate," in *The Christian in Society I, vol. 44 of Luther's Works,* ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 137.

[155] For a detailed discussion on this topic see Spitz, "Prince as *Notbischof,*"113–31.

should relinquish his special powers and allow the Church to be governed by its proper governors, the ministers who are representatives of God's regiments."[156] Secondly, Luther allowed a secular authority to serve as a *Notbischof-* an emergency bishop not because of their secular office but only on the ground that they too are baptized Christians. Luther notes in this regard "Since those who exercise secular authority have been baptized with the same baptism, and have the same faith and the same Gospel as the rest of us, we must admit that they are priests and bishops and we must regard their office as one which has a proper and useful place in the Christian community."[157] Luther's thought can be summarized in the words of Erwin Gane:

> If a prince influences doctrine he does so only as a Christian, not by virtue of princely authority. If a Christian takes part in secular government and enforcement of law and order, he does so as subordinate to secular laws and as an instrument of secular order. The prince is not to force uniformity of belief, nor is the individual Christian to take part in secular rule for the sake of enforcing the teaching of his church. Faith is a spiritual matter to be engendered by spiritual weapons.[158]

Luther upheld a clear distinction between the institution of Church and state in the left hand realm. This does not mean for Luther a strict 'separation of Church and state' in the modern sense of the term.[159] It is indeed an intriguing question to ask in this context, what then could be a meaningful vocabulary to best conceptualize Luther's conviction regarding Church and state relationship? Any attempt to answer this question will soon be wrought with difficulties because it is difficult to find a single phrase or word to contain all the nuances, richness and complexities involved in Luther's thought. However, as Eugene Linse suggests, "While no neat model exists that permits us to discuss these relationships between two living institutional structures in society, one that is commonly used is that of institutional separation and functional

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[156] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 149.

[157] *LW* 44:129.

[158] Gane, "Church and State," 142.

[159] Eugene Linse, "Church and State: Some Problems of Philosophy and Practice," *Concordia Journal*, no. 6 (6 Nov 1980): 244.

interaction."[160] Eugene further elaborates:

> The phrase, "institutional separation and functional interaction," is a catchy way of talking about the interrelationships between Church and state from an historic perspective. Yet, it yields little by way of norms or standards as a consequence of which one is able to detect shifts in direction, encroachment, or incipient elements of secularism. Nor is it useful, except in a vague and general way, for attempting to give direction to emerging public policy. It both judges everything and serves as a criticism of nothing, except perhaps the grossest kinds of abuses either by the state or the church; most of these would be apparent anyway, even if the phrase did not exist. Yet, every aphorism contains the shadow of a truth, and this phrase can be useful in delineating in a broad, general outline the relationship of two viable structures in society.[161]

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to explicate a theoretical framework to understand God given structures in the left hand realm with a special focus upon state/temporal authority. In our discussion we have seen that Luther viewed the state as neither a theocratic institution, nor a godless structure. He was convinced that state is an authority instituted by God for the preservation of all irrespective of one's religion or cultural persuasion. We also noted that the state functions through the creative power of human reason and cohesive legal authority, to constrain evil, foster civil righteousness and promote human fellowship. In this venture, Luther envisaged that the state is be informed and guided by the parameters dictated by the natural law. Luther was also consistent in maintaining that one's legal status in the society should not be based on one's religious faith. He was convinced that matter's concerning religious faith properly belongs to the right-hand realm, where coercive authority of sword should not prevail. Thus Luther's understanding of the State "do not require the promotion of Christianity in order to promote the common good."[162] Luther did find the state and other structures in the left-hand

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[160] Linse, "Church and State,"244.

[161] Linse, "Church and State,"244.

[162] "Render unto Caesar," 29.

realm to be places where Christians could work together with people of different cultural or

religious persuasions to bring about common good for all. Christians approach their particular

responsibilities with God's strength and a unique sense of calling informed by an understanding

about Christian vocation and two kinds of righteousness. Our concern then in the next chapter is

to examine Luther's understanding about two kinds of righteousness and Christian vocation.

CHAPTER SIX

TWO KINDS OF RIGHTEOUNESS AND CHRISTIAN VOCATION: A CHRISTIAN CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK TOWARDS ENGAGEMENT IN THE WORLD

An important distinction that emerges from Luther's understanding of the two realms is the distinction between the two kinds of righteousness. As Kolb and Arand note "To use Luther's language, Christians live in two worlds, one heavenly and the other earthly. Into these, we place the two kinds of righteousness, which are distinct and separate from each other. Both kinds of righteousness are God's will, and both kinds are necessary for us to live as full human creatures restored in Christ."[1] Robert Kolb refers to the two kinds of righteousness of a Christian as the "Righteousness of Identity" and the "Righteousness of Performance."[2] A clear understanding of the distinction between the two kinds of righteousness is fundamental to our discussion because this helps to clarify our identity and the manner in which that identity shapes our actions in relation to our fellow human beings in the left-hand realm. The purpose of this chapter is to undertake a brief study on Luther's two kinds of righteousness and how this would shape our understanding about Christian performance in the society. We shall also discuss how Luther's understanding of Christian vocation helps the Christian to be actively involved in the world informed by a true estimate of the Christian self, shaped by two kinds of righteousness.

Luther's Understanding of Two Kinds of Righteousness

One of the best places to look at Luther's understanding of two kinds of righteousness is in

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[1] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 26.

[2] Robert Kolb, "Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness: Reflections on His Two-Dimensional Definition of Humanity at the Heart of His Theology," *Lutheran Quarterly* 13 (1999): 453.

his famous *Galatians Commentary* (1535).[3] Here he refers to the two kinds of righteousness as "our theology" and thus notes, "This is our theology, by which we teach a precise distinction between these two kinds of righteousness, the active and the passive, so that morality and faith, works and grace, secular society and religion may not be confused. Both are necessary, but both must be kept within their limits."[4] As Kolb and Arand note, what is fundamental to Luther's distinction between two kinds of righteousness was that "to be righteous is to be the human person God envisioned when he created us. It has to do with meeting God's "design specifications" for being a human creature and fulfilling the purpose for which God created us."[5] Fundamentally, God created us to be relational beings who live in his presence (*coram Deo*) and at the same time in community with one another (*coram Mundo*).[6] To Luther "in these two relationships we encounter a twofold definition of what it means to be the person God made us to be-hence two kinds of righteousness."[7] Luther terms our righteousness before God (*coram Deo*) as "passive righteousness" and our righteousness before others in the world (*coram Mundo*) as the "active righteousness." These two kinds of righteousness "place our relationship to God as our redeemer into the larger context of our relationship to God as creator."[8] As Kolb and Arand point out, "The crux of the Lutheran reformation rested on maintaining the distinction between divine righteousness (which is salvific before God) and human righteousness (which is good for

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[3] Few among the other places where we could find the treatment about two kinds of righteousness is in Heidelberg disputation and in his sermons entitled "Three kinds of Righteousness" (1518), "Two Kinds of Righteousness (1519)", on Monastic Vows" (1522), and his sermons on Genesis (1523/1527). See Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 25.

[4] Martin Luther, "Lectures on Galatians, 1535, Chapters 1-4," in *Vol. 26 of Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999), 7.

[5] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 26.

[6] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 26.

[7] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 26.

[8] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 128.

the world)."[9] However to Luther the two kinds of righteousness are not separable entities nor are they alternative forms of human existence. Because "the passive righteousness of faith provides the core identity of a person; the active righteousness of love flows from that core identity out into the world."[10] In this regard, as Kolb refers to them, the two kinds of righteousness are the "righteousness of identity" and the "righteousness of performance."[11]

The Passive Righteousness: The Righteousness of Identity

To Luther, passive righteousness establishes our identity. As God's creatures and children. Here we relate to God firstly as our creator and secondly as our redeemer. We receive this identity from God passively because it flows from God's activity towards us without our contribution or participation. We passively received our creaturely life when He first created us as God, the Creator. And in addition, when we lay dead in sin, he restored life to us, as God the Redeemer, through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.[12] "In both instances, human beings 'suffered' the work of God."[13] Luther terms the righteousness we receive as "alien righteousness" because it is given to us from outside.[14] Luther further elaborates:

> As the earth itself does not produce rain and is unable to acquire it by its own strength, worship, and power but receives it only by a heavenly gift from above, so this heavenly righteousness is given to us by God without our work or merit. As much as the dry earth of itself is able to accomplish in obtaining the right and blessed rain, that much can we men accomplish by our own strength and works to obtain that divine, heavenly, and eternal righteousness. Thus we can obtain it only through the free imputation and indescribable gift of God.[15]

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[9] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 30.

[10] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 26.

[11] Kolb, "Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness," 453.

[12] Kolb, "Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness," 28.

[13] Kolb, "Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness," 28.

[14] Martin Luther, "Two Kinds of Righteousness," in *Vol. 31* of *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 297.

[15] *LW* 26: 6.

There are at least three things, namely Christ's work on the cross, God's Word, and faith

which form an integral part in Luther's articulation of passive righteousness. Firstly to Luther,

we are righteous because of Christ (*propter Christum*). The human righteousness in God's sight

is intrinsically related to Christ's life and work for us. Kolb captures Luther's thought in this

regard:

> For sin had indeed destroyed that righteousness which consisted in trust in the
> Creator. Christ took sin into himself and substituted himself for sinners before the
> law's tribunal. Christ took the punishment for sin, its wage of death, into himself and
> satisfied the law's condemnation of human creatures who fail to be and behave like
> the creatures they were designed to be. No cheap atonement was possible from
> Luther's point of view. The Lamb had to die. Luther employed the Pauline baptismal
> model of dying and rising in Romans 6:3-11 and Colossians 2:11-15 to speak not
> only of God's saving action in baptism but also of his action of justifying. The
> sinner's sin kills Christ. Christ buries the sinner's sin. Christ raises the sinner to new
> life—to a new identity and a new way of practicing that identity.[16]

Thus to Luther "the work of Christ, properly speaking, is this: to embrace the one whom the Law

has made a sinner and pronounced guilty, and to absolve him from his sins if he believes the

Gospel. 'For Christ is the end of the Law, that everyone who has faith may be justified' (Rom.

10:4); He is 'the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world' (John 1:29)." [17]

Secondly Luther always maintained that it is through God's word of Gospel that He

bestows passive righteousness to a person. Luther notes, "Although the work took place on the

cross and the forgiveness of sins has been acquired, yet it cannot come to me in any other way

than through the word."[18] Luther rejected any tendency to deal with God apart from the Word,[19]

since "the Word that imparts, gives, proffers, and delivers the forgiveness of sins that has been

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[16] Kolb, "Luther on the Two Kinds of Righteousness," 462.

[17] *LW* 26: 142.

[18] Martin Luther, "The Sacrament of the Altar," in the Large Catechism, *The Book of Concord*, eds., Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress, 200), 469.

[19] Luther here depart both from medieval theologians and the Anabaptists who seems to relegate God's word to secondary place. For example the medieval theologians claimed a revelation to its hierarchy whereas Anabaptist to an inner voice within each Christian. See Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 41.

purchased on the cross. Christ bestows his righteousness on God's human creatures through the Spirit, who brings it to us in the *Gospel*."[20] To Luther "the Word that freely justifies us is the same Word that first gave us physical life"[21] and just as "the Word of the Lord had defined reality in the act of creation," so "in the act of re-creation the Word of the Lord also defined the fundamental reality of the believer's existence."[22] The concept of "promise" is fundamental to Luther's understanding of God's word as *Gospel*. The Gospel remains just a piece of information or biography of Jesus if it is devoid of God's promise attached to it. But it becomes "the Gospelwhen it grasps the sinner with the promise that Christ lived, died, and rose 'for you!' and 'for me!' and 'for us!'"[23] Kolb and Arand further elaborate the significance of Luther's understanding of promise:

> The term "promise" highlights several things. First, the Bible is filled with promises. The promise of God highlight the unity of the Old and New Testaments better than the term good news. Second, the promise brings out the personal and relational character of God. God himself makes promises to us. Third, in the Gospel God promises that he will receive us into the new age as fellow children and coheirs with Christ. The promise is a pledge and guarantee of God's favor in the eschaton. Finally, and most important for Luther, the promise is not an announcement that will be fulfilled only in the future; it is a creative word that takes immediate and present effect. In the here and now it brings about the very thing it announces about the future. It creates the reality that we are justified. It announces about the future. It creates the reality that we are justified. It announces that we have gone through the eschatological judgment ahead of time.[24]

Luther understands Baptism as God's sacramental Word of promise through which a person receives passive righteousness. In his Small Catechism Luther teaches that baptism "brings about forgiveness of sins, redeems from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation

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[20] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 41.

[21] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 43.

[22] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology, 43*.

[23] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 42.

[24] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 42.

to all who believe it, as the words and promise of God declare."[25] To Luther, "God's baptismal word of promise, according to the scriptures, kills and makes alive; it raises sinners from the dead, and it cleanses them of their sins (Rom.6:3–11; Col. 2:11–15)."[26]

The final element significant to our discussion on Luther's understanding of passive righteousness is faith. To Luther "promise without faith accomplishes nothing. Because faith without a promise has nothing to which it can cling."[27] A promise then calls forth for a response. And 'faith grasps the promise, and in this way the promise finds it realization and fulfillment."[28] However Luther did not find faith to be an accomplishment we can boast and take credit for, because faith itself is a gift and work of God in us.[29] Luther's understanding of faith can be termed as *via passiva,* a concept which means we passively allow God to work in us and/or receive His righteousness. Oswald Bayer summaries this concept in Luther thus:

> The righteousness of faith is passive, in that we allow God alone to work in us and we ourselves, with all our powers, do not do anything. Faith is a divine work in us that changes us and brings us to a new birth from God (John 1:13) and kills the old Adam; he makes of us a completely different human being in the heart, mood, mind, and in all powers. (cf.Deu.6:5). Faith is thus the work of God, through and through, with nothing accomplished by the human being; rather it can only be received and suffered. The righteousness of Christ is set in complete opposition to the righteousness of works; it is passive. We can only receive it. We do nothing, but instead suffer its coming from another, who work in us: God.[30]

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[25] Martin Luther, "The Sacrament of Holy Baptism," in The Small Catechism, *The Book of Concord*, eds., Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis, Fortress, 200), 359.

[26] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 193.

[27] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 45.

[28] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 45.

[29] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 45.

[30] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 43.

To conclude our discussion, passive righteousness brings forth "God's gift of our identity as his children, reveals itself as that upon which human existence depends,"[31] and from this identity as His creatures and children our active righteousness before the world (*coram Mundo*) proceeds.

