EUCHARISTIC UNITY, FRAGMENTED BODY: CHRISTIAN SOCIAL PRACTICE
AND THE MARKET ECONOMY

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EUCHARISTIC UNITY, FRAGMENTED BODY: CHRISTIAN SOCIAL PRACTICE AND THE MARKET ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT

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The following is an interpretive synopsis of Henri de Lubac and Karl Polanyi’s particular thought about how human sociality is organized around the formal influence of theological and economic structures, giving shape to the practice of everyday life. For De Lubac, social fragmentation and unity are central theological categories for understanding both the first instance of sin and the unfolding of salvation in history. God is at work in the world as an active agent in the reparation of discordant humanity, restoring humankind to its original state as one collective body in the Church. Karl Polanyi’s analysis of the rise of market economics gives us a historical instance of social and ecological fracture, providing the possibility of relating de Lubac’s theological argument in a particular historical context. Two competing logics of social formation emerge: 1.) the Eucharist implicates human sociality toward deep forms of community in the Church; and 2.) the mechanism of the self-regulating market actively dissolves these thick forms of community, organizing sociality around capital markets and production. Placing de Lubac and Polanyi in conversation provides a way of thinking theologically about the history of unity and break in an increasingly dispersed social era.
To my wife, Holly
for her patient endurance and quiet wisdom.

To my children,
may you come to know the land and find yourself a humble part of its brilliance.
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INTRODUCTION:

The following is an interpretive synopsis of Henri de Lubac and Karl Polanyi’s thought on human sociality.¹ Both have particular ways of thinking about how this sociality is organized around the formal influence of theological and economic structures which give shape to the practice of everyday life. For De Lubac, social fragmentation and unity are central theological categories for understanding both the first instance of sin and the unfolding of salvation history. God is at work in the world, an active agent in the reparation of discordant humanity, restoring humankind to its original state as one body in the Church. The Church is born in the Eucharist and exists as the sacrament of salvation to the world in history. Karl Polanyi, in his analysis of the rise of market economics, gives us a historical instance of social and ecological fracture. This account

¹ To the best of my ability, I will use gender inclusive language. Due to the era-determined writing of both Polanyi and de Lubac, this may not always be possible. It should be assumed that ‘man’ and ‘he’ are not exclusively representative of the male person, but encompasses both male and female persons.
allows us to ground de Lubac’s theological argument in a particular historical context. What emerges are two competing logics of social formation: 1.) the Eucharist implicates human sociality toward deep forms of community in the Church; and 2.) the mechanism of the self-regulating market actively dissolves these thick forms of community, organizing sociality around capital markets and production. Placing de Lubac and Polanyi in conversation provides a way of thinking theologically about the history of unity and break in an increasingly dispersed social era.

The first chapter provides an exposition of Henri de Lubac’s theological anthropology of Creation and Fall. Discerning our origins as one body helps us understand the development and implications of fragmentation in society as contrary to our created nature. De Lubac argues that the Christian understanding of creation, incarnation, and salvation envisions both a natural and supernatural ordering towards unity. This pre-existent unity of humanity is central to de Lubac’s theology of sin. Sin, inasmuch as it is an internal infidelity to the divine image, is also a social disordering of our collective image-bearing nature. This chapter will establish the theological categories (humanity created as one and sin as disintegration of a whole) that will function as the foundation for a theological interpretation of Karl Polanyi’s analysis of the emergence of the self-regulating market.

The second chapter will explore the emergence of the self-regulating market, its reordering of human sociality, and the social fragmentation it produces. According to Karl Polanyi the emergence of the self-regulating market required a break in the traditional ordering of society. This break disrupted of tightly woven relationships between kin, community, and the land, and placed these foundational elements of society
in a subservient relationship to production and markets. In pre-market societies, *economic action* was embedded in non-economic institutions, and *production* was a social as well as economic form of human action. Both actions were subjugated to the social end of the common good of society. As Gregory Baum notes: “Polanyi shows that throughout history economic activity has been embedded in social relations: economics in short, was accessory to society.”

These changes in the material structure of society implicate changes in the way we think about, experience, and practice sociality. The self-regulating market absolutizes the liberty of the individual. The market’s material practice dissolves the non-contractual relationships between kin, community, and the land; after this dislodging, the individual is “free” to enter into the contractual relationships, offering his or her labor to the market. The land also becomes disembedded from deep social bonds and enters the realm of commerce, real estate, and mortgage. It is the task of this chapter to identify this fragmentation between peoples and the land as a norm established by the market in the modern world. In the market, both the body and land are fragmented commodities for exchange, dissolving earlier forms of wholeness into disunity.

The third chapter explores the reparation of social fragmentation, proposed in the Eucharistic ecclesiology of Henri de Lubac. The salvific work of Christ in history is realized through the sacramental action of the Church. Christ’s work in history is understood as initiating and bringing to fulfillment the reuniting of dispersed humanity into one body. Central to de Lubac’s ecclesiology is the claim that God willed to redeem humanity not through a multiplicity of individual salvations, but rather that humanity

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would be gathered together in the unity of a common society, the Church. Whereas sin orients the collective body towards individuation, the work of Christ in redemption (re)gathers the sinful, fragmented body of humankind together in unity.