<center>Active Righteousness: The Righteousness of Performance</center>

To Luther if our righteousness before God (*coram Deo*) is passive, our righteousness before the world (*coram mundo*) is ever active. The sole concern of our righteousness before world is to carry out God-given responsibilities within our walks of life towards the well-being of our fellow creatures. Although our active righteousness is good for the left-hand realm (*coram Mundo*), it does not constitute or determine our relationship with God in the right-hand realm (*coram Deo*). In other words "our active righteousness dare never become the basis of our righteousness *coram Deo*."[32] Luther made it explicit that good works which constitute our active righteousness "should be done as fruits of righteousness, not in order to bring righteousness into being. Having been made righteous, we must do them; but it is not the other way around: that when we are unrighteous, we become righteous by doing them. The tree produces fruit; the fruit does not produce the tree."[33]

Thus Luther believed that there is an intrinsic relationship between two types of righteousness. He found that our identity, which is determined by passive righteousness, flows into and determines our performance in the left hand realm. In this regard our active righteousness is seen as a fruit of our passive righteousness. Luther notes, "When I have this righteousness with me, I descend from heaven like the rain that makes the earth fertile. That is I

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[31] Kolb, "Two Kinds of Righteousness," 457.

[32] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 30.

[33] *LW* 26:169.

come forth into another kingdom, and I perform good works whenever the opportunity arises."[34]

Thus to Luther, our passive righteousness of faith "does not remain relevant only for realities in heaven; it belongs also to earthly realities and contributes to the pursuit of active righteousness within the world."[35] Moreover, "our relation to God empowers and provides the basis for our relation to creation. And so on earth, as we grow in faith we actively pursue a life of works and virtues in accordance with God's will for creation and His reclamation of creation in Christ."[36]

If Luther called our passive righteousness our alien righteousness, then to him active righteousness is our "proper righteousness" which is a "product, consequence and the fruit of passive righteousness."[37] Luther notes, "The second kind of righteousness is our proper righteousness, not because we alone work it, but because we work with that first and alien righteousness…"[38] and "This righteousness is the product of the righteousness of the first type, actually its fruit and consequence."[39]

To Luther the two types of righteousness are not alternative forms of human existence. He rejected any one dimensional approach to Christian righteousness. He could not envision a human existence which is complete and genuine with only one kind of righteousness. To be fully human, according to God's design, requires both kinds of righteousness. The two kinds of righteousness find an inseparable nexus in the life of a Christian person because "the passive righteousness of faith provides and continually reaffirms the core identity of the believer, while the active righteousness of love flows from and through this justified child of God in service to

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[34] *LW* 26: 11.

[35] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 122.

[36] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 122.

[37] Masaki Makito, "Luther's Two Kinds of Righteousness and His Wartburg Postil (1522): How Luther Exhorted People to Live Christian lives" (PhD diss, Concordia Seminary, 2008), 56.

[38] *LW* 31: 299.

[39] *LW* 31:300.

the surrounding creation."[40] However, "maintaining the distinction between the two kinds of righteousness allows us to affirm both dimensions of our humanity. Arand and Biermann best summarize this idea:

> Luther did not compartmentalize the human being in such a way that one could be human by partly possessing passive righteousness and partly possessing active righteousness. To be a human being as God created us to be, a perfect human specimen, involves being totally passive—as a newborn child of God—and totally active—as a responsible neighbor to other people and to the whole of God's world. People need both kinds of righteousness in order to be completely and genuinely human. "We must be righteous before God and man. Without one or the other we find our humanity diminished."[41]

Luther always affirmed that as Christians seek to pursue their active righteous to serve their neighbor, their efforts are ever guided by the natural law, human reason, and imagination. God's gifts of human reason and imagination help to tailor and apply God's law towards specific situations so that our practice of active righteous becomes useful and effective towards promoting creaturely well-being of both the human and non-human creation.

To Luther there is nothing Christian to the effectual nature of one's good deeds performed in the left-hand realm. Because the effectiveness of one's performance in the left hand realm depends on various factors other than faith, such as one's personal ability, skills, knowledge, resources, social standing, or opportunities.[42] Kolb and Arand further elaborate:

> Within creation some people are better at certain things, whether or not they are believers. Some people have more resources or are more talented or better educated or more compassionate, and so they might be more effective at looking after the needs and providing solutions than other might be. Here a nonbeliever may accomplish just as much or more than a believer; and in one sense God does not care (if we may speak that way) because God's concern in terms of the creation is the good of the neighbor. Or, a believer may actually be more effective than a nonbeliever in doing good, but it may not be because of one's faith or Christian

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[40] *LW* 31:300.

[41] Arand and Biermann, "Why Two Kinds of Righteousness," 120.

[42] Arand and Biermann, "Why Two Kinds of Righteousness," 73

insight but because of the creaturely gifts and accomplishments with which one has been blessed.[43]

It should be noted here that in Luther's thought one cannot find any instrumental mentality attached to the practice of active righteousness. The Christian in his practice of active righteousness is neither motivated nor is required to objectify his neighbor to use him as means to a self-serving end, because a Christian does not need to practice good works towards his neighbor to secure salvation or a good standing before God. Being firmly assured of one's standing before God through passive righteousness, a Christian is made free to practice his active righteous to meet his neighbor's need devoid of any ulterior motive.

In Luther's articulation of active righteousness, one does not find a retreat from one's responsibility towards fellow creatures. The two kinds of righteousness "open up the world as God's good creation so that Christians can live unreservedly in the world where good works are done for neighbor and for the good of creation."[44] In such a positive affirmation of our creaturely life, Luther's understanding of two kinds of righteousness "widens our vision regarding the left-hand realm and seeks to identify the common ground for moral reflection between Christians and non-Christians"[45]. Arand and Biermann further elaborate the relevance of Lutheran emphasis on active righteousness in the left-hand realm:

> Thus the definition of active righteousness provides the necessary theological space for reflection on the place of the social sciences, ethics, and moral theology for Christian living. It even creates space for Christians to actively consider and address such secular and mundane concerns as economics, environment, public policy, politics, and justice: thus affirming a common "worldliness" between Christians and non-Christians that is grounded in our creaturely existence. At the same time, it

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[43] Arand and Biermann, "Why Two Kinds of Righteousness," 76.

[44] Arand and Biermann, "Why Two Kinds of Righteousness," 111.

[45] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 131.

recognizes that the *Gospel*'s work (coram Deo) will inform, empower, and even transform our creaturely activities in the world {coram mundo).[46]

Another important affirmation found in Luther is the nature of good deeds resulting from the active righteousness performed by a believer and the civil righteousness practiced by a non-believer. To Luther, "There is nothing particularly "Christian" about either our actions or our roles; rather they are human and creaturely (and in that sense are profoundly Christian)."[47] In this sense Kolb and Arand note, "the Christian life looks quite ordinary and mundane with regard to the activities that are carried out. Christian life is human life, as God designed it for all his human creatures."[48] Thus there is no fundamental difference in nature pertaining to the good deeds performed by a believer or a non-believer since both contribute towards God's purpose for the well-being of all in the left-hand realm of His creation. Thus to Luther, the external works of the non-believers are truly and useful and "they are useful creatures of God"[49] and in this sense "the good works done by non-Christians and those by Christians in earthly sense may share the same value in the sight of man."[50] To Luther the only difference between the good deeds of a believer and a non-believer is in their nature of orientation. The believer might practice deeds of active righteousness stemming from their passive righteousness and conscious of their call from the Lord. Whereas the non-believer performs their civil righteous out of constraints of the sword, as a means towards a peaceful and respected life in the society, or as part of their effort towards work righteous with a false hope to earn their salvation from God.[51]

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[46] Arand and Biermann, "Two Kinds of Righteousness?," 128.

[47] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 75.

[48] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology*, 103.

[49] Martin Luther, "Against Latomus: Part Three," in *Vol. 32* of *Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 256.

[50] Makito, "Luther's Two Kinds of Righteousness," 63.

[51] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 75.

Although our discussion above clearly suggests that there exits fundamentally no visible difference between the civil righteousness practiced by a non-Christian and the active righteousness practiced by Christian in the left-hand, it remains helpful for us to distinguish between each other, because such as distinction helps us to distinguish the difference within the horizontal or this-world righteousness between the righteousness practiced by a non-Christian and that of a believer [52] To some extent this would also help us to address the intra-Christian criticism within our theological circles that the two kinds of righteousness paradigm eliminates the unique aspect of the Christian life and equates the morality of a "righteous pagan" with that of a faithful follower of Christ.[53] Joel Biermann's recent work, towards developing a Lutheran frame work on virtue ethics, is helpful in this regard. Biermann brings to our attention that Luther in his sermon on "Three Kinds of Righteousness" in 1523 has talked about three respective kinds of righteousness.[54] Building upon the two types of righteousness approach and interacting closely with Luther and Melanchthon, Biermann proposes a three-kinds-of righteousness frame work for our theological clarity.[55] Biermann elaborates this view point:

> In the three-kinds-of-righteousness framework that I am suggesting, the first righteousness is the righteousness that applies to all people, regardless of a person's standing before God, whether justified *coram Deo* or not. A key aspect of the first kind of righteousness is its grounding in the recognition that God's will (that is, the law) has been revealed and is still present throughout all of creation. This first kind of

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[52] Joel Biermann, *A Case for Character: Towards a Lutheran Virtue Ethics* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2014), 126.

[53] Biermann, *A Case for Character*, 126.

[54] Biermann notes that the first kind of righteousness is the one expected in the civil realm that can operate independent of faith in the triune God. Civil, political righteousness and ceremonial righteousness which a non-Christian is able to practice are good examples of the same. The second kind of righteous relate to alien righteous or the passive righteous through which a person is justified. And the third kind of righteousness relate to the active righteousness, which a believer alone is capable of performing because it stems from one's faith in triune God. Biermann, *A Case for Character*, 124.

[55] Biermann also points to our attention that three-kinds-of righteousness approach closely relate to three uses of law (namely law as a curb, mirror, and guide) but later transcends the limitation of the later, "dealing as it does only with law- and is burdened with an unfortunate excess of negative baggage See for more discussion. Biermann, *A Case for Character*, 126–27.

righteousness is roughly parallel to what Luther called apparent righteousness, and what Melanchthon labeled righteousness of reason. The second righteousness is the righteousness of salvation that comes from outside, through faith. What is being called here the second kind of righteousness, Luther named, among a variety of other terms, alien righteousness. Melanchthon termed it the righteousness of the promise and considered it third. The third kind of righteousness in this threefold framework is the righteousness that is evident in the godly lives and good works of Christians as they function within the created world. In Luther's sermon from 1518, this pious Christian activity was labelled as actual righteousness, and Melanchthon designated it as the righteousness of the law.[56]

Biermann further ascribes participles, *governing, justifying, and conforming* to the respective righteousness and thus writes:

There is a righteousness based on God's will, governing righteousness, which rules and directs all of life in this world, and those who adhere to it attain a certain degree of righteousness according to the world. The second righteousness, justifying righteousness, is entirely distinct from governing righteousness, and for the sake of Christ delivers salvation to the wholly passive recipient. Justifying righteousness flows (through new and heightened "Christian" motivations of love for God and concern for neighbor) into the third kind of righteousness, conforming righteousness, which in its expression often seems to the outward observer quite similar to the governing righteousness.[57]

Having discussed and named different kinds of righteousness operative in the life of a believer and also in a non-Christian, it is now pertinent that we briefly discuss on how Christians work with others towards the well-being of all in the left-hand realm. Important in this regard is Luther's understanding on Christian's Vocation.

Luther's Understanding of Vocation

A Christian's vocation in the left-hand realm occupies an important place in Luther's understanding of God's two realm. Luther articulated his understanding of vocation in contrast to the popular medieval understanding. The medieval spirituality which preserved certain pre-Christian pagan elements in thinking, separated the "sacred" from the "profane." The "Sacred"

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[56] Biermann, *A Case for Character*, 127.

[57] Biermann, *A Case for Character*, 129.

146

activities, largely ritualistic in nature, were regarded as more God-pleasing and holy than profane

activities, which consisted of "regular" every days tasks, oriented toward earthly life.[58] The

medieval Church also restricted the use of the biblical term "calling"—*vocatio* in Latin, *Beruf* in

German only to those people who were entrusted with the so called sacred responsibilities like

the priests, monks, and nuns. "They were the 'called' of the medieval church; these sacred

responsibilities were defined as 'voca- tions' or 'callings.'"[59] Luther overturned this

spiritualizing view of medieval Christianity by affirming that "all activities performed by the

faithful people of God as a result of their trust in him are equally holy, and equally without

influence in determining that his people are his people."[60] Luther also "transformed the use of the

word "calling" or "vocation" by assigning it to all Christians."[61]

As pointed out in the previous chapter, God has ordained certain structures or institutions

in the left-hand realm to preserve his creation.[62] Within these structures or situations God assigns

"offices" (ä*mter*) or responsibilities for his people to carry out the corresponding tasks. To

Luther, "God places all people, not just Christians, in these situations; He assigns all people these

responsibilities."[63] However, Luther specifically used the word *Beruf* or *vocatio* in reference to

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[58] Robert Kolb notes three reason for Luther's rejection of the traditional distinction of the sacred and profane in medieval Christianity. He notes, "First, the sacred activities of the medieval Church were often (though, not always) human teachings, taught as if they were divine commands (Mt 15:9). Second, these activities often distracted and diverted people from carrying out their God-given response-abilities in their families, occupations, societies, and congregations. Third, they also were performed within the medieval system not to honor God but to insure the salvation of the person performing them. On all three counts Luther found the medieval view of reality false and inimical to a biblical understanding of God's way of accomplishing his will in society." See Robert Kolb, "Called to Milk Cows and Govern Kingdoms Martin Luther's Teaching on the Christian's Vocations," *Concordia Journal* (Spring 2013): 134.

[59] Kolb, "Christian's Vocations,"135. See also Gene Edward Veith, *God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All for Life* (Crossway: Illinois, 2002), 17–19.

[60] Kolb, "Christian's Vocations," 134.

[61] Kolb, "Christian's Vocations," 135.

[62] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 58–59.

[63] Robert Kolb, "God Calling, 'Take Care of My People:' Luther's Concept of Vocation in the Augsburg Confession and Its Apology," *Concordia Journal* 8 (January 1982): 6.

Christian's work in the world as he perceives and carries out his God-given responsibilities.[64]

Luther's affirmation of God's ongoing creative work (*creatio continua*) towards his creation forms an integral part in Luther's understanding of Christian's vocation. To Luther, God is actively at work in His creation for its preservation and well-being. In this regard "sin and human evil have not prevented God's ongoing work within creation."[65] Luther called people in the exercise of their response-abilities "masks of God," through whom God, for example, milks cows so that his human creatures may be nourished. However only those who trust God may understand that their responsibilities are personal assignments from God.[66] In this regard Luther notes in his explanation of the first commandment that "Creatures are only the hands, channels, and means through which God bestows all blessings. For example- he gives to the mother breasts and milk for her infant, and he gives grain and all kinds of fruits from the earth for man's nourishment-things which no creature could produce by himself."[67] Wingren further summaries how *creatio continua,* human vocations and Two Realm theology is inter-related in Luther's thought:

> In his vocation man does work which effect the well-being of others; for so God has made all offices. Through this work in man's offices, God's creative work goes forward, and that creative work is love, a profusion of good gifts. With persons as his "hands" or "coworkers," god give his gifts through the earthly vocations, towards man's life on earth (food through farmers, fishermen and hunters; external peace through princes, judges, and orderly powers; knowledge and education through teachers and parents, etc, etc). Through preacher's vocation, God gives the forgiveness of sins. Thus love comes from God, flowing down to human beings on earth through all vocations, through both spiritual and earthly governments. This can also be a connection between two governments from man's point of view, if he

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[64] Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, 2.

[65] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 56.

[66] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 56.

[67] Martin Luther, "The Ten Commandments" in the Large Catechism, *The Book of Concord*, eds., Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis, Fortress, 200), 389.

ponders what he receives through the faithfulness of others to their vocations. He receives the good gifts of God's love thought both prince and preacher.[68]

Luther recognized that as a member in the community, a Christian could belong to all the three estates at the same time and can have responsibilities in each sphere. Thus a person could often live in "several walks of life at the same time; for example, a person may simultaneously be a father, husband, employee, taxpayer, citizen, and Church member."[69] Sometimes it is inferred that the rigid societal structure during Luther's time prevented people from vocational change. Luther, too, held on to a static notion of vocation, that people are called into particular stations through birth and are called to be content where they are.[70] However Kolb and Arand dismiss such a view and note that although Luther lived in a society with fewer opportunities for social mobility and vocational change, he recognized that vocations do change with time and circumstance. Kolb and Arand argue:

> In addition, Luther came from an early-modern European family that itself had experienced and fostered its own upward mobility. His father left the farm to become a successful smelter. Luther himself had been sent as the first ever in his family to the university in hopes that he would win a place in the governmental structures of some princedom or city. His own rebellion against his father's plan moved him from the faculty of law to a life in monastery. Luther knew that God can direct lives in such a way that vocational change takes place. So in our day, Luther's understanding of vocation would not view as inappropriate the aspiration to seek a better job or a promotion as long as one does not turn that new job or promotion to an idol (as evidence when a person feels that life is no longer worth living if one does not attain it), but instead view it as an avenue for better serving God and neighbor. For God's callings to his people are not end in themselves.[71]

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[68] Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, 27–28.

[69] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 64.

[70] Schwarz, *True Faith in the True God*, 138.

[71] Kolb and Arand, *Genius of Luther's Theology,* 64. Hanz Schwarz too dismiss the view that Luther held on to a static notion regarding vocation. He notes that, "Luther in many ways broke through the idea that society is structured according to the stations into which people are born. He fought, for example, against the practice of barring those born out of wedlock from holding honorable vocations within the craft and trade professions. He also demanded the possibility for the advancement of children of common parents …Luther made parents vividly aware that through sufficient education, advancement to all government, educational, and ecclesiastical offices would be open to their children." Schwarz, *True Faith in the True God*, 138.

Luther's view of vocational mobility offers a critique to the caste system in India, where through birth a person's caste determines one's social status and prevents social mobility. But to Luther vocations do change with time and circumstance.

The purpose of all our vocations is to serve and meet our neighbor's need. In this way Luther did not see any salvific value to our deeds we perform through our vocations.[72] As Wingren rightly puts it "God does not need our good works but our neighbor does."[73] Luther thus writes:

> Let us truly learn we are saved through faith in Christ and that alone. This fact has been made sufficiently manifest. The let no one rely on his own works. Let us in our life time engage only in such works as shall profit our neighbors, being indifferent to testament and intuition, and direct our efforts to bettering the full course of our neighbors life.[74]

Our gifts and neighbor's need determines our vocational considerations and human reason and law guides our efforts to live out our active righteousness in the service of the common good. Luther, affirming the importance of our gifts and the need of neighbor in our practice of vocations, notes:

> If you are a manual laborer, you find that the Bible has been put into your workshop, into your hand, into your heart. It teaches and preaches how you should treat your neighbor. Just look at your tools—at your needle or thimble, your beer barrel, your goods, your scales or yardsticks or measure—and you will read this statement inscribed on them. Everywhere you look, it stared at you. Nothing that you handle every day is so tiny that it does not continually tell you this, if you will only listen. Indeed, there is no shortage or preaching. You have as many preachers as you have transactions, goods, tools, and other equipment in your house and home. All this continually crying out to you: Friend, use me in your relations with your neighbor just as you would want your neighbor to use his property in his relations with you.[75]

A Christian's vocation is externally identical to the responsibilities carried out by non-

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[72] Schwarz, *True Faith in the True God*, 10.

[73] Schwarz, *True Faith in the True God*, 10.

[74] As quoted in Makito, "Luther's Two Kinds of Righteousness," 134.

[75] Martin Luther, "The Sermon on the Mount and the Magnificat," in *Vol.21 of Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999), 237.

Christians in the left-hand realm. As Kolb points out, it is the faith that motivates the Christian

that differentiates the Christian's vocation from the non-Christian's practice of his

responsibilities as both carry out God-given responsibilities as the mask of God.[76] Therefore, in

this thought of Luther we find a common ground for Christians and non-Christians working

together as instruments and masks of the one true God. In addition, the only thing that

distinguishes a Christian's work from that of any other is "the vertical relationship with God, the

trust which recognizes God's love and lordship, impinges on and controls the horizontal

relationships in which that faith now perceives God's calling and command."[77]

To Luther, vocation relates to the entire life of a Christian in significant way. As Wingren

encapsulates:

> Vocation belong to man's situation before the resurrection, where there are two
> kingdoms, earth and haven, two contending powers, God and the devil, and two
> antagonistic components in man, the old man and the new, related to the constant
> battle for man. The old man must bear vocation's cross as long as life on earth lasts
> and the battle against the devil continues. As long as he continues in his earthly
> vocations, there can be no end to the struggle. After death comes a new kingdom free
> from the cross; heaven has taken the place of earth, God has conquered the devil, and
> man has been raised from the dead. The man's struggle is at end.[78]

Thus to Luther vocation is more than just dedicated service to one's occupation. Vocation

encapsulates the "the whole theater of personal, communal, and historical relationships in which

one lives."[79] Marc Kolden elaborates on the much deeper and broader nature of vocation:

> The call comes from Christ, but it locates one in a calling in the creation doing works
> for one's neighbor. …vocation" refers not only to one's occupation but to all one's
> relationships, situations, contexts, and involvements (including, of course, one's
> occupation, if one is employed). It is true that Luther often speaks about specific
> occupations, but the purpose in doing so is not to restrict vocation to occupation but
> to affirm that even the most mundane stations are places in which Christians ought to

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[76] Kolb, "God Calling," 6.

[77] Kolb, "God Calling," 6.

[78] Wingren, *Luther on Vocation*, 250–51.

[79] Marc Kolden, "Luther on Vocation," *Word and World* 3 no. 4 (Fall 1983): 383.

live out their faith; such work serves other people, unlike religious vocations which serve no one but the person involved (and not ever that person, if it is seen that salvation comes not by pious works.[80]

Luther's understanding of vocation provides value to every vocation as a sacred calling. Thus ordinary and mundane tasks of everyday life carried out through one's respective vocations find significance because they contribute towards the welfare for earthly life. All vocations are places of service to others, in living out our life as human beings according to God's good design. The doctrine of the priesthood of believers forms an important element in this regard. Luther notes:

All Christians are truly of the spiritual estate, and there is no difference among them except that of office. Paul says in I Cor. 12[:12–13] that we are all one body, yet every member has its own work by which it serves the others. This is because we all have one baptism, one *Gospel*, one faith, and are all Christians alike; for baptism, *Gospel*, and faith alone make us spiritual and a Christian people… As far as that goes, we are all consecrated priests through baptism, as St. Peter says in 1 Peter 2[:9], "You are a royal priesthood and a priestly realm." The Apocalypse says, "Thou hast made us to be priests and kings by thy blood" [Rev. 5:9–10]. …Therefore, just as those who are now called "spiritual," that is, priests, bishops, or popes, are neither different from other Christians nor superior to them, except that they are charged with the administration of the word of God and the sacraments, which is their work and office, so it is with the temporal authorities. They bear the sword and rod in their hand to punish the wicked and protect the good. A cobbler, a smith, a peasant—each has the work and office of his trade, and yet they are all alike consecrated priests and bishops. Further, everyone must benefit and serve every other by means of his own work or office so that in this way many kinds of work may be done for the

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[80] Kolden, "Luther on Vocation," 386.

bodily and spiritual welfare of the community, just as all the members of the body serve one another [I Cor. 12:14–26].[81]Two important vocations which are of importance to this present study relating to Christian's responsibility in the context of *Hindutva* nationalism in the political realm, are the call to live as a citizen and the call to be a ruler in leadership within political structures. The modern political arena, marked with democratic ideals, has altered drastically the conceptual parameters of people as passive subjects during Luther's time to proactive citizens having an active responsibility in the political process. Similarly the political ethos with regard to the role and function of political authority operative under a democratic system is different from Luther's time. But such a change in circumstance and ideals does not mean that Luther's principles with regard to our civic responsibilities in political area is obsolete. In the next chapter, I will return to this topic as we discuss in detail the vocation of citizens and political leaders in our engagement with the *Hindutva* nationalism in India.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to introduce a theological rationale towards Christian's involvement in the left-hand realm. In this regard we discussed two important teachings of Luther in relation to Luther's understanding of two realms, namely two kinds of righteousness and Christian's vocation in the world. The two kinds of righteousness of a Christian grounds him with an identity as a child of God and provides impetus to work towards the welfare of all in the left-hand realm. Further, the two kinds of righteousness rejects any one-dimensional understanding of Christian anthropology, and it affirms the indispensable nature of the simultaneity of two kinds of righteousness operating in a Christian, who lives out his calling in this world. So we cannot conceive of a compartmentalization and/or separation of the

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[81] *LW* 44:127.

Christian's identity from the Christian's action in the world. Thus any talk about a Christian's performance in this world is talk about his faith and identity. We also saw that through one's vocation Christians serve the world as God's mask towards the common good of all. God uses all people, not just Christians, as His mask towards the preservation of His creation. The Christian's performance of active righteousness through his vocation can find common ground with others to work towards the well-being of all in the left hand realm. Our effort in the next chapter, then, is to find the relevance of Luther's Two Realm theology in response to *Hindutva* nationalism, informed by a theological rationale which takes seriously a two dimensional Christian anthropology and a distinction between God's two mode of governance.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A RESPONSE TO *HINDUTVA* FROM A TWO REALM PERSPECTIVE: TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF ENGAGEMENT

Thus far this dissertation has identified the specific challenges to the common good brought about by *Hindutva* ideology, specifically its conception of a Hindu State in India. . Following that I also surveyed some major responses given to *Hindutva* from different Christian perspectives. In order to further contribute towards theological thinking in India I have introduced Luther's Two Realm theology to provide a conceptual and theological framework to Christians in India as they engage in the public sphere. This framework assists Christians in their effort to take seriously their Christian faith (exclusive in nature) but at the same time embrace an inclusive attitude (inclusive in nature) as they address various challenges that come from *Hindutva* nationalism. This chapter will first, summarize and spell out a Lutheran theological frame work useful for Christian engagement in the public sphere, Second, offer a critique to *Hindutva* understanding of the State from Two Realm frame work, and third, discuss how Christians and Church in India could carry out their respective calling in the context of *Hindutva* informed by Luther's Two Realm theology.

Towards a Theology of Engagement in Public Square: Luther's Two Realm Theology

In the third chapter of this dissertation we undertook a detailed survey of various Indian theological approaches towards political Hinduism. We saw how each approach, taking seriously their commitment towards the Church and the nation, addressed various challenges raised by *Hindutva*. Inculturation theologians sought to root the Christian faith within the Hindu traditions

155

and culture with an effort to overcome the accusation of colonial legacy and foreignness of the Christian faith. The secular and inter-religious theologians of the post-independence era proposed secularism and inter-religious dialogue. The Dalit theologians confronted and tried to expose the Brahminic hegemony of *Hindutva* while working towards the liberation of Dalits. The evangelical theologians responded by noting numerous Christian contributions towards the nationhood and tried to dispel *Hindutva* accusation that conversion to Christianity would weaken one's commitment to the nation. Although these theologians were genuine in their efforts, their suggestions were one dimensional in their approach. For example, the secular approach and inter-religious approach downplayed the need of proclamation of the Gospel and uniqueness of faith in Christ, whereas the liberation approach tends to interpret Gospel and religious conversion socio-politically. To many inculturation theologians the doctrine of the Church was scandalous. In the theological approaches mentioned above, the contextual concerns determined their theological paradigm. In their approach, they seem to operate with an assumption that preserving and taking seriously the uniqueness of one's Christian faith and identity can become an impediment to theologizing efforts. The Christian faith and identity mattered within an evangelical approach, however, two common criticisms can be levelled against the evangelical approach. First, the evangelical approach tends to be withdrawn from the societal realities. Second, those evangelical strands which were involved with societal concerns are often criticized for an "instrumental mentality" implicit in their operation, building bridges with others with the sole concern for evangelizing or Christianizing the other.

The theological approaches reviewed appear to be one dimensional in their approach, either compromising cardinal elements of Christian faith for the sake of social involvement, or withdrawn from social realities, solely concerned with the Christian identity. This analysis seems

to suggest that it might be difficult to have a theological approach which could remain faithful

both to our Christian faith (which is exclusive in nature) and at the same time be inclusive of

others and concerned about the social realities around us. This dissertation proposes that a robust

understanding of Luther's Two Realm theology could help address this problem. In Luther's

Two Realm theology, God is actively interested and present in both realms of reality. This

affirms a holistic Christian anthropology which takes into account the spiritual and secular

spheres of human life, both distinct yet integrated with all its nuances.

　The relevant major tenets of the Two Realm frame work can be summed up as following.

1) Two Realms of God's activity: Distinct not Separate 2) Two Dimensions of Christian's

Identity: Distinct yet Integrated. 3) An Inclusive Paradigm for Common Humanity.