Finally, the conclusion will work toward a constructive synthesis of de Lubac and Polanyi’s respective theories of human sociality. Here, the ambiguities and blind spots in de Lubac’s thought will be situated in relation to Polanyi’s more concrete historical analysis. Central to this final section will be the discussion of an important point of divergence between Polanyi and de Lubac: the role and place of the land in social unity. De Lubac’s account largely takes for granted that humans are creatures that inhabit and are dependent upon a created world. It is not that De Lubac disputes this fact; rather it is simply not engaged as a contributing factor or defining characteristic of human social life. On the other hand, Polanyi understands the land to hold a central place in the enacting of human sociality, actively giving shape to social life and providing its necessities. Finally, the fundamental question for the material enactment of de Lubac’s ecclesial vision is how “politics”, “economics”, and “social life” are to remain intertwined in a social body that exists in liberalism. The character of “ordinary life” in the spheres, far from demonstrating any form of authentic unity, becomes an aggregate of divergent influences, to which the “supernatural” or “divine” occupies one facet among many. The unifying grace embodied by the Church refuses to be relegated to an abstract sphere outside of, or merely an additive to the activity of “ordinary life”.
CHAPTER I
HENRI DE LUBAC AND THE PRIMORDIAL UNITY OF HUMANITY

Introduction

Henri de Lubac argues that prior to sin, humanity constituted one body in unity. The Christian understanding of creation, incarnation, and salvation envisions both a natural and supernatural ordering towards unity. This pre-existent unity of humanity is central to de Lubac’s ecclesiology and understanding of Christ’s mission in human history. In this first section we will explore this aspect of de Lubac’s theological anthropology, as developed in his Catholicism: Christ and the Common Destiny of Man.3 This chapter will provide an exposition of Henri de Lubac’s understanding of our origins as one body in order to understand implications of fragmentation in society as contrary to our created nature.

One Body, in unity:

In the first chapter of Catholicism, Henri de Lubac argues for the social character of dogma in light of the early Fathers theological anthropology of Creation. De Lubac notes that in these early texts, the Fathers were not content with interpreting the Creation

narrative as merely a creation of individual persons. Rather, they contemplated the
genesis of humanity as a whole. Adam was not simply the “father of the human race”, he
was instead “the first made” of many or “the first begotten by God.” All humanity is
present in Adam at creation.5

Humankind, like no other being in the order of creation, had been created
according to the Image of God, existing as a rational being, endowed with a capacity for
reason. In his De hominis opificio, Gregory of Nyssa contemplates all non-human
creatures coming forth in degrees and in their own proper time, “by a natural and
necessary genesis.” Humankind however, created “according to the Image”, is the
“object of a direct creation…[This image] is in each one of us and makes us so entirely
one that we ought not speak of man in the plural any more than we speak of three Gods”6.
The human person as Image-bearer reveals the necessarily social nature of human
existence and the singularity of humanity’s creation. There is one image of God, thus
there is one humanity in his image: God, who is Unity himself, creates in unity one
humanity. This collective Image-bearing nature “from the first man to the last is but one
image of Him who is.”7 This image is a whole, one that can only be perceived in its
totality, encompassing all of history: from its manifestation at creation, extending through
the end of the last age.

This emphasis on a created unity is not at the expense of individual persons. De
Lubac’s conception of unity does not negate distinction, for “unity is in no way confusion
…true union does not tend to dissolve into one another the beings that it brings together,

4 De Lubac, Catholicism, 31.
5 De Lubac, Catholicism, 27 (commenting on Gregory of Nyssa).
6 De Lubac, Catholicism, 29.
7 De Lubac, Catholicism, 30-31.
but to bring them to completion by means of one another.”  

For this reason, de Lubac’s notion of primordial unity can be seen informed by a Trinitarian logic.  Just as in God’s singularity of being there exists a plurality of persons, so that a particular member of the Trinity cannot be isolated from their identity with the whole of the Godhead, so too the human person is not adequately addressed as an individual only, disassociated from the collective body that is humanity.  When studying the nature of the human person, both the singular and the collective must be held in tension with each other.  For when speaking of Adam, the Fathers are indicating the whole of human nature itself; but they are also addressing that wholeness which resides within each member.  In this way Adam’s created nature, common to all human persons, indwells the whole of the human race, binding us as one even in our particularity.  This primordial unity is then not the product of human endeavor: but it is the Divine image itself, visible in God’s creation, that provides the basis for the unity of humankind.  Human unity is reflected in both the universality of human nature and the particularity of each human person, as de Lubac (quoting Ruysbroeck of the fourteenth century) suggests:

“The heavenly Father created all men in his own image.  His image is his Son, his eternal Wisdom…who was before all creation.  It is in reference to this eternal image that we have all been created.  It is to be found

8 De Lubac, Catholicism, 330.
9 Wood, S. K. Spiritual Exegesis and the Church in the Theology of Henri de Lubac. (Grand Rapids; Edinburgh: Eerdmans, 1998), 132-3, provides a helpful understanding of de Lubac’s limited Trinitarian imagery for human unity. She demonstrates that de Lubac’s primary interest is in comparing the unity of humanity to that of the body and therefore is primarily Christocentric. That said, it can be noted that de Lubac uses Trinitarian models in talking about Creation, humanity as imago Dei, and redemption, while preferring Christological imagery. This will be discussed at length in our discussion of the Church in her relationship to Christ. See also de Lubac, Catholicism, 329, 333, 334.
essentially and personally in all men; each one possesses it *whole and entire* and undivided, and all together have no more than the one. In this way we are all one, intimately united in our eternal image, which is the image of God and in all of us the source of our life and creation.”