Two Realms of God's Activity: Distinct not Separate

The core of Luther's Two Realm theology is the distinction between God's two realms and

His two modes of governance. In the right-hand realm God deals with us as the Redeemer and

Sanctifier through the *Gospel*. In the left-hand realm God deals with us as the Creator and

preserver through the law. Carl Braaten rightly elaborates Two Realm doctrine thus:

> This doctrine draws a distinction between two ways of God's working in the world,
> two strategies that God uses to deal with the powers of evil and the reality of sin, two
> approaches to human beings, to mobilize them for active cooperation in two distinctly
> different kinds of institutions. One is created as an instrument of governance seeking
> justice through the administration of law and preservation of order, and the other as
> an instrument of the Gospel and its sacraments announcing and mediating an ultimate
> and everlasting salvation which only Christ can give in an act of unconditional love
> and personal sacrifice.[1]

Maintaining such a distinction is fundamental to any theological effort because provides

precision and clarity with regard to God's distinct concerns in both realms of life. This

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[1] Carl Braaten, *Principles of Lutheran Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 135.

157

distinction allows the theologian to let creation be creation and redemption be redemption.[2]

Luther's distinction between the two realms and God's two modes of operation in the respective realms clearly demonstrates that God is active and interested in both realms of life. God is not the God of right-hand/ spiritual realm alone where He rules as the redeemer and sanctifier but He is also the God of left-hand/secular realm where He reigns as the creator and preserver of His good creation. As Robert Benne notes "God the creator and God the redeemer are not separate deities. Likewise the two ways that God reigns are not separate spatially or existentially; they interact in creative ways."[3] Thus Luther's Two Realm theology helps us to avoid any dichotomy between two realms but clarifies the unique concerns of one true God in both realms of His activity. Luther's Two Realm theology reminds us that God's concern in relation to right hand realm with regard to human salvation and sanctification, and His concern for the left hand realm of preservation of His creation are equally important concerns. Thus in "the Lutheran ethical view, Christians live in two realities at the same time. Each reality is under the governance of God but in sharply different ways… God's aim in both modes of rule is the same- to overcome evil and recall disobedient creation to himself but God uses very different means in each "kingdom."[4] This reminds us that our theology should be able to maintain the simultaneity of God's distinct yet not separate concerns and mode of operation.

Two Dimensions of Christian's Identity: Distinct Yet Integrated.

We have already noted that in Luther's definition a person exists in two dimensions. His relationship with God (*coram Deo*) and his relationship with the world (*coram mundo*) define

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[2] Arand and Biermann, "Why Two Kinds of Righteousness," 120.

[3] Robert Benne, "Lutheran Ethics: Perennial Themes and Contemporary Challenges," in *The Promise of Lutheran Ethics*, ed. Karen L. Bloomquist and John R. Stumme, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998), 25.

[4] Benne, "Lutheran Ethics," 24.

158

properly one's anthropology. In this two dimensional existence, to be a human being as God created us to be, "We must be righteous before God and man. Without one or the other we find our humanity diminished."[5] Luther's definition of the two kinds of righteousness is significant in this regard. God's design for us is fulfilled in both the passive righteousness which provides us with the identity as God's children and active righteousness through which we relate and perform deeds of faith to other people. Thus we need both kinds of righteousness in order to be completely and genuinely human.

Luther's understanding of two kinds of righteousness reminds us that in our theological deliberation we should hold on to a holistic understanding of Christian anthropology. Our theologizing efforts should reject any one dimensional approach or compartmentalizing tendencies. It is equally important that we keep the two dimensions of human existence distinct so that we may not confuse the concerns of the two realms of human existence. As Arand and Biermann rightly put it "Luther insisted that to affirm both dimensions of human existence they must be kept distinct. This is our theology, by which we teach a precise distinction between these two kinds of righteousness, the active and the passive, so that morality and faith, works and grace, secular society and religion may not be confused. Both are necessary, but both must be kept within their limits."[6]

Luther's Two Realm doctrine offers a rich resource to Indian theological thinking and a corrective vision to various approaches reviewed in our discussion. Luther's Two Realm perspective provides clarity and direction to our inculturation efforts. The Two Realm perspective, rich in its theology of creation, helps us to appreciate and cherish various cultures, traditions, and languages present in the left hand realm. Natural law and human reason, which

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[5] Arand and Biermann, "Why Two Kinds of Righteousness," 120.

[6] Arand and Biermann, "Why Two Kinds of Righteousness," 120–21.

governs the left-hand, realm help us to affirm, critique, and at the same, make useful of liberative elements implicit in human culture and traditions for the common good. In our inculturation efforts, knowing that Gospel belongs to the right hand realm, the Two Realm theology help us to preserve the universality and transcultural nature of the *Gospel*, since there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. It prevents us from the temptation to either add human tradition and culture to the Gospel or fall into the trap of syncretism thereby allowing culture to usurp and change the Christian message. Luther's Two Realm theology also encourages us to gladly and critically make use of the cultural forms, local language, music, and various art forms, which are God's good gifts in the left hand realm, to better communicate the Gospel contextually and locally. We are also called to critique the culture and traditions around us which are not compatible with the *Gospel*. This task occurs not on the basis of the Gospel but through human reason, the natural law, and our vocations.

We saw that inter-religious dialogue and secular approach both were concerned about the well-being in the left-hand realm at the cost of compromising the basic tenets of Christian faith and identity. These approaches caution that the pre-occupation with faith and identity might lead one to withdraw from concerns of the society. However Luther's understanding of two kinds of righteousness provide a corrective vision, as Luther reminds us that passive righteousness becomes the source of motivation to serve others in the world. Thus one's Christian identity and faith makes a Christian ever active and mindful towards the concerns in the left-hand realm. In this regard two kinds of righteousness also engages the evangelical approach by providing a richer vision of embracing a two dimensional understanding of righteousness and a freedom to perform good deeds towards our neighbors without a need to instrumentalize our neighbors, because the whole purpose of our active righteousness is to meet our neighbor's need.

Luther's Two Realm perspective provides clarity to secular and inter-religious approach and reminds us that inter-religious harmony and task of nation building are legitimate concerns in the left-hand realm. Religion, with its insistence on ceremonial righteousness, plays a positive role in upholding morality in the left-hand realm. In this regard inter-religious dialogues and secular fellowships could explore implications of the natural law for our common good in the left hand realm.

Secularizing the meaning of the Gospel (Secular approach) and superficially lumping together the salvific tenets of various religions together (Inter-religious approach) both fail to treat with integrity the diversity and nuance implicit in different religious persuasion. As Sebastian Kim points out, what is called forth in our theological approaches is acknowledgement, mutual respect, and accommodation that "different theological searches for the meaning of life and the way to achieve it- a common quest but answered in widely differing ways."[7]

Luther's Two Realm perspective offers a critique to liberation theology which tends to reduces salvation into socio-political reality. Although justice and peace are genuine concerns in the left-hand realm, turning socio-political liberation as salvific is a confusion and of God's two realms. Robert Benne noting his temptation offers a critique:

> Particularly in the political sphere humans are prone to claim salvific significance to their efforts at social or political transformation…The good news of the Gospel is that God saves us through his gift of grace in Christ alone. We need do nothing but accept the sheer gift of salvation with repentant hearts. The Lutheran insistence on a radical doctrine of grace puts all human efforts into proper perspective. They deal with penultimate attempts to improve the human condition with relative bads, not with salvation. This means that politics is desacralized and relativized, as are education and therapy. Salvation is through Christ, not through human political schemes or educational or psychological efforts. Lutheran might appropriately speak of liberation

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[7] Kim, *In Search for Identity*, 200.

ethics but never of liberation theology in the sense that revolutionary praxis is synonymous with salvation.[8]

Having been freed from the burden of a socio-political liberative understanding of *Gospel*, Benne notes that we are in a better position to engage in our efforts for liberative concerns in the society:

> When we are freed from the need to look for salvation in human schemes, our eyes should be clearer to make the very important distinctions between the relatively good and the relatively bad in the realm of human action. Liberated from the worry about our salvation, we can turn unobsessively to the task of building a better world, not by prideful claims of transformation, but by determined yet humble attempts to take first steps for the better.[9]

The traditional stereotype that Lutheranism is socially disinterested and quietist in nature cannot hold true. As Antti Raunio notes:

> Lutheranism is known for the idea that faith frees the human being to serve the neighbor in love. Luther defines the love of neighbor as a striving for the good of another. The self is freed from striving for personal good and gain. Luther often describes neighborly love as a love that aims solely to fulfill neighbor's need. The neighbor's need is precisely the point at which Luther determine the good. Luther does not start with the person's effort to attain and guarantee her won good but turn attention to the neighbor.[10]

Luther's distinction between the two realms and his two dimensional understanding of human existence provides us with a conceptual tool to distinguish between the concerns of creation and redemption, thereby helping us not to confuse, mix, or compromise between concerns relating to our spiritual and temporal realms of existence. Herbert Hoefer rightly summaries, "The two kingdom distinction is an analytical tool. It helps to clarify the various issues involved in complex, inter-relating social questions. Using the distinction we do not

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[8] Benne, "Lutheran Ethics," 18–19.

[9] Benne, "Lutheran Ethics," 20.

[10] Raunio Antti, "Luther's Social Theology in the Contemporary World: Searching for the Neighbor's Good," in *The Global Luther: A Theologian for Modern Times*, ed. Christine Helmer (Minneapolis: Fortress, 200), 216.

faciely solve our theological and practical problems. However, we do understand our various responsibilities better and thus make more balanced decisions in the developing situations of our life and work in the society."[11]

An Inclusive Paradigm for Common Humanity: Foundations for our Common Existence

Luther's two realm theology provides us with an inclusive paradigm for our common human existence, whereby Christians are able to work closely with people of different faiths, or no faith, towards the wellbeing of all in our temporal life. In this regard, we shall now discuss two foundations for our common existence which serve as the common points of contact with others in the temporal realm of life. They are 1) Common Creatureliness and Common Needs 2) Common Source of Morality: Natural Law and Human Reason.

Common Creatureliness and Common Needs.

We have already identified that left-hand realm is the realm of creation wherein God reigns as the Creator and Preserver. In this temporal realm we share a common Creatureliness with our fellow human beings and everything in creation by the fact that we all are created by God. The Lutheran Church Missouri—Synod's document, *Together with all Creatures: Caring for God's living world* (2010), elaborates the common Creatureliness we share not just with our fellow human beings but with entire creation:

> While we share a common Creatureliness with all things "visible and invisible" (the latter including angels) we share a particularly close bond with our fellow earth formed creatures. God formed us together with them from the soil. Genesis 2:7 makes a special point of emphasizing this feature of our Creatureliness: The "Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground." Note how the narrative highlights our connection to the ground with very name given to the first human creature. God call him *Adam* because he is created from *adamah*. Genesis 5 makes the same point: "Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them man (*adam*) when they were created" (Gen 5:2). *Adam* here is used as a generic name for humans

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[11] Hoefer, *Church-State-Society*, 9.

163

rather than personal name of a single person. Genesis provides a deliberate play on words. Adam is made from the *adamah*. Humans are made from the humus. Earthlings are made from the earth. We are earth creatures.[12]

Human beings are also set apart from the rest of creation due to the fact that they are, according to Genesis 1:26-28, created in the image of God (*imago Dei*). To Luther, human beings created in God's image means at least two things. Firstly, "The image of God consists in the ability that has been distributed to the human being to 're-spond.'"[13] In this regard, human beings have been given the ability to converse with God and He with them. The image of God establishes a special relationship between human beings and God.[14] Secondly, "The image of God for human beings consists in the fact that the individual is the representative (*vicarious*) of God and is the one responsible for carrying out his mandates on earth."[15] In this regard "humans are given the responsibility of protecting and guiding creation in order to maintain shalom."[16] Created in the Image of God, human beings are created to be in relationship with God and towards fellow human being, and even the wider creation. Although the fall did damage the image of God in human beings, which only God could restore, Luther held that sinners could, to some extent, live outwardly moral lives. They might behave morally for several reasons, including fear of punishment, want to justify self before God and/or receive praise, fame, advancement, or self-glory in this world. [17] In the left-hand realm we are bound to each other because of our common Creatureliness, since all are created by God and are God's creatures.

As God's creatures we are also bound to each other because of the common creaturely

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[12] Luther Church Missouri Synod, *Together with all Creatures: Caring for God's living World* (Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, 2010), 32.

[13] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 157.

[14] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 157.

[15] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 159.

[16] Luther Church Missouri Synod, *Together with all Creatures*, 40.

[17] Bayer, *Martin Luther's Theology,* 160.

needs we have in this world. All human beings share the same planet and a common pattern of life. We need each other for our food, security, belonging, and life to flourish. In this temporal realm, which is affected by sin and evil, we also share a common need for order, peace, justice, and harmony, in order for life to exist and grow. We are mutually dependent upon each other because God has created us to be social creatures, whereby "As social creatures, we have been fashioned by God to live in a social web of mutually constitutive relationships, in which we not only receive life and support from others but also contribute to the life and well-being of others."[18]

Luther's understanding of God as the provider and preserver of His creation is significant to our ongoing discussion, because in and through our mutually constitutive relationships, it is God who uses human beings and non-human creation as His instruments or masks (*larvae Dei*) to meet our common needs.[19] Luther's teaching on divinely ordained intuitions, and people acting in and through these structures, in the left hand realm to carry out God's will for His creation is significant in this regard. God has placed not just Christians but all people in these places of responsibilities towards the preservation of His creation. Thus in the horizontal realm, places of responsibilities, or God ordained created walks of life, provide a common ground for Christian and non-Christians to cooperate and work towards the mutual wellbeing and common good.

Although Luther did not live in a society marked with much cultural and religious diversity, still he did not envisage a homogeneous society in terms of a single religion or culture. Even in his context Luther always acknowledged that "Christians are always a minority in the

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[18] Kolb and Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 54.

[19] Arand, "Christian's Calling," 9.

midst of non-Christians."[20] And "the world and the masses are and always will be un-

Christian…"[21] Thus Luther never envisioned a monolithic society shaped by Christian religion

and culture. Applying Luther's principle to our context helps us to recognize and acknowledge

the plurality and diversity in terms of ethnicity, culture, religion, and language in our midst

without having the need to eliminate these differences with a notion that homogeneity is desired

to build a common ground for people to work together for the common good.

Luther also did not think that the basis of cooperation in the left-hand realm should be

based on the *Gospel*. The Gospel provides identity and motivation for Christians to embrace the

secular realm as God's good creation, but the common platform a Christian shares with his non-

Christian neighbor, in a religiously and culturally plural society, is not be based on the *Gospel*,

but under God's law. As William Lazareth rightly notes, "Especially in our pluralistic culture,

men and women who cannot worship together under the Gospel are still going to have to find

more ways in which they can work together under the law."[22]

To conclude, in a religiously plural and culturally diverse context, like India, an affirmation

of our common Creatureliness carries much relevance. It reminds us that we have more in

common with each other due to our Creatureliness and are depend upon each other for our

common needs. Luther's Two Realm theology helps us also to reject any visioning for a

theocracy or to seek a homogeneous societal foundation based on culturally, religiously, or

ethnically monolithic tenets, which aim to obliterate difference under the false pretense to foster

cooperation and progress. Building upon our common Creatureliness, Luther's Two Realm

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[20] *LW* 45: 92.

[21] *LW* 45: 91.

[22] William H. Lazareth, "Luther's Two Kingdom Ethic Reconsidered," in Marburg Revisited: A Reexamination of Lutheran and Reformed Traditions, ed. Paul C. Empie and James I. McCord (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1966), 175.

theology introduces us to another creative and solid foundation, under which our common Creatureliness function and grow, namely under God's gift of Natural Law and Human Reason/Wisdom.

Common Morality: Natural Law and Human Reason.

The left-hand realm is a place where sin and evil reigns in order to destroy and thwart God's creation. Nevertheless, God is ever active in this fallen realm to prevent it from falling apart and dissolving to nothing. Luther's doctrine of the "orders of creation" reminds us that Christians, along with all other human beings, are placed in a frame work of universal structures to carry out the divine task of curbing sin and its effects and to promote life and human fellowship for the wellbeing of all in the left-hand realm. In this temporal realm of life, God has gifted humans with natural law and reason to foster our creaturely life and to check evil.

Luther affirmed natural law to be fundamental towards ordering, guiding, and regulating morality and ethical conduct in the left hand realm, for it defined the basic obligation a person owed to God, neighbor, and to self. To Luther, "God's natural law, set at the creation, continued to operate after the fall into sin, and that it provided the foundation for all positive law and public morality in the earthly kingdom."[23] Luther thus notes "Natural law is a practical first principle in the sphere of morality; it forbids evil and commands good. Positive law is a decision that takes circumstances into account and conforms to natural law on credible grounds. The basis of natural law is God, who has created this light, but the basis of positive law is civil authority."[24] Fundamental to Luther's affirmation of natural law was its universal nature and the revelation of the same in the creation apart from the Bible and the Christian faith.

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[23] Witte, *Law and Protestantism,* 113.

[24] Martin Luther, "Table Talk," in *Vol. 54 of Luther's Works*, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1999), 293.

Along with Natural law, to Luther, the temporal world is subject to reason and imagination. Luther affirmed clearly that God has provided the ability to reason to everyone regardless whether they are Christians or not. He also believed that some are more gifted with wisdom than others regardless of their religious persuasion. Luther noted that the basic teachings of the natural law "lives and shines in all human reason, and if people would only pay attention to it, what need would they have of books, teachers, or of law? For they carry with them more than enough about what they ought to do, judge, accept, and reject."[25] Luther was, however, also skeptical whether sinful persons would on their accord use their reason to "pay attention" to the natural law written in their hearts. Luther always thought that the coercive power of the legal system, parents, preachers, and magistrates had a positive role to play in enforcement of the natural law.

Luther's affirmation of the universality of natural law and reason carries much significance to our discussion. Firstly as Christians who seek to work with others in the left hand realm for the common good, we are not required to introduce God and His law to the world for the first time.[26] There is no such realm of life from which God is absent, because "God is always present in the world beforehand through the law engraved in the nature of the things He creates. God is universally present as the authority that drives people to do what they must do to sustain life, to administer justice, to play by the rules, and to care for their families and communities."[27] Thus "the universality of law provides a common ground for us to cooperate with all those who share respect of law, regardless of their theological conviction."[28]

Secondly a positive affirmation of the natural law and of human reason in Luther's thought

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[25] Witte, *Law and Protestantism,* 114.

[26] Braaten, "A Lutheran Affirmation of the Natural Law," 10–11.

[27] Braaten, "A Lutheran Affirmation of the Natural Law," 10–11.

[28] Meyer, "Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms," 10.

presents possibilities for work towards strengthening human fellowship and finding solutions in dealing with various problems the society faces which disrupts peace and justice. Through the use of reason, human fellowship is sustained and deepened. Knut Alfsvág points out "Fellowship based on reason as an important (but not the ultimate) goal of human activity is the proper role for the political estate according to Lutheran understanding."[29]

 Finally, in a religiously plural and culturally diverse public square, the universality of natural law and human reason provide a common foundation to argue for the reasonableness and ethicality of our positions without having to resort to the Bible or the Christian faith. Although our core convictions are shaped by our faith, our position statements can be made persuasive to "non-Christians solely on the condition that they are backed by reasonable arguments intelligible to those who do not happen to believe in Christ and the Bible."[30] Thus humanity's common foundation, based on universality of natural law and human reason, provides us with a common ground to carry out our conversation.

In an age of moral relativism the task of making intelligible arguments in the public square is not with a challenge, because of pervasive of human sin and its distortion of natural law and human reason. Luther reminds us that due to the fall and corruption of human person and human reason, human beings no longer are able to understand fully the requirement of the natural law except in a dim way. This then tempts humans to imagine and add his own content to the natural

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[29] Alfsvág, "Christians in Society," 18.

[30] Braaten, "A Lutheran Affirmation of the Natural Law," 13–4. Further elaborating the rationale and method of structuring our arguments Robert Kolb notes that in our discussions "[B]elievers do not hide the fact that their convictions spring from their faith. They do not deny the power of historical arguments from the Judeo-Christian heritage which shaped this culture. But if we are to argue persuasively in this culture, we must use arguments which can reconstruct a commonly accepted "common sense" in this society for those who do not share Christian convictions concerning the vertical relationship with God. That is entirely possible. Those with different convictions regarding life's ultimate meaning may still come to consensus on how to operate in the horizontal realm. The regulation of that realm will arise from rational argument and formulation among people of different ultimate beliefs as they seek the common good within the realm of the possible." Kolb, "Civic Responsibility," 20.

law according to his sinful nature. Thus a sinful person is ever tempted to recreate the natural

law, "as he does God, in the image of himself. The Golden Rule: 'Whatever you wish that others

would do to you, do also to them" (Mathew 7:12), apart from spiritual insight, has an egoistic

perspective."[31] Thus in our engagement with people with differing worldviews, we should not

assume that a set of universally acceptable precepts will immediately and naturally emerge. This

so because sometimes others might understand good differently from the Christian. "In fact the

non-Christian will be influenced by his own traditions, values, and concepts, just as the

Christians is influenced by his."[32]

The above observation highlights the need to recognize always the intrinsic link that exists

between natural law and the Decalogue. In this way we should be careful not to treat natural law

as something autonomous to the law of the Lord revealed in the Decalogue. Luther always

affirmed that natural law finds its clear expression in the Decalogue and relied on the Decalogue

to ensure the true understanding of the natural law. Complexities and nuances present in the

perception and application of natural law should not dishearten our efforts to establish a common

ground with those do not share our beliefs. Regardless of religious, cultural and moral diversities

which exist in our society, the fact remain that the "Decalogue summarizes enduring moral

principles that exist, even if suppressed, denied, or obscured. These principles will always

influence, to some degree, every moral system. The law written on the heart is consistent, even

though man's heart, corrupted by sin, is not. This means that while the law written on our heart

may be suppressed, it may not be erased."[33] Thus no matter how persuasive the effect of sin in

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[31] Gifford A. Grobien, "What is the Natural Law? Medieval Foundations and Lutheran Appropriation," in *Natural Law: A Lutheran Reappraisal*, eds., Robert C. Baker and Roland Cap Ehlke (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2011), 33.

[32] Grobien, "What is the Natural Law?," 37.

[33] Mathew E. Cochran, "A Way Forward? Continuing Conversations on Natural Law," in *Natural Law: A Lutheran Reappraisal* , eds., Robert C. Baker and Roland Cap Ehlke (Saint Louis: Concordia, 2011), 280.

the temporal realm, people are always confronted with the *ought*, due to the presence of the natural law. Our careful engagement and persuasively intelligible moral reasoning carries much significance in finding common moral ground with each other in the left-hand realm.

A Critique of *Hindutva* Understanding of the State from Luther's Two Ream Perspective

Hindutva ideology, as we have noted, is a politicized form of Brahmanical Hinduism which promotes an ethnic nationalism in India. In recent years, *Hindutva* is taking every effort to make itself known as the true representative of various sects and traditions in the Hindu fold, but it is a well-known fact that it stands for the political, cultural, and religious supremacy of Brahmanical Hinduism. In the *Hindutva* configuration, the State has an important role to play in its political project to create a Hindu *Rashtra* (nation). The purpose of this section is to offer a critique of the *Hindutva* conception of State and its function in the society. Since we have already noted several critiques made to *Hindutva* ideology by secular and theological writers of various persuasions, I will limit my critique to the *Hindutva* conception of State under two headings, namely, *Hindutva* conception of nature and purpose of the State, and *Hindutva* State and Religious Toleration.

Critique of Nature and Purpose of State in *Hindutva*

In the *Hindutva* imagination of the nationhood, the role of the state holds a significant place. Driving on the wheels of a monistic religio-cultural world view, to the *Hindutva* ideologues, the Hindu nation is a manifestation of the Almighty.[34] The soul (*chitti*) of the Hindu nation is made visible through the "five unities" namely, Sacred Hindu land, Hindu Race, Hindu Culture, Hindu Language (Sanskrit and its derivatives), all shaped by Hindu Religion. To the

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[34] Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts,* 46.

Hindutva ideologues, Hindu Dharma, or the innate law (similar to natural law), is the supreme

and eternal law to which even God is subject. By upholding and observing these laws the nation

will exist and function. The Dharma of every Individual in relation to his country is to serve the

nation and work towards the visible manifestation of a Hindu nation. Since the Hindu society

itself is the manifestation of the ultimate reality, one's religious devotion to the country is one of

the paths for moksha/salvation.

The *Hindutva* understanding of the State is then to be placed against this backdrop of

selective monistic religio-cultural reading of the nationhood. The state, from this view point, is a

political institution formed through a social contract for the purpose of the realization of the

Hindu nation. In this way, the State is committed to promote Hindu Dharma and foster those

conditions conducive for the Hindu nation to manifest, function, and grow as guided by the

parameters of "five unities."

The *Hindutva* understanding of the nationhood and state is problematic on several levels.

Firstly, from a Hindu religious perspective the representation of Hindu Dharma in the political

project of *Hindutva* is a grave distortion and materialistic reductionism. Chetan Bhatt

substantiates this criticism:

> Upadhyaya's assertion that his 'dharma' was based on Hindu precepts is highly
> problematic. Leaving aside the caste and gender supremacist strictures of
> varnashramadharma or stri-dharma, for solemn devotees, the dharma within Hindu
> metaphysics is nothing less than the universal arrangement of the cosmos (!), whereas
> for Upadhyaya dharma is redacted to the soul (chiti) of the densely parochial Hindu
> Rashtra. This also reflects the unsophisticated curtailment, diminishing and
> simplification of Hinduism and Buddhism in Hindu nationalism. Upadhyaya's
> 'integralism' was an elementary reduction, legitimized through advaitin language, of
> the totality of Hinduism and the diversity of its philosophies and beliefs into a
> materialist concern with 'man', 'society' and exclusive nationalism. Religious
> commitment becomes a matter of nationalist affiliation (or conversely, nationalism
> becomes the sole measurement for religious commitment). Dharma is arguably
> productive for Hindu metaphysics because it is an empty transcendental signified. In

172

Upadhyaya's philosophy, it was instead filled with material, temporal concerns of land and nation.[35]

Secondly, a monolithic, homogeneous, and hegemonic political project of a Hindu nationhood is not a true representation of the different traditions present within the fold of Hinduism. Hinduism is indeed a collection and synthesis of various Indian cultures and traditions having different roots. Hinduism does not have a single text, creed, or founder but an umbrella of terms which accommodate various faith persuasions or non-faith persuasion.[36] As we have already noted, *Hindutva* ideology, in this regard, is a politicized form of elitist Brahmanical tradition in the Hindu fold. Liberation theologians have brought to our attention how Dalit, tribal, and other ethno- cultural groups inside the Hindu fold run counter to the hegemonic stance of Brahminic tradition.

Thirdly the purpose of the State in *Hindutva* ideology is problematic, since it views the main purpose of the Hindu state as the establishment of a monolithic and homogenous Hindu nation excluding religious and ethnic minorities from its configuration. Thus the State is mandated to look after the wellbeing of only those who belong to the Hindu fold.

Hindutva's parochial cultural and religious nationhood runs counter to the constitutional interpretation of Indian nationhood. As already noted, Prof. Gurpreet Mahajan notes that at the time of independence the framers of the Indian constitution were ever mindful of the religious and cultural diversity of the Indian populace and thus "they deliberated on a framework that would provide for a unified but culturally diverse nation state."[37] This constitutional orientation of the Indian nation can be best encapsulated in the slogan Unity in Diversity. "Unity in

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[35] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism*, 156.

[36] For more discussion see Flood, *The Blackwell Companion to Hinduism*, 1–5, Klaus K. Kloustermaier, *A Survey of Hinduism*. 3rd ed., (New York: State University of New York, 2007), 15–16.

[37] Mahajan, "Negotiating Cultural Diversity," 111.

Diversity articulates the sentiment that India can be a strong and unified country while

simultaneously affirming its cultural diversity. Cultural homogeneity is not, in other words, seen

as a necessary condition for forging a political identity as a nation state."[38] Due to the

commitment to treat all religions and communities as equal, India chose not to have a state

religion, although Hinduism was the majority religion.[39] Gurpreet summaries for us the complex

constitutional framework of India's approach towards accommodating different kinds of

diversities:

> Religious communities enjoy extensive cultural rights but no separate political rights. Identified linguistic communities enjoy cultural rights as well political rights. In many regions they form the federal units which have some degree of political autonomy to govern themselves. Tribal communities, particularly in the Hill regions, have special cultural rights, political rights of separate representation and the right to govern themselves. There is a lingering mistrust, or liberal anxiety, about granting political rights to religious communities. In any case, most religious communities are scattered through the country. Linguistic communities and tribal populations, particularly when they are concentrated in a given region, enjoy some political rights. These rights have promoted diversity while simultaneously deepening democracy.[40]

In the Indian constitutional framework, the state and its institutions are committed to

formulate policies and take necessary measures to foster conditions conducive for a multi-

cultural ethos to prevail. The state is also committed to protect the life and property of its citizens

from communal violence and to simultaneously punish the guilty who discriminate and disturb

the public peace and harmony on communal lines.[41]

Our reflections about the State, from the Luther's Two Realm perspective, help us to affirm

and support the Indian political and judicial understanding of the role and purpose of the State.