This *Divine monogenism* which links the unity of God to the unity of the human race, is the function of de Lubac’s understanding of Creation, humanity’s fall and Christ’s salvific work in history. The inherent sociality of human nature is present due to the principle and cause of humanity’s creation: the divine image. The Triune God who creates, and whose image we are created, is Unity, a community of three persons, as one. Due to the principle of creation, human nature resists individualization. Even so, the emergence of social fragmentation in the first instance of sin, and all those following, consequently dislodge the human person from their proper place in the created order, as it violates the principle of their creation.

Susan Wood notes that in de Lubac’s anthropology, human unity receives its fullness in union with God: “the unity of the body results from its orientation and participation in God.” Thus, Wood argues that in de Lubac’s theology of creation, humanity’s primordial unity is Christological and historical, for humankind bears a supernatural finality. Therefore, to the extent that social unity is essential to human nature, human sociality is oriented towards our union with God. Unity and cohesion are both natural and supernatural, a graced, even sacramental reality.

Wood works to establish the link between de Lubac’s Christological anthropology and his primordial conception of created human unity. For de Lubac, Christ is not a

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10 De Lubac, *Catholicism*, 30. (emphasis mine)
13 Wood, *Spiritual Exegesis and the Church*, 81.
particular moment of humanity expressed in history, but rather, our very human-ness can only be fulfilled in relation to his. Wood notes: “to be fully human is somehow to be related to Christ, as at once the cause of humanity and the restorer of human unity.”¹⁴

Discordant Bodies: Sin as Fragmentation

How then are we to understand the current and historical disunity of humankind? Clearly, this primordial condition that naturally ordered humanity towards oneness has been disrupted. Here, once again, de Lubac returns to the ancient exegetical tradition of the Fathers, to develop a social interpretation of the problem of sin. Sin, inasmuch as it is an internal infidelity to the divine image, is a social disordering of our collective image-bearing nature.¹⁵ Acting contrary to this collective-social nature causes a disruption of the integral cohesion that binds the collective human organism as one Image, one body in unity.

De Lubac retrieves this theology of sin primarily from Maximus the Confessor, who defined sin as a disintegration of the whole. In Catholicism, de Lubac summarizes Maximus’ discussion of the nature of sin:

“[Maximus] considers original sin as separation, a breaking up, an individualization it might be called, in the depreciatory sense of the word. Whereas God is working continually in the world to the effect that all should come together into unity, by this sin which is the work of man, the one nature was shattered into a thousand pieces’ and humanity which ought to constitute a harmonious whole in which ‘mine’ and ‘thine’ would be no contradiction, is turned into a multitude of individuals, as numerous as the sands of the seashore, all of whom show violently discordant inclinations.”¹⁶

¹⁴ Susan Wood, Spiritual Exegesis and the Church, 131.
¹⁵ De Lubac, Catholicism, 33.
¹⁶ De Lubac, Catholicism, 33.
Sin disrupted humanity’s union with God, and subsequently the original unity of Creation has been marked with disintegration. This motif of disintegration is de Lubac’s primary way of understanding the implications of sin. De Lubac contends that the theological understanding of the problem of sin must address both internal and collective, personal and social dimensions. To talk of sin in terms of social fragmentation does not diminish the spiritual disruption between an individual and God. Instead it acknowledges these two are integrally intertwined, as Maximus stresses: “the devil, man’s tempter from the beginning had separated him in his will from God, [and in doing so] had separated man from each other.”

De Lubac laments, that for too long theology has articulated sin’s disordered in primarily individualistic terms. He traces this in part to Augustine. The individualized theology in Augustine’s Confessions tends to overshadow Augustine’s more developed conception of sin found elsewhere. For example, in his In Psalm 95, n. 15, Augustine makes the connection between the four letters of Adam’s name with the four points of the compass, having been spread out over the entire world: “Originally one, he has fallen, and, breaking up as it were, he has filled the whole earth with the pieces.” Thus the often near-exclusive focus on the personal-individual ramifications of sin on one’s soul is not a matter of orthodoxy, but of over-emphasis. A fully orthodox theology must hold the two in common: “the inner disruption went hand in had with the social disruption.”

De Lubac notes that humankind’s spiritual unity, oriented towards supernatural union with God, is disordered. Outside of supernatural union with God, the identity of the

17 De Lubac, Catholicism, 35.
18 De Lubac, Catholicism, 35
19 De Lubac. Catholicism, 35.
unified human person is unwoven. Consequently, after the fall, human kind is a body in discord, fragmented by self-interest and individuation. Humankind is reduced to an aggregate of discordant bodies, “and now” Maximus observes, “we rend each other like the wild beasts.”20

Is the fragmentation that results from the fall irreparable? De Lubac asserts this is certainly not the case, as the principle of unity is the divine Image. The image of God, after the fall, no matter to what extent it is disordered within humanity, remains incorruptible. Although fragmented, the natural unity of humankind cannot be eradicated.

**Conclusion:**
In this chapter, we have outlined Henri de Lubac’s theological anthropology of humanity’s created unity and its social disintegration at the fall. Sin, inasmuch as it is an internal infidelity to the divine image, is also a social disordering of our collective image-bearing nature. These theological categories show that social unity is transcendent and normative, while social fracture is pathological. We will bring these dogmatic reflections on human unity and division into dialogue with Karl Polanyi’s historical account of the social fragmentation brought about by the emergence of the self-regulating market.