Because State in Luther's Two Realm perspective rests not on a theocratic or homogenizing

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[38] Mahajan, "Negotiating Cultural Diversity," 112.

[39] Mahajan, "Negotiating Cultural Diversity," 113.

[40] Mahajan, "Negotiating Cultural Diversity," 112.

[41] Mahajan, "Negotiating Cultural Diversity," 118–20.

ethnic/cultural foundation, but, as an instrument of God, functions to protect and foster human

fellowship, irrespective of one's cultural, lingual, ethnic or religious background. Thus Luther's

Two Realm perspective helps us to critique and reject the homogenizing and parochial political

paradigm of *Hindutva*, which seeks to work towards the wellbeing of its carefully chosen people.

Luther's Two Realm paradigm helps us also to recognize the lack of distinction, which

secular democratic governments usually affirm, regarding the religious and secular realms of life.

However *Hindutva*, with its reductionist approach towards Hinduism, rests its societal

foundation on a monistic frame work, where religion, society, and state is reduced to a single

reality, in which the concerns of both realms of human life are confused, mixed, and politicized

for its political project of a Hindu *Rashtra* (nation). Such a lack of distinction (not separation) is

not conducive for a vision of society in which people with different cultural and religious

persuasion coexist and work together for common good.

<center>Critique of *Hindutva* State on Religious Toleration</center>

As in Chapter 3, one of the claims made by *Hindutva* is that Hinduism stands apart from

Christianity in terms of religious tolerance, since Hinduism believes in plurality of truths and

multiple paths to salvation. But it is interesting to note that the Hindu notion of tolerance has its

own limitation when it confronts the issue of conversion. As Sebastian Kim points out, although

Hinduism maintains doctrinal tolerance, when it confronts world views which do not fit into its

mold, the practice of Hindu differs.[42] Further clarifying Hindu notion of religious tolerance and

its limitation, Sebastian Kim summarizes:

> This paradox of 'tolerant' Hinduism was well explained by P.D Devanandan, first
> director of the Christian Institute for Religion and Society in Bangalore, who saw that
> the tolerance of Hinduism had developed and was mainly operational within

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[42] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 187.

<center>175</center>

Hinduism. However, during the course of its encounter with other religions, he argued, the tolerance that was manifested within its geographical and ideological sphere of influence was not exhibited to other religions unless they also conformed to its frame work. Similarly, Ainslie T. Embree, writing on the 'the question of Hindu tolerance', provides a convincing argument that Hindu civilization has grown self-content through the centuries of development and has established its own distinctive 'endurance and persistence of its style and its patterns', and that the Hindu approach is not best described as 'absorptive, synthesizing, or tolerant' but it 'encapsulates' other cultural and religious traditions. It is evident that the Hindu politcy of toleration, which had developed over centuries within its geographical and philosophical sphere, was not equipped to accommodate the challenge of the 'intolerant' doctrine and practice of conversion brought by Christianity.[43]

Although Hinduism cannot inherently accommodate exclusive truth claims, it is not generally violent like political *Hindutva*. As previously noted, Hinduism should be distinguished from *Hindutva*, because *Hindutva* does not represent the various strands of traditions which form Hinduism; it is only a politicized version of Brahmanical Hinduism.

The *Hindutva* agenda becomes inherently intolerant because of its insistence of citizenship based on Hindu religion. The criterion for a person's standing in the Hindu nation is based on his Hindu religion and his commitment towards the ideals of *Hindutva* nationhood. Chetan Bhatt notes, in the "*Hindutva* nationhood, citizenship is made conditional on Hindu racial, cultural and religious affiliation."[44] Anyone who stands outside the interest of *Hindutva* nationhood is treated as the "other," unpatriotic, and as an enemy of the nation. Christians, Muslims, and other religious minorities must return to the Hindu fold and prove their allegiance by accepting *Hindutva* ideals. Chetan Bhat rightly notes that through these demands:

 Savarkar initiated a vicious and regressive logic that could never reach fulfilment to the satisfaction of the Hindu nationalist imaginary. The mere fact of their existence meant that Indian Muslims and Christians were inherently treacherous and had the overwhelming and perpetually unfinished burden of demonstrating their love and loyalty to the Hindu nation in a manner that could only reach completion, if at all,

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[43] Kim, *In Search of Identity,* 187–88.

[44] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism*, 98.

with the abandonment of their faiths and the adoption of an *Hindutva* ideology that considered them enemies.[45]

In addition, *Hindutva* is due to an infatuation towards militarization, which is built into the very philosophy of *Hindutva* itself. Savarkar's famous slogan "Hinduise all politics and Militarise Hindudom" best captures this sentiment.[46] To *Hindutva* ideologues non-violence is weakness, which made India vulnerable to numerous invasions. Aggressive militarization of all Hindus is the optimal way to protect itself from threats from within and without. In this regard Bhatt notes the rejection of Gandhi's nonviolence proposal for common living, "Savarkar stated that against 'useless, impotent and coward' rulers who represented democracy in India, he would prefer the 'great leader' Hitler."[47]

Hindutva ideologues' fascination towards militarization manifests itself as a dangerous proposition in two arenas, namely their approach towards containing issues of religious conversions and their perspective towards an ideal State machinery. Since religious conversion and people different faith orientations pose threats to national unity, it is pertinent that the Hindu be alert and aggressive in protecting their interests and bringing people back to their original fold. Chetan Bhatt notes this particular orientation in Golwalkar:

> Golwalkar proposed that all minorities had to become Hindus not through a conscientious and voluntary choice that accompanies religious affiliation but against their will and conviction and under an explicit and palpable threat of violence. Indeed, Golwalkar articulated the expansion of his imagined ancient Aryan-Hindu empire not as a mission of religious education or even persuasion, but as one of military conquest: 'Obviously we did not expand into Central Asia and South-East Asia by sermons alone. It is significant that every Hindu god is armed'[48]

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[45] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism*, 130.

[46] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism*, 103.

[47] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism*, 104.

[48] Bhatt, *Hindu Nationalism*, 131.

To *Hindutva* ideologues this means that India needs an aggressive reorientation of the state. And

"a new Hindu and Hindustan needs to be carved out wherein the re-engineered Hindu is

aggressive and on a bit of a high. This should be reflected in the nature of the Indian state and

this would in the final analysis eliminate the sediments that have piled up on the Hindu

psyche." [49]

The *Hindutva* attitude towards tolerance is problematic on several fronts. *Hindutva* clearly

rejects the Indian secular democratic version of nationhood which embraces all the citizens of

India irrespective of one's religious or cultural standing. In the *Hindutva* view point, the State

does not represent all the people living in its territory, but identifies itself with and is concerned

only towards those who follow the dominant creed of the country, namely Hinduism. The

Hindutva paradigm runs counter to the constitutional provision for religious freedom and

practice. An extract from relevant portions of the Article 25 of the Indian constitution attests to

this.

> Article 25. Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.
>
> 1) Subject to public order, morality and health and to the other provisions of this Part, all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practice and propagate religion.
>
> 2) Nothing in this article shall affect the operation of any existing law or prevent the State from making any law—
>
> a. Regulating or restricting any economic, financial, political or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practice;[50]

> While article 25 of the Indian constitution guarantees religious freedom, article 29 seeks to

protect the culture and unique ethnic identities of the minority communities. This article confers

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[49] Wajahat Qazi, "Why Modis Idea of a Militarized India is a Recipe for Disaster," *First Post*, September 16, 2013, http://www.firstpost.com/politics/why-modis-idea-of-a-militarised-india-is-a-recipe-for-disaster-1110897.html. (accessed November 22, 2015).

[50] Constitution of India, Part III, art. 25. Sec 1–2.

the freedom to all its citizens, to conserve their distinct languages, scripts, or cultures. It also ensures that the state shall not impose upon it any culture other than the community's own culture.[51] The above mentioned articles also serve to allay any fears of the minority communities from the cultural and religious hegemonic tendencies of the dominant creed.

Approaching *Hindutva* from a Two Realm theology, we are called to reject it as paradigm. The Two Realm perspective calls us to treat with suspicion any ideology which seeks to divide people and disrupt peace and justice in the temporal realm of life. Luther rejected the notion that citizenship should be based on a person's faith. The common ground towards progress and prosperity in the temporal realm is based on the common foundation of human Creatureliness and the natural law. To Luther, the task of the State is limited to keep order, protect property, enforce the laws of the land, punish the wicked, and foster an environment conducive for the common good and wellbeing of all irrespective of one's cultural, religious or ethnic standing. If the government engages in the religious realm to dictate and enforce religious beliefs, it is overstepping its God ordained realm of activity. Thus the Two Realm perspective helps us to affirm that faith should not be coerced. Militancy to contain people's faith through violence, fear, and intimidation is against God's will. Luther's Two Realm perspective helps us to affirm that religious tolerance and freedom is fundamental to human survival in the left-hand realm.

The two-realms perspective's proper identification of the jurisdiction of the state over temporal affairs and the self-limiting ordinance of the state's power in the matters of religious beliefs provides space for Christians to talk about religious freedom and religious toleration over against *Hindutva* ideology in a religiously pluralistic context such as India. William Schumacher notes, that "government could well encourage religious practice generally for the sake of public

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[51] Constitution of India, art. 29. Sec 1.

order and morality, and thus might urge its citizens to worship in the Church, synagogue, or mosque of their choice."[52] However, such a view does not warrant the state's use of power to promote religious nationalism (in our case Hindu nationalism) or the creation of a theocratic state. The state also should not take away the freedom of its citizens to propagate their faith or their right to choose or change their religious faith. This then offers a critique to *Hindutva* ideology, which tries to combat religious freedom in general and evangelization activities of the Church in specific, with threats, violence, and judicial powers. As George Weigel observes,

> Religious freedom is the first of human rights precisely because it is the juridical acknowledgement (in constitutional/or positive law) that within every human person is a privileged sanctuary of conviction and conscience where state power may not tread; … In defending religious freedom, therefore, the Church defends both the truth about man and the conditions for the possibility of civil society.[53]

The theological insights presented to us through Luther's two kingdom perspective provide Christians in India with an ethical rationale to critique and repudiate *Hindutva* as a paradigm. In making such an appeal we are not only backed by our Christian faith but also by the reasonableness of human wisdom as enshrined in the constitutional understanding of religious tolerance and freedom. [54]

God's Calling in the Public Square in the Context of *Hindutva*

An important question which emerges is, how can Christians confront *Hindutva* in the public square and work together with others for the common good for all? To answer this

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[52] William W. Schumacher, "Civic Participation by Churches and Pastors: An Essay on Two Kinds of Righteousness," *Concordia Journal* 30 (July 2004): 175.

[53] George Weigel, "The Church's Political Hopes for the World; or, Diogentus Revisited," in *The Two Cities of God: The Church's Responsibility for the Earthly City,* ed. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 74.

[54] As already pointed out over against the cultural nationalism promoted by *Hindutva* proponents, Indian constitutional framers affirmed a nationhood consisting of people belonging to different faith and religious persuasions. And unlike in various Western cultures, however, India does not have clear framework that allows a separation of 'Church and state' but except for the fact that India's Constitution has stipulated the right to practice freely a religion of the citizen's choice. See Chapter 2 for more discussion.

question we shall discuss briefly the significance of our vocation as citizens and/or as political authority, and the calling of the Church in the public sphere.

Call to be a Citizen in the Public Square

To a Christian, their vocational spaces are the places where God's two fold rule creatively come together in the world. Passive righteousness brings a new identity and regeneration which kindles faith, love, and hope in each Christian. Through their God given vocations, these virtues embedded in active righteousness finds a space to operate in the world. These vocational spaces provide opportunities for a Christian to leaven the world as they seriously carry out their responsibilities in the world. Christians, well informed to keep concerns of God's Two Realms distinct, are called to influence the temporal realm, strengthened by their identity as God's children and knowing the nature, concerns and, *modus operandi* of that realm.

The call to be a citizen is important for Indian Christians in the context of *Hindutva* nationalism. The democratic ideals which shape the model political process were relatively less developed during Luther's time, but it does not mean that a call to be a subject was passive in nature. This call involves an active participation in the political life, whereby a person carries out his obedience to his authorities (for e.g., paying their taxes, obeying the laws, praying for the authorities) in an intentional and proactive way. In this way political structures which were meant to facilitate good for the subjects are strengthened and carry out their God given task. Although Luther did not envisage subjects to overthrow their wicked political authorities he did not encourage them towards a blind obedience either. The subjects were called to actively discern and disobey (not through violence) when the authorities departs from God's will. This disobedience could mean inviting punishment and subsequent suffering which is not all 'passive'. The notion of 'passivity' being attached to the understanding of a subject and

'activeness' being attached to a notion of a 'citizen' is a not a true representation of the reality. In this regard Prof. Berndt Wannenwetsch,[55] in his analysis of Romans 13, stating the 'active' nature of 'subjects' notes:

> Obedience, then, embraces the act of attentive listening to a command and consenting to the authority behind it which is completely different from being subject to dumb or silent forces. In the same vein, the Greek notion *hypotasseste* (usually translated as "be subject") carries the tone of a pro-active *positioning* of oneself within the realm of political authority instead of a mere *being placed* or even being forced there. It means to *make* oneself serviceable instead of being a merely reactive servant.[56]

The subject in Luther's thought is proactive and responsible in carrying out their responsibilities in the political arena. This principle is valid and operative in the modern political conception of citizenship. The citizen is called to proactively participate in the political realm through their active obedience towards established rules and policies of the government so that the common good may prevail.