20 De Lubac, *Catholicism*, 34.
CHAPTER II

DISCORDANT BODIES: KARL POLANYI AND THE EMERGENCE OF THE SELF-REGULATING MARKET

Introduction

Although he offers a historical, not dogmatic account, Karl Polanyi, like Henri de Lubac envisions social fragmentation as a loss of a pre-existing unity. According to Polanyi the emergence of the self-regulating market required a break in the traditional ordering of society. Such a break signaled a disruption of tightly woven relationships between kin, community and the land. The foundational elements of society were subordinated to industrial production and markets. In pre-market societies, economic action was embedded in non-economic institutions, and production was a distinct form of human action, not reduced to economics. Both actions were subjugated to the social end of the common good of society. The shift brought by the emergence of the market changed the material structure of society, implicating changes in the way we think about, experience, and practice sociality. The self-regulating market absolutizes the liberty of the individual. The market’s material practice dissolves the non-contractual, thick relationships between kin, community, and the land. This dislodging “frees” the individual to offer his or her labor to the market in a contractual relationship. The land becomes disembedded from deep social bonds and enters the realm of commerce, real estate, and mortgage. This chapter will to outline Polanyi’s understanding of
fragmentation between peoples and the land as a norm established by the market in the modern world. Polanyi’s analysis of the self-regulating market serves as a particular instance of social disintegration, grounding de Lubac’s theological categories in a particular historical context.

*Karl Polanyi’s Account of Pre-Market Society*

Karl Polanyi was a sociologist and economic historian. He undertook research into the economic practices of ancient societies focusing on pre-market forms of sociality. Polanyi employed Aristotle’s description of ancient civilization as an “eye-witness account” of pre-market social life.21 Claiming that classical antiquity was “altogether wrongly placed by economic historians,” Polanyi seeks to be a “champion of Aristotle.”22 Polanyi notes that Aristotle’s explicit rejection of the scarcity postulate made him “the philosophical fount of the position we represent.”23 Additionally, given the theological nature of my synopsis, I have found it helpful to connect Polanyi’s historical account of medieval economic philosophy and his use of Aristotle to Aristotle’s most influential medieval interpreter: St. Thomas Aquinas.

Polanyi found in Aristotle a view of economy that texturized the interwoven relationships of human persons among kin, community, and the land. Rather than impersonal, contractual relationships, the ties between peoples were characterized by kinship, reciprocity, and shared habit. In the life of pre-market societies, “economic

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activity is, in effect, a mere function of social organization.” As Polanyi notes, in pre-modern societies:

“man’s economy, as a rule, is submerged in his social relationships. He does not act so as to safeguard his individual interests in the possession of material goods; he acts to safeguard his social standing, his social claims, his social assets. He values material goods only so far as they serve this end. Neither the process of production nor that of distribution is linked to specific economic interests attached to the possession of goods; but every single step in that process is geared to a number of social interests which eventually ensure that the required step be taken. These interests will be very different in a small hunting or fishing community from those in a vast despotic society, but in either case the economic system will be run on noneconomic motives.”

Economic action is motivated to a large degree by non-economic interests, corresponding within a larger structure of social order.

Here it would seem that de Lubac would posit that this impulse toward to social, rather than the individual in economic action is due to our created social nature. While Polanyi is not making theological claims on pre-market sociality, de Lubac would identify this impulse toward social assets rather than individual material goods as bearing witness to the social principle of human nature.

Such socially embedded economics more directly function in light of society’s common good, than do competitive individualistic economics. Society exists as a response to human need to exist as a social being. One vital aspect to the telos of society, then, is to be that body required by all for the attainment of one’s most basic existential

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Therefore, the common good is rightly understood as that cooperation among society’s members to procure the essential goods, material and immaterial, which allow for human fulfillment and flourishing, together. In terms of the relationship of economy to the common good, economic activity is to be ordered by non-economic motivations. If society exists to furnish the social requirements of human life, one’s economic action should be necessarily subordinated to these social ends. Economic interests are dispersed across an array of institutions, and counted accessory to the primarily social needs of the household and polis.

Ancient social systems, Polanyi observes, did not require a complex system of written records or an elaborate administration to function properly, but rather were sustained by normalized behaviors and customs. Prior to the emergence of the self-regulating market, Polanyi identifies the primary mechanisms insuring the maintenance of these social principles as 1. reciprocity between social groups, 2. redistribution of goods and 3. householding. These social rhythms are bound to the seasons, guided by cultural and religious traditions of sabbath rest, and naturally occurring fluctuations in ecosystem vitality.

Reciprocity and redistribution were the communal activities of a tribe or polis, such as sharing meals and the rituals associated with harvest. These practices ensured the sustenance of the entire people and those who hoarded their wealth at the cost of others, were met with scorn and social dishonor. In this tightly woven social fabric, generosity was not only a virtue, but also a vital aspect to the survival of one’s kin and community.

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27 See the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, #164 on the discussion of society and the Common Good.
28 Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 49, 55
These social practices kept individual self-interest in check. Social bonds were maintained through a complex organization of social interaction and accountability.\textsuperscript{29}

Householding is a concept that Polanyi draws from Aristotle’s account of ancient economics. “Economics” designates the management (νόμος) of one’s household (οἰκία).\textsuperscript{30} Aristotle notes that home-management is an exercise of prudence, aimed at procuring the “good life” for those within the household or family unit. This association of economy within virtue is one of its most significant structures of regulation. While the economy necessarily involved the acquisition and allocation of property and wealth, Aristotle argues that economics “takes more interest in the human members of the household than on its inanimate property.”\textsuperscript{31} This economics consists of those human acts that are ordered towards the end (telos) of human flourishing, both within the family and wider society.

Whereas the philosophy of modern market economics addresses production, distribution, and consumption of wealth under a single framework, ancient economic philosophy made a sharp distinction between use and production of wealth. In ancient and medieval thought, the closest word which resembles our concept of “production” is the term used to describe the art of acquiring wealth (ars pecuniativa, or Χρηματιστική). The art of acquiring wealth (chrematistics) is distinguished from the art of using wealth (oeconomica).\textsuperscript{32} Of the relationship between economics and the art of wealth-getting, St. Thomas states: “[the question] is whether the art of acquiring wealth is exactly the same

\textsuperscript{29} Polanyi, \textit{The Great Transformation}, 50-1
\textsuperscript{31} Aristotle. \textit{Politics}, I, v3 1259
\textsuperscript{32} Bede Jarrett. \textit{Social Theories of the Middle Ages, 1200-1500} (Westminster, Md.: The Newman bookshop, 1942), 154. See also Fredrick Flynn, \textit{Wealth and Money}, 2; 11
as economics, or whether it is a certain part of economics; or, if it be not the same nor yet a part, but rather subsidiary to it.”

St. Thomas argues that “wealth-getting” is not the same as economics, nor a part, but is in fact subsidiary to economy as means to end.

There is no other art except economics, whose task it is to make use of those things necessary for the household. It is clear that even in other matters the art which uses is different from the art which acquires or makes, just as the art of sailing a ship is other than the art of shipbuilding; therefore economics is different from the art of wealth getting.

This distinction between use and acquisition subordinates production to the limits of the household good: as Aristotle points out, wealth relates to householding “not as the ultimate end but as an instrument.”

Important to this discussion is Polanyi’s use of Aristotle’s further distinction between natural and unnatural (or artificial) wealth. In its natural form, wealth is broadly understood as the fruit of one’s labor on the land, though not excluding the various material necessities such as clothing, shelter, and the tools for daily work.

Building on Aristotle’s definition, Polanyi defines wealth in sociological terms, it “is, in truth, the things necessary to sustain life, when safely stored in the keeping of the community, whose sustenance they represent.” Polanyi observes that Aristotle insists that human needs themselves, whether of the household or the polis, are not without limit and the natural world has no scarcity of provisions to provide for such limited needs.


St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Politics*, Bk. 1, Ch. 6, 47.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Politics*, Bk. 1, Ch. 8.

St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II-II, Q. 50, Art. 3 (emphasis mine)

Aristotle, *Politics*, Bk. I.

Aristotle, *Politics*, Bk. I.

Wealth is deemed “natural” when it is set within these natural limits of sustenance. Its acquisition is directly related to one’s labor and its use is ordered to the good provision of both household and polis.

In distinction, artificial wealth is wealth that is gained through commerce, trade, or barter. Most specifically it denotes token wealth, or money, which cannot in its own form supply the wants of a household. Such token wealth, in a sense, can be “re-naturalized” if it is subjected through its use for purposes of subsistence. As Polanyi notes: “Trade is ‘natural’ when it served the survival of the community by maintaining its self-sufficiency.” Nonetheless, trade is viewed with caution. Seeking artificial wealth superfluous to the needs of a home or polis is seen as unnatural. Artificial wealth threatened to become its own end, disordering good economic practice. For Aristotle, it is virtue, not material gain, which orders the human person in their relationship to the land and its inhabitants. Whereas Smith and modern capitalist economics after him combine provisioning for the home and production for gain under the single realm of economics, the Aristotelian tradition considered these as two distinct forms of human action.

Commenting on the distinction between natural and artificial wealth in Aristotle, Polanyi, observes: “Looking back from the rapidly declining heights of world-wide market economy, we must concede that his famous distinction between householding proper and money-making, in the introductory chapter in his Politics, was probably the most prophetic pointer ever made in the realm of the social sciences; it is certainly still

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40 St. Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle’s Politics*, 53.
42 Aristotle, *Politics*, Bk. I.
the best analysis of the subject we possess." While being a requirement for the good life, for Aristotle material goods and wealth have a fixed and subordinate place within the hierarchy of human needs.45

We can understand how Polanyi thinks about economic actions and the production of wealth by considering Aristotle’s placement of economics within a teleological framework.46 Human action is ordered for the sake of an end (telos).47 This particular end serves to specify certain types of acts performed by human agents: “the action is the action it is because of the objective the agent has in mind while performing it.”48 The act of planting a garden is ordered to the end of providing food for one’s family. This end distinguishes the act from another, say, chopping wood, which is ordered towards heating one’s home. There exists a hierarchy of ends, specifications which both differentiate ends from each other and order ends to that of ultimate ends. In this view both the ends of provisioning food for one’s family (through the act of gardening) and of warming one’s home (through the act of chopping wood) are subordinate ends to the ultimate end of sustaining one’s family. Placing economic actions within such teleological framework allows one to distinguish types of acts in relation to their particular ends.49

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48 Kretzmann and Stump, *Companion to Aquinas*, 198.
Polanyi proposes that Aristotle’s distinction between production for use vs. production for gain is essential to the philosophy of pre-market economics.⁵⁰ “Production for use” is ordered directly to the proper functioning of economics in Aristotle’s sense, as oeconomicia is the prudent making use of those things necessary to the household. Production for gain on the other hand, produces wealth without limit and is ordered toward commerce and token exchange. In natural form, one sows seeds and brings them to harvest, not in order to reap a profit, but to provide the sufficient nutrition for the survival of one’s family. The making of cloths or tending to the needs of shelter ensures the well-being of the household. These productive-provisional acts are defined teleologically by the end to which they are ordered, namely, their use to supply for the needs of the household economy.

On the other hand, Aristotle notes that for human beings it is natural that we may have more than we need of some things and less that we need of others. Here, use is qualified. Exchange of surplus goods for those in want supply is not contrary to nature, insofar as it is ordered to the sake of household sufficiency. Production is done not for the purpose of such exchange, but for the sufficient provisioning of a household. Using the example of shoes, Aristotle notes one can use shoes in two different ways, either to protect one’s feet, or to exchange them for a deficit need. Only one of these is proper to shoes’ nature, that of wearing on one’s feet, “for shoes are not made for the sake of trading them.”⁵¹ Individual households cannot be entirely self-sufficient, so while not entirely “proper to nature”, the natural conditions of life may require barter. Such barter,

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⁵⁰ Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 57. Though, as Polanyi points out, Aristotle insufficiently perceived how difficult this distinction would be to maintain in practice.
⁵¹ Aristotle Politics Bk. I.
as it is embedded within other forms of reciprocity and redistribution, bind a household economy into the greater network of the village or polis, and in doing so, perfect the household according to its social necessity.

Due to the ends pursued, this notion of barter is entirely different from the human acts which Aristotle denote as *commerce* and *token exchange*. Being “devised by reason,” exchange is ordered to gaining the greatest profits from any transaction. In these emerging forms of exchange, economic action itself is redefined in terms of gain for the actors, rather than provision for a household or polis.\(^{52}\)

From the perspective of a system that produces for the sole purpose of gain, Polanyi notes “Aristotle rightly forecast two thousand years before its advent” the social disintegration brought by an economic system organized around market and production based demands.\(^{53}\) Further, “in denouncing the principle of production for gain as boundless and limitless, ‘as not natural to man,’ Aristotle was, in effect, aiming at the crucial point, namely, the divorce of the economic motive from all concrete social relationships which would by their very nature set a limit to that motive.”\(^{54}\) Such a disordering of means and ends disfigures sociality; human acts are removed from the natural structure of moral norms. Thus, Polanyi understood the market system was a reordering of ends, one that subjugated the human person and the land to the ends of production and monetary gain.

Polanyi argues that prior to the rise of the market economy the land and body were held within an integral system of reciprocity. These deeply interwoven relationships

\(^{52}\) Aristotle *Politics* Bk. I, specifically 49.

\(^{53}\) Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 57.

\(^{54}\) Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, 57.
sustain a social importance of the land for habitation, nourishment and as a place of community. The land shapes the lives of its inhabitants through landscape, boundaries, and frontiers, making it necessary not only for the cultivation and acquisition of sustenance, but also for the cultural vitality of a people. Polanyi finds in Aristotle this deeply knit social fabric between the land and a people that was the normative context for pre-market social life.

The natural art of procuring the necessities of life is tied to one’s relationship to the natural environment that surrounds them. Polanyi conceives the economy as inhabited: economic acts are deeply embedded in culture, sociality and the nuances of the environment. One cannot cultivate the land for the sustenance of the family without an immersed knowledge of the seasons, natural ecosystems and soil. In his commentary on Aristotle’s *Politics*, St. Thomas, referring to the manual labor of the agrarian life, concludes that “it is necessary to have an experiential knowledge of these things that men may make as perfect a use of them as possible.”

This conception of a tacit, *experiential knowledge* of nature is fundamental to Polanyi’s discussion of the dynamic relationship between land and peoples. In pre-market society, one did not regard the land in terms defined merely by production and gain; rather, like society itself, land and peoples made up an integrated whole, a system of sustenance and reciprocity. Economy is not simply the provision of material objects for the physical survival of the family, but also includes training in the life of wisdom and

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work, oriented towards “the completely good life insofar as it can be attained in domestic intercourse.”

For Aristotle, both the art of use (oeconomia) and the art of production (chrematistics) are subject to the form of nature. St. Thomas understands the principle of any art is, at its core, an imitation of nature. Human work and the movements of life are tied directly to the natural order. “The reason of this,” comments Bede Jarrett, “is that the relationship between two or more principles determines what shall be the relationship between their various forms and workings.” Jarrett continues,

Now the principle of what ever is effected by art, is the human intellect which is derived from, and is in someway a reproduction of, the divine intellect, and this divine intellect is the principle of whatever is in nature; so the process of art must imitate the process of nature and whatever is effected by art must imitate something in nature.

Here, Jarrett’s commentary on St. Thomas reveals that art, as “form” and “working”, emerges from the relationship between two principles, the divine and human intellect. In this way, art is perceived as the human intellect’s imitation of the divine principle found in nature. Nature (which can be known by the human person but is created by God) provides the principle that perfects art; art on the other hand (which is known and created by human beings) cannot perfect nature: nature serves as the primary model. In this way,

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56 Aquinas. Summa Theologiae Ia-II 50, 3. In the above quotation, St. Thomas’ use of the adverb “insofar” qualifies the attainment of the “completely good life” of the domestic society in relation to the end (telos) of another good, namely the common good of the whole society. See below for further discussion.

57 Ibid.

58 Jarrett. Social Theories of the Middle Ages, 151-2.
an art rightly functions within the natural order insofar as it is an imitation of it.59 Accordingly, the human arts must model nature according to nature’s own principle and cause, the divine Creator. To violate this divine ordering is not only to loose the perfectibility of one’s art, but also to degrade the relationship between the two principles, namely the relationship between the divine and human intellect. Therefore human work, as the meeting place of these two intellects, has deep implications on all facets of life. This understanding of acquisition as art is set within a proper ordering—rather than mechanistic exploitation and gain—and holds the relationship between body and land in symbiotic relationship.