Although these fundamentals remain the same, the modern democratic conception of citizenship adds additional responsibilities and privileges. The modern sense of citizenship

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[55] Berndt Wannenwetsch is one such theologian who suggest that we treat the subject-citizen as related concepts. He proposes retain the term 'subject as citizen' terminology to faithfully articulate one's political responsibility in political realm. In his regard, Wannenwetsch suggests that over against the traditional reading of 'subject ethics' from Romans 13 which concerns itself only with 'submission', he points out that Pauline ethics do contain the modern ethos of "Subject as Citizen", whereby we are called to partake in the task of the government. The most explicit hint of the same can be found in v. 5: "Therefore one must be subject not only because of wrath but also because of conscience." He notes that "Because of conscience" presupposes inner and free consent as a matter of conviction not force. Wannenwetsch, elaborates his point thus: "Paul characterizes the political role of Christians under worldly authority as *dia ten syneidesin*, a matter of conscience. The literal meaning *of syn-eidesis* or *con-scientia* invites the following thought: The peculiar freedom that suggests referring to Christians as citizens is one that arises from the "con-comitant" knowledge (*syn-eidesis*) that they are granted about the purpose of all political rule. What frees Christians from having to fear worldly authority (as though they were mere "bodies" in Luther's language) is, first and simplest of all that has been revealed to them what it is all about. Knowledge drives out fear. Fear is at its worst precisely when we perceive a threat that yet remains opaque and anonymous to us.By specifying the nature and task of political power, Biblical texts such as Romans 13 are not merely instructing the readers "about" the "topic" of "The Christian and Government"; they actually *engender* a particular pattern of citizenship. In revealing to the ordinary Christian the divine ordination and purpose of political authority–a purpose whose full scope may well be hidden to individual rulers–Paul's account in Romans 13 turns ordinary Christians into those who actually, though in a specific and limited way, *partake* in the task of government: citizens in the original sense of the word. Berndt Wannenwetsch, "Soul Citizens: How Christians Understand their Political Role," *Political Theology*, 9 no 3 (Jul 2008): 377–78. See also Berndt Wannenwetsch, *Political Worship: Ethics for Christian Citizens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[56] Wannenwetsch, "Soul Citizens," 385.

encourages, requires, and provides opportunities to its subjects to choose the right leaders, shape

good polices, and creatively make known their dissent through appropriate forums and methods.

In democracy people are called to be active participants in the political machinery and decision

making. In this sense, citizenship demands basic knowledge and social commitment towards the

common good, justice, civic responsibilities, rights and the like.[57] Citizenship also means active

involvement in the life of the nation and its government through voting, debating issues, grass

root politics, and civic activism.[58] Robert Kolb rightly draws our attention to the active nature of

our call to be a citizen as thus:

> Citizens are called upon to do more than think about their societies, however. They are also called to act. With the calls for justice in the city, which the prophets send ringing through our ears in the pericopes for the end of the Church year, we proceed into daily living. We do so conscious of our calling to call for justice in forms appropriate for our day and place—and to work for its execution. Even—or perhaps especially—in a society standing clearly under God's judgment, we take most seriously our calling to work for the peace of the city, for justice and well-being for all its inhabitants.[59]

As citizens called to be active in the public square, we should also be aware of the

penultimate nature of the horizontal realm of our lives. Such an awareness help us avoid utopian

estimates for the society but help us realistically work towards the betterment of life in the left-

hand realm without getting frustrated. Robert Kolb offers the following caution and advice in

this regard.

> Whatever form our obligations as Christian citizens may take, whatever forms of action we choose to adopt as we exercise our vocations as citizens in the land in which God has called us to serve, we remember that we are first of all people of His *Gospel*. That means that we exercise these callings in Christian freedom. That means we recognize the penultimate nature of our goals and our strivings for our society and its members. Everything in the horizontal dimension of our lives is haunted by its penultimate character. We recognize that our wills are bound as fallen creatures of

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[57] Wannenwetsch, "Soul Citizens," 378.

[58] Gene Edward Viet, *God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2002), 113.

[59] Kolb, "Civic Responsibility," 22–23.

God, and therefore, we will sometimes find ourselves locked into situations in which the choices lie not between good and evil but between two or more evils. We will more often find ourselves in situations in which callings conflict, in which two or three good tasks lie before us, but we have time to carry out only one. We will less often face a situation in which no ¡pod choices offer themselves, and we must choose the lesser of two evils. Even inaction can be an evil. But in Christ we are freed to serve and to make such choices.[60]

In light of this study, the call of citizenship in the context of *Hindutva* carries with it some implications. In our exercise of citizenship we are called to be 'knowledgeable and educated' so that we are able to make informed decisions and advocacy in the public square. In this regard, Christians must know the distinct concerns and *modus operandi* of God's both realms of life, the purpose of state in Christian understanding and, at the same time, knowledge about democratic ideals and provisions of the nation, especially the specific philosophy and challenges *Hindutva* ideology brings about. The purpose of this dissertation has been to help Christians in India in this regard, with the result that as well informed citizens of the country we make the best use of the constitutional provisions provided to respond to *Hindutva*, not just for the sake of Christians, but for sake of all. This includes making use of the voting franchise carefully and engaging in debates, forums, and formal structures which are meant keep justice and order intact in the country. This also includes joining hands with like-mined people belonging to different walks of life in order to work towards a common good and exposing true nature of *Hindutva*. In the public square Christians may not present their case against *Hindutva* on the basis of scriptures or Christian faith (though our convictions for sure are shaped by it), but on the reasonableness of natural law as reflected in the constitution and democratic policies which support the cause of justice and common good.

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[60] Kolb, "Civic Responsibility," 26.

Call to be a Political Authority for Common Good

In the chapter five, we discussed in detail the nature and purpose of the State from a Christian perspective, as elaborated by Luther. The State/government is entrusted with the responsibility to protect all people from the effects of sin and foster human fellowship for justice, peace, and the common good for all. A Two Realm perspective helps to affirm the role of a the State to be concerned about the welfare of all its subjects irrespective one's religious, cultural, ethic, linguistic, racial, or caste background. This role is important in a multi-cultural and religious context like India, the need for the state machinery to promote and maintain an atmosphere conducive to religious freedom and tolerance.

To Luther, because they are masks and instruments through which God carries out His purpose in the political arena those called to a political office bear an important and sacred responsibility. Luther affirmed that an emperor need not to be a Christian or saint. Heathen governments are under God's ordinance and creation. Regardless of their faith every ruler and government is subject to the natural law and human reason/wisdom in the exercise of their respective responsibilities.

Although Christians form a minority in India, their presence in socio-political realm is significant. The presence of Christians in the places of service such as medicine, education, and science is commendable. Especially in the states like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andrapradesh, and Goa, the Christian presence in the political structure is significant. In the context of *Hindutva* politics in India, a discussion about the vocation of Christians in political life carries much significance. To Luther the capabilities, wisdom, and responsibilities for a political ruler remains the same for a believer and unbeliever. Still a Christian ruler, who is truly a believer, in light of his two kinds of righteousness, will be anxious to devote himself to the

185

service of his neighbor and to treat his vocation as a true calling from God.[61]

Luther wrote significant things regarding the political responsibilities of a Christian prince since they are baptized members of the church. Luther elaborated his advice with biblical examples. For our purpose we shall briefly discuss four such themes in Luther. Firstly, a Christian prince should devote himself fully to the welfare and good of his subjects, without being preoccupied with desire to dominate or Lord:

> First. He must give consideration and attention to his subjects, and really devote himself to it. This he does when he directs his every thought to making himself useful and beneficial to them; when instead of thinking, "The land and people belong to me, I will do what best pleases me," he thinks rather, "I belong to the land and the people, I shall do what is useful and good for them. My concern will be not how to lord it over them and dominate them, but how to protect and maintain them in peace and plenty." He should picture Christ to himself, and say, "Behold, Christ, the supreme ruler, came to serve me; he did not seek to gain power, estate, and honor from me, but considered only my need, and directed all things to the end that I should gain power, estate, and honor from him and through him. I will do likewise, seeking from my subjects not my own advantage but theirs. I will use my office to serve and protect them, listen to their problems and defend them, and govern to the sole end that they, not I, may benefit and profit from my rule." In such manner should a prince in his heart empty himself of his power and authority, and take unto himself the needs of his subjects, dealing with them as though they were his own needs. For this is what Christ did to us [Phil. 2:7]; and these are the proper works of Christian love.[62]

Secondly, temporal authorities are to be concerned about the poor, needy, orphans, and the widows in the society. This virtue "includes the tasks that range from establishing good laws and customs so that people live peacefully, to endowing hospitals and filling community chests."[63] The third advice includes rulers exercising their authority to protect and guard people against violence and crime in order to provide peace, order, and good will in the society. Kolb and Arand note, "For all these reasons, Luther in explaining petition of the Lord's prayer suggested that princes ought to emblazon on their coat of arms a loaf of bread instead of a lion in order to

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[61] Thompson, *Political Thought*, 71.

[62] *LW* 45:120.

[63] Kolb and Arand. *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 54.

186

remind everyone that their office is one of providing peace and protection, without which bread could not be baked or eaten in peace."[64] Finally, Luther advised the political leaders to secure justice to all those who fear God.[65] Through this religious freedom is protected and no one is coerced towards faith. This religious tolerance allows God's word to be preached and flourished.[66]

As people vested with authority, political leaders who are Christians have a challenging role to play in a Hinduised public square. Luther's principles provide them a perspective in which they exist as true servants of God, fully committed to serve the interest of not just their fellow Christians but of everyone, resulting in the wellbeing and common good of all. The Two Realm perspective also helps Christian leaders not to use the powers vested in their office to establish a Christian government or to allow any other theocratic tendencies to prevail. This, then, is a challenging task for a Christian political leader in a political context where *Hindutva* regime is in power. A Two Realm perspective also equips leaders in the political arena with necessary conceptual tools to analyze and distinguish between the concerns of both realms of life without separating the dynamic inter-play between both realms. This teaches leaders not to confuse or mix the concerns of religion and the state, but to be equally concerned about various moral and ethical issues equally by natural law and through Christian faith. A Two kinds of righteousness frame work also helps a Christian in political office realize that they are freed from the need to justify oneself before God and that they are thereby well positioned to "seek justice for the city and for all its inhabitants—for their own sake…"[67] As leaders in a political office, their faith also

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[64] Kolb and Arand. *The Genius of Luther's Theology*, 62.

[65] Kolb and Arand. *The Genius of Luther's Theology*, 63.

[66] Kolb and Arand. *The Genius of Luther's Theology*, 63.

[67] Kolb, "Civic Responsibility," 27.

reminds them that they may not fully succeed in establishing ideal conditions in the world. But

as Kolb and Arand note:

> Through their lives and through the "civil righteousness" of those outside the faith,
> the world may become somewhat better for some and for a time. But Christians know
> that their struggle on behalf of justice and the welfare of all human beings and all of
> creation will never end, for sin and evil will continue to intrude in the midst of their
> best efforts. But rather than being discouraged by this recurrence of evil and the
> undermining of the good, believers simply proceed with love and service, assisting as
> God has called us to assist with the care of his creation.[68]

Call of the Church in the Public Square

We have already noted that the Church is a unique creation of God having a two

dimensional existence, *Coram Deo* and *Coram Mundo*. The church, *Coram Deo* lives in the

presence of God as an assembly of all believers gathered together by the Holy Spirit through the

Gospel. Whereas the church, *Coram Mundo*, has its existence in this world as a God ordained

institution in the left-hand realm. In this world, Church carries an important call in relation to the

right hand realm of God. The primary purpose of the Church in this regard is to be an instrument

of God, whereby through the ministry of word and sacraments God saves people from sin and

the devil. Robert Benne rightly summaries this unique purpose and call of the church:

> That calling is to proclaim the Word of God as law and Gospel and to enact that
> Gospel in the proper administration of the sacraments. God has directly called the
> Church to be that earthen vessel through which he reaches out in Word and
> sacraments to retrieve all his lost and erring creatures. No other institution on earth
> has that calling and none will carry it out if the Church fails in its essential mission. It
> is sacred calling. It deals with ultimate things: the earthly destinies of all created but
> fallen human beings.[69]

The primary call for the Church in the world is to remain as Church by being faithful to the

ministry of word and sacraments. Although the Church might engage itself in the public square

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[68] Kolb and Arand. *The Genius of Luther's Theology,* 63.

[69] Robert Benne, "The Calling of the Church in Economic Life," in *The Two Cities of God: The Church's Responsibility for the Earthly City,* ed. Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 100.

for the cause of justice and the common good, the "Church is not political actor, a social

reformer, or an aggressive interest group. If it acts as one of these, it is identified and treated as

one more contentious worldly group. Furthermore it loses its own integrity and reason for

being."[70] This does not mean that Church should not engage itself in the public square. The

church, existing as institution in the left-hand realm, has a genuine concern for the welfare in that

realm. The Church should engage in a way that would not lead to neglect the cardinal truth to

which it is called to exist and its primary duty of preaching the Gospel and administering the

sacraments.

The church's vision for the political realm is not to establish a Christian hegemony, but to

cooperate with other institutions in the society towards the wellbeing of all under the law. The

Church does have a responsibility towards the state and its authorities to help uphold the law and

to call them to repentance, when they depart from God's design for them. In this way Luther

notes:

> Now, if a preacher in his official capacity says to kings and princes and to all the
> world, "Thank and fear God, and keep His commandments," he is not meddling in
> the affairs of secular government. On the contrary, he is thereby serving and being
> obedient to the highest government. Thus the entire spiritual government really does
> nothing else than serve the divine authority, which is why they are called servants of
> God and ministers of Christ in the Scriptures. Indeed, St. Paul even calls it a service
> to the Church and to all heathen (Rom. 15:16). [71]

Luther affirmed that when a government departs God's calling to keep order, peace, and

justice for all, it is indeed forfeiting its claim to be instruments of God's will.[72] In those

instances the Church does have a responsibility as an institution in the left-hand realm to call the

state to repentance through orderly means. The church, in this case, does not have a coercive

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[70] Benne, "Lutheran Ethics," 20.

[71] Martin Luther, "Psalms 101," in *Vol. 13 of Luther's Works*, Selected Psalms II, ed. Jaroslav Jan Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald and Helmut T. Lehmann (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1999), 195.

[72] Kolb, "Civic Responsibility," 21.

power to enforce its views, but must persuasively present their case with sound knowledge and wisdom, appealing to the conscience of the society. Kolb offers a wise caution:

> the Church often is tempted to make moral comment without competent command of the facts. Being fools for Christ is not the same as being ignorant and thereby shaming Him. Perhaps worse than making the faith look foolish, ignorant expressions of pious emotion in the political realm can make it look irrelevant to the world that God does hold in His hands. Government officials are not impressed by ignorance, even when it is pious, or incompetence, even when it is religious.[73]

In a Hinduised public square, the task of the Church is challenging, because the Church itself is a target of violence under the *Hindutva* regime. In this context, the question of how the Church can practically carry out its prophetic ministry deserves special attention. Robert Benne's four "possible connections" help the Church connect with the public square. This provides a good starting point for faithfulness to God's call to be a voice heard in the political realm, keeping the Two Realm theological rubric intact. Benne organizes his life connections under indirect and unintentional influence, indirect and intentional influence, direct and intentional influence and direct and intentional action.[74]

Indirect and Unintentional Influence.

This model suggests that Church does not get involved in the public square directly. The Church is to be concerned with the preaching and teaching of God's word, and thereby seeks to

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[73] Kolb, "Civic Responsibility," 34.