For an art to be in fact an imitation of nature, particularly that art of acquiring wealth, the acts themselves need to be set within a structural limitation, circumscribed to fulfill that end to which they are ordered. Wealth was functional; it served an instrumental purpose and was considered a means to an end: “the pursuing of an end in any art is without limit; the pursuing of that, however, which has an relation to some end, is not without limit, but has a limit set by the rule and measure of that end.”60 This structure of natural limitation guarded against exploitation and kept wealth-productive acts within the realm of provisioning. Limitless production, aimed at superfluous gain, is not in accord with the natural order. An economic system built on such models of production places the human person in disordered relation to the natural functioning of Creation.

59 Jarrett. Social Theories of the Middle Ages, 152.
60 Aquinas, Commentary on Aristotle's Politics, Bk. 1, 56.
In this section, we have established that for Polanyi, economics is conceived within society, which itself exists as an integrated whole. Economic acts function within a wider social and moral order, and consequently involve the entire life and activity of the family and polis. Principles such as reciprocity among kin and redistribution of goods by a governing authority insure the maintenance of the common good. The distinction between acquisition and use kept production subservient to the good of the home, limiting the endless pursuit of gain. Economic interest is never absolutized, even in the household, but corresponds with and is intertwined in all aspects of social life. Polanyi’s Aristotelean account of pre-market society provides an analysis of economics and productions that is not only subservient to a social unity, but functions in a way which seeks to preserve this unity against practices which may lead to its fragmentation or individuation.

*The Fictitious Commodities and the Birth of the Market Society*

The markets of pre-modern society were a far cry from the self-regulating markets of the 19th century forward.61 The emergence of the autonomous self-regulating market veritably created a new world. Previously, the pattern of market exchange was mapped along and corresponded to the practices of the broader social order. “As a rule, the economic system was absorbed in the social system, and what ever principle of behavior predominated in the economy, the presence of the market pattern was found to be compatible with it.”62 Markets were accessories to a larger, more developed system of economic interaction. Markets and economic action were characterized by restrained

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human practices in relation to the land; their patterns did not shape the structure of
society itself, rather markets were to be an adjunct to the overall social and political
practice of human organization. “Regulation and markets, in effect, grew up together.”\textsuperscript{63}

This section will outline the “liberation” of the market from its normative subordination
to social organization. Furthermore, we will address the subsequent subordination of the
social organization to the newly emerging self-regulating market.

\textit{The Production of Bodies: The Satanic Mill and the Social Logic of the Self-Regulating Market}

“What ‘satanic mill’ ground men into masses? What was the
mechanism through which the old \textit{social tissue} was destroyed and
a new integration of man and nature so unsuccessfully
attempted?”\textsuperscript{64}

The 19\textsuperscript{th} century witnessed new economic conditions that restructured the entire fabric of
social life. Hoards of laboring peoples gather in masses to the industrial towns of
England. Rural families become crowded slum tenants. A peasant’s knowledge and skill
for working of the land is no longer needed, as they were reduced to the “fictitious
commodity” of unskilled labor for the systematized and mechanical industrial production.
Market society demanded that persons, human work, and nature be converted to
commodities in order that production could be maintained: “Human society had become
an accessory to the economic system.”\textsuperscript{65}

Polanyi’s work in \textit{The Great Transformation} is aimed at correcting a significantly
misguided historical vision: “Economic liberalism misread the history of the Industrial

\textsuperscript{63} Polanyi, \textit{The Great Transformation}, 71.
\textsuperscript{64} Polanyi, \textit{The Great Transformation}, 35.
\textsuperscript{65} Polanyi, \textit{The Great Transformation}, 79.
Polanyi refutes the belief that the market’s emergence was one of spontaneous progress. In contrast, Polanyi argues it was a deliberate creation of an economic system set at compensating for industrialized production and the subsequent effect economic system had on human sociality and habitation. He argues that this mistaken perception of history blinds social theorists and historians alike to the significant role governing authorities always played in establishing economic norms and limits. The seeming “evolution” of the market pattern was not a natural social phenomenon, but in fact a state led transition.

The market’s novelty required the previously integrated social order to be split into distinct categories, so that the economy could become a separate and self-regulating institution. Polanyi observes that, only after it was freed from the customs and relationships that made economic activity a subsidiary function of the social order, the market could then truly exist as a “self-regulating” entity. Economic action, previously defined by social ends, gained a distinctively economic motive. Economic interest becomes the end and principle of social ordering: “Such an institutional pattern could not have functioned unless society was somehow subordinated to its requirements.”

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66 Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 35.
69 “Market price” itself being a novelty, in contrast to the previously established “just price” set by the governing and social organism to ensure justice in business dealings and regulate competition. See Jarrett, Social Theories of the Middle Ages, 160.
70 Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 45
71 Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 74.
Reordering sociality around the market mechanism and production required a disruption of previous bonds of kin, community and the land. The social logic of the market mechanism split human communities into individual competing units. Previously, pre-market social organizations maintained reciprocal relations, procuring a common good defined in extra-economic terms. This shift in the structure of social interaction effectively redefined the good of the social body in terms of monetary gain through market exchange. Such a radical re-ordering of economic ends marks the transition from economy as *homecraft* to economy as the *buying and selling of commodities*.

Progressively, persons are increasingly dependent upon incomes and employment (through industrial labor and production) rather than cultivation of the land and reciprocity among kin for the sustenance of the home. By the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century, this transition made the goods of everyday life available for purchase, bought and sold on a regular basis like never before.\textsuperscript{72} The home, rather than being a primary site of *production* (as it is found in the ‘home-economic’ of Aristotle or the ‘householding’ of Polanyi), was reshaped by the phenomenon of buying and selling, thus transforming the home into the primary site of commodity-flow *consumption*.

*The Fictitious Commodities: Labor and Land*

For the market to emerge as an autonomous economic reality it must not only shake off its former social constraints, but also redefine the components of social-life as commodity. It is in this process of economic disembedding that we see the self-regulating market became itself the organizing principle of social life and practice. As

\textsuperscript{72} Baum, *Karl Polanyi*, 17.
Polanyi argues, the success of the self-regulating market was dependent on it treating as commodities “labor” and “land”, subjecting the “human” and “natural” to market demands.

Defined by Polanyi, commodities are those objects produced for sale on a market. The value of commodities is determined through the market mechanism of supply and demand. As Polanyi observes, the commodity logic of the self-regulating market “supplies a vital organizing principle in regard to the whole of society affecting almost all of its institutions in the most varied way, namely, the principle according to which no arrangement or behavior should be allowed to exist that might prevent the actual functioning of the market mechanism on the lines of the commodity fiction.”

Polanyi argues that this dissolving of older habits and practices takes place through the commodification of human work and nature, converting them for use in the realm of “commodity fiction”. Polanyi’s empirical definition of the commodity and its relationship to production brings us to a tipping point in the discussion. For a market economy to comprise all elements of industry, it must include human labor, land, and money: “labor, land, and money are essential elements of industry; they also must be organized in markets; in fact, these markets form an absolutely vital part of the economic system.” “Labor” and “land”, Polanyi notes, are the commodity forms of human persons and the natural environment in which they exist.

“Production is interaction of man and nature; if this process is to be organized through a self-regulating mechanism of barter and exchange, then man and nature must be brought into its orbit; they must be subject to supply and demand, that it, be dealt with as commodities, as goods produced for sale. Such precisely was the arrangement under the market system. Man, under the name of labor, nature under the name of land,

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73 Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 76.
74 Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 75.
75 Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 75.
were made available for sale; the use of labor power could be universally bought and sold at the price called wages, and the use of the land could be negotiated for a price called rent.”76

Herein lies one of Polanyi’s most substantive critique of market society: the emergence of the self-regulating market was dependent on defining labor and land as commodities, but by their definition they are not commodities. By their very constitution they cannot be. “Labor” is human work by another name, which is not produced for sale and cannot be detached from the person for the sake of storage or exchange. Land is the natural world falsely rendered as raw material, but not the creation of human hands.77 Labor and land cannot be maintained within the paradigmatic definition of commodity; to do so is to demand the creation of a fictitious order, one in which human beings and nature are objects made available for purchase and exchange. Nonetheless, such a commodity fiction is taken to be true and exerts itself as the organizing principle of a market society.

Fictitious as they may be, a steady supply of labor, land, and money are required for the functioning of industrial production. Speaking to the desolation such an organization of reality would bring, Polanyi prophetically warns:

“To allow the market mechanism to be the sole director of the fate of human beings and their natural environment, indeed even of the amount and use of purchasing power, would result in the demolition of society…Robbed of the protective covering of cultural institutions, human beings would die as victims of acute social dislocation through vice, perversion, crime and starvation. Nature would be reduced to its elements, neighborhoods and landscapes defiled, rivers polluted, military safety jeopardized, the power to produce food and raw materials destroyed.”78

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76 Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 137.
77 For the purposes of this project, I am limiting the scope of Polanyi’s analysis of commodification to land and labor. In his more extensive account, he additionally speaks to the commodification of money in similar terms. See Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 75.
78 Polanyi, The Great Transformation, 76.
Human work is now labor, which is set within a market framework and exchanged for a price called wages. The land, previously the site of habitation, subsistence, and community, is the raw, dead material used for industrial production of commodities. To include these most foundational elements of human existence within the space of the market was to subordinate the very substance of society to the laws and actions of the market. The logical end of the market commodification is fracture and individuation, so that such subordination was to redirect human sociality in accord with this logic of commodification: human persons in their relation to society and the natural world, once conceived respectively as a whole, is split into pieces.

In the market society, humanity still dwells in some semblance of communities, fractured though they may be. Communities can exist, but only insofar as they do not interfere with the vitality and functionality of the market. Polanyi observes the same great evil of social fragmentation articulated by de Lubac, but Polanyi contextualizes such observations in the lived experience of those who occupy the space of the self-regulating market. Not only is the human person individuated, living in isolation from both land and kin, they are made into “non-creations”, mere things to be exchanged for the efficient production of capital.

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“Traditionally, land and labor are not separated; labor forms part of life, land remains part of nature, life and nature form an articulate whole.”\footnote{\textcite{Polanyi187}} The shift from natural acquisition and sustenance to (artificial) industrial production and wage labor placed a new-found distinction between humanity and the land. The atomized individual exists not only as stranger among kin, but lives estranged from the natural world. The market, dissolves the traditional law and custom which guided peoples in the prudent and frugal cultivation of the soil. The first major shift took place in the commercialization of the soil. Feudal customs that had previously held the land and communities together exempted the land from the realm of commerce. Once freed from these customs, the land was divided and placed on the market for sale to developing industrial projects. Secondly, its cultivation was industrialized, charged with the task of supplying enormous amounts of food and raw materials to the laboring hoards in industrial towns. Thirdly, these actions were fit into the large, developing extra-national capital exchange, placing it firmly under the rule