[74] Benne notes that "indirect" here means Church as an institution does not get involved in the public realm rather relies on indirect modes of influence and action through its laity and their vocations or independent associations to make connections. Thus their efforts are not under the control of direction of Church in any way. In contrast, "direct" connection assumes that Church as an institution becomes a public actor. The Church as an institution *directly* get involved in the political realm to make its voice heard. Benne also notes that by "unintentional" he means that the Church has no definite, conscious intent to affect the public square in a particular direction. It does not come up with a definite and specific policy statement but allow its members to formulate those drawing from the core religious and moral vision it communicates. "Influence" to Benne means that the Church relies on persuasion, in this case persuasion of its own members. The Church might do this through its preaching, teaching, rituals or practices. Influence in this sense emphasizes non-coercive means of enlisting people to preferred ethical thinking and practical practices. See Robert Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision: A Public Theology for the Twenty-First Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 184–85.

shape the perspective and character of its members. These individuals, through their vocational

calling, serve God in the political arena. This is perhaps a commonly practiced model among

Christian churches. The Church operates indirectly and trusts that people who are shaped by the

values of the Church consciously take initiative to interact and engage with the paradigms in the

public square. Benne notes that although this model looks less radical, this approach has its own

possibilities,

> But even if this approach leads to a less radical posture, it has the promise, if done
> well, of having a far-reaching, pervasive, and long-term effect on public life. The
> laity can affect a complex and secular world much more than Church can. There are
> far more of them than clergy, and they have access to a far wider array of public roles
> that the Church or its clergy.[75]

One of the weaknesses inherent in this approach is that the lack of a conscious effort by the

Church to connect with issues of the society, which might lead its members to dichotomize their

religious and secular lives. In the context of *Hindutva*, this approach is too long-term and general

which might not help Church nor its members to engage the world in a timely and relevant

manner.[76]

Indirect and Intentional Influence.

In this approach, the Church still remains indirect in its engagement in the political realm,

by not coming out publically. It does not formulate and issue public statements. The Church is

intentional to mobilize its biblical and confessional resources to help and shape the conscience

and moral convictions of its own people. In this way the Church intentionally engages itself to

train and even challenge people to address moral and ethical concerns in the political realm

through their vocations and areas of influence. But the Church approaches its members non-

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[75] Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 190.

[76] For more discussion Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 184–90.

coercively and seeks to influence through the reasonableness of its position. However such an approach could raise a well knowledge laity who can make "creative connections between religion and public life."[77] This model holds much promise in the context of *Hindutva* nationalism in India, because the Church assumes more intentionality to equip and help people to understand *Hindutva* and formulate their response in light of their faith affirmation to work towards common good for all.[78] At this point it's worth noting here that such action would take a shift in the thinking and self-understanding of pastors who are to equip and teach their people. Because many pastors seems to have an attitude of detachment from social and political concerns. But a re-orientation and re-education from Two Realm perspective could assist pastors to be genuinely interested in concerns of the left-hand realm. In our case, pastors are to be well equipped to prepare the congregation members to face those challenges raised by *Hindutva*.

Direct and Intentional Influence.

Through this approach the institutional Church becomes a visible public actor in the public square. Along with its ministry of intentional influence to equip its members for the public tasks through their vocations, the Church makes its position known. In this regard Church might issue public statement documents to appeal to and change the public conscience to work towards a common good. Benne recommends that this approach should be carried out with great discretion and possibly infrequently. As Richard Neuhaus puts it "when it not necessary for the Church to speak, it is necessary that the Church not speak."[79] There is always a risk of the Church getting polarized and politicized in this approach. However, whenever the common good is at immediate

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[77] Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 200.

[78] For more discussion Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 191–200.

[79] Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 204.

risk and social or governmental practice directly run counter to core religious and/or moral

convictions, the Church cannot remain in obscurity. In these instances, the Church must openly

let its voice heard for the sake of order, peace, and justice for the life in the left-hand realm.

Benne suggests that when the Church chooses this route, it should give special care to credibility

and intelligibility in their articulation. Benne notes that to gain credibility, the Church focus on

knowledge and expertise in the preparation of its documents. The lack of credible arguments,

backed up with facts and reasonability, leads to embarrassment in the church's position although

the cause might be the right one. Similarly, Benne notes that "Church should speak only when it

is has something unique to offer from its own theological-ethical heritage. It should be convinced

that its vision has a fresh or incisive interpretation to offer or some unique judgement to make."[80]

To Benne, intelligibility assumes that our core arguments and moral visions shaped by our

tradition be made thoroughly understandable and clear to people in the public square, who may

possess different worldviews and religious persuasions. In the context of *Hindutva* nationalism in

India, where public interest is clearly at stake, this approach requires our serious attention.[81]

Direct and Intentional Action.

This method radically differs from all other approaches in terms of use of power. All the

other approaches discussed so far rely on moral and persuasive reasoning without any coercive

power. Direct and intentional action to materialize when the Church resorts to the use of power

to change policy or move society to a particular direction. Benne understands power to mean "all

those levels of pressure ranging from threat to force that get people to do what one want them to

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[80] Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 207.

[81] For more discussion, Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 201–14.

do, whether or not they really want to do it."[82] In this regard the Church channels funds, people

power, and political weight to be a political force in the secular realm. To a great extent this

method might not be compatible in a Hinduised public square wrought with communal violence

in India. Moreover to a great extent this is the methodology consistently practiced by *Hindutva*

proponents to change the political configuration in India.[83]

In shaping a Christian response to *Hindutva*, this dissertation recommends and promotes

the "indirect and intentional influence" and "direct and intentional influence" approaches. Both

approaches carry intentionality towards the concerns of the left-hand realm. The institutional

Church is also serious about engaging its theological resources to equip and shape Christian

individuals to better carry out their responsibilities through their respective callings in the

society. In this regard, the *modus operandi* of both these methods aligns itself with the

theological tenets of Luther's Two Realm theology. The church, without directly meddling with

the power process and structures in the political realm, but still having a voice and concern about

the same, allow its members to effect change in the society through their vocations as citizens

and/or political authorities. The members, through their rightful space, use the democratic

structures, processes, opportunities, and avenues available to them to confront and engage, in our

case, the *Hindutva* challenge to the common good. This also helps Church to be Church without

having to resort to the coercive power, but to be a responsible catalyst for social change through

its members. The great advantage of approaches having intentional influence is that it has the

strength to develop a knowledge laity to engage the public sphere. "The church's ministry

through its laity and institutions has the capacity to reach the deepest level of human society—

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[82] Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 215.

[83] Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 215–25.

the hearts and minds of its people."[84] Bene rightly notes that in the modern society these approaches tend to function so well.

> Modern Society, with its penchant for autonomy, will also be more inclined to listen to articulate Christian lay persons than it will the church. Laity will be able to speak with the authority of their own disciplines and practices behind them and will more likely be able to translate the Christian vision into a language that is intelligible to the public spheres in which they exercise their responsibilities.[85]

At times the institutional Church needs to speak up for the cause of justice and peace. This task then is amply envisaged when the Church chooses to be prophetic through its direct and intentional influence in the public realm. Thus, far from quietism and indifference, the Church in India is called to confront *Hindutva* to foster the common good. For this, the Church will be greatly benefited by distinguishing between God's two realm, its concerns, limits and *modus operandi*. This encourages the Church to be the Church and the state the state, both not separate but distinct in carrying out the one true God's creative rule in the world.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered a critique to *Hindutva* nationalism with the help of the theological principles learned from Luther's Two Realm perspective. In this regard we clearly identified the *Hindutva* conception of the state to be incompatible to the common good and wellbeing of all in the temporal realm in India. The *Hindutva* conception of a hegemonic cultural and religious nationalism poses a threat to life, safety, and religious freedom for the religious and ethno cultural minorities in India. In formulating our response, Luther's rich theology of creation helps us to develop an inclusive paradigm for our common humanity based on our common Creatureliness and human reason. We noted that such a paradigm provides us with a common

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[84] Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 199.

[85] Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision*, 200.

space to talk about and work towards the common good. We also discussed in detail how specifically we could respond to *Hindutva* in the public square through our vocational call to be a citizen or political authority. This chapter also discussed and suggested possible approaches through which the Church as an institution may influence the public square for the welfare of all in that realm.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has offered a theological response to *Hindutva* nationalism and its challenges to Christians in India. The particular focus was to understand and critique *Hindutva* conception of the State and its failure to work towards the common good of all. Towards that end this dissertation explicated a theological frame work to help Christians take their Christian faith seriously while embracing an inclusive paradigm which enables Christians to work together with people of different faiths or no faiths for the common good. For this purpose this dissertation explored the relevance of theological resources available to us from Luther's Two Realm perspective. This dissertation affirmed that, fundamental to any theology of engagement in the world, is to understand and distinguish between the concerns, activities, and mode of God's rule in relation to God's Two Realms of life. This teaches us not to confuse concerns of creation with that of redemption, nor compartmentalize or separate between God's activities in both realms of life. This dissertation pointed out clearly the distinction between God rule through Gospel in the right-hand realm and His rule in the temporal realm through the law. Luther's Two Realm theology was introduced as an analytical tool for Christians in their efforts to distinguish between God's distinct concerns to formulate appropriate and concrete responses when confronted with various moral and ethical issues.

God's concern for the left-hand or temporal realm is to restrain the effects of evil and sin, and to foster human fellowship so that life might flourish. God's purpose is to establish and maintain external peace, order, and justice not just to believers but towards the entire creation

over against the schemes of the devil. In this regard we noted the special role entrusted to the State/Civil government. In Luther's Two Realm thought, the state and worldly governments are instruments or masks of God towards the wellbeing and service of all, irrespective of one religious, cultural, or ethnic persuasion. Towards that end the state is entrusted with its coercive power ("law grounded on the power of punishment" or "the just, orderly use of power"), which is set to run on the wheels of natural law and human wisdom. In this regard we noted that a ruler need not to a Christian nor a government Christian, since God can use a pagan ruler in the same way as he gives wisdom to a Christian ruler. This does not suggest the autonomy of secular realm from the Laws of God. The secular realm belongs to God and is accountable to operate through the natural law as revealed to everyone in and through creation and conscience.

God's provision of the state in the left-hand realm for the maintenance of external peace, justice, and the common good, in the context of a multi-religious, multicultural, multiethnic, and multilinguistic fabric is a very challenging task. The Indian constitution envisages a nation and government that represents all the people who live in its territories and rejects a majoritarian, religious, or cultural nationalistic agenda. This dissertation affirmed that Luther's two-realm perspective helps Christians in India to affirm the constitutional version of the state and government over against the *Hindutva* vision of a monolithic Hindu state where religious and ethnocultural minorities do not have a legitimate space in the nationhood.

The two-realm perspective identified the proper jurisdiction of the state over temporal affairs and provides a self-limiting ordinance in the matters of religious beliefs. In this regard, we noted that the concern of the state is not to establish a theocracy or establish religious hegemony over its population. The purpose of the state is to provide protection and security to life and property for all its members and to maintain a conducive atmosphere for religious freedom and

tolerance. This then provides space for Christians to discuss religious freedom and religious toleration over against *Hindutva* ideology in a religiously pluralistic context such as India.

In our deliberation we noted that one of the strengths of Luther's realm theology is its ability to help us take our Christian identity (exclusive in nature) seriously and, at the same time, embrace an inclusive paradigm which enables us to find a common ground to work towards good for all. This dissertation demonstrated that two kinds of righteousness rejects any one-dimensional understanding of Christian anthropology, and affirms the indispensable nature of the simultaneity of two kinds of righteousness operating in a Christian, who lives out his calling in this world. We cannot conceive of a compartmentalization and/or separation of the Christian's identity from the Christian's action in the world. Thus any talk about the Christian's performance in this world, is talk about his faith and identity. At the same time our discussion of active righteousness and the Christian's vocation in the world also pointed out that a Christian, in his practice of good deeds, is neither motivated nor is required to objectify his neighbor to use him as means to a self-serving end. The purpose of good deeds in the left-hand realm is motivated by the love of Christ in meeting the neighbor's need. Luther's Two Realm perspective helps us to reject any instrumental mentality attached to our practice of good deeds in the society.

In our attempt to find a common ground with people of different faiths or no faiths, this dissertation proposed two foundations for our common existence. This forms a bridge or a common point of contact with others in our temporal life. Firstly , we noted that human beings and the rest of the creation are bound to each other as creatures of God's creation, having common needs, sharing a common space, and mutually dependent upon each other for survival and existence. Secondly, apart from our common Creatureliness, we are also bound to each other through a common morality as revealed through natural law and human reason. Although this

199

dissertation noted the difficulty and complexity involved in appealing towards common good on the basis of natural law[1] still in a limited sense, on a foundational level, it provides Christians a space to carry out our conversation with others with regard to issues of justice, morality, and the common good. We noted the appropriateness of basing and relating our critique of *Hindutva* through appeal to human wisdom as reflected in the Indian constitution. Here we noted that the *Hindutva* conception of the State and nationhood, with its vision of hegemonic and homogenizing approach, departs from and rejects the constitutional understanding of Indian nationhood, which is committed to all its citizens regardless of their religious, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds and is committed to the ideals of religious tolerance and peace.

Finally, this dissertation explored the significance of a Christian's social engagement in the public square, taking seriously one's call to be a citizen and/or as political authority. In this regard this dissertation affirmed that as a responsible citizen in his vocation, a Christian is called to be proactive and actively concerned about the proper functioning of the civil government making good use of the democratic provisions available to them. As a political authority, a Christian is committed to the common good for all through obedience to God and use of the authority and power vested to him. This dissertation also affirmed that the Church as an institution in the left-hand should not run way from its responsibility towards the extension and welfare of all under law in the temporal realm. The Church does carry a divine mandate to challenge and preach God's law to the civil government when the government clearly walks away from God's design. To guide the church's social engagement his dissertation also considered Robert Benne's four "possible connections" in making church's voice heard in the public square. In shaping a Christian response to *Hindutva*, we proposed the "indirect and

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[1] See Chapter 7 on "Common Morality: Natural Law and Human Reason."

intentional influence" and "direct and intentional influence" approach, because both these approaches teach intentionality and a commitment to engage its theological resources to equip and shape Christian individuals to better carry out their responsibilities. In the direct and intentional approach, the Church no longer stands in obscurity, but is committed to directly engage the world non-coercively but persuasively and convincingly. Unfortunately many churches in India, including the Lutheran church, lack such an intentionality or are ill-equipped towards undertaking this important task. This might be due to the lack of expertise and/or the inability of the Church to engage its own theological resources and to make its voice heard convincingly and persuasively to its own members and also in the public square. This dissertation fills this void and equips the church, and Christians in India, with a theological perspective to continue to be a part of God's *creatio continua* in this temporal world as they engage *Hindutva* challenges in the public square.

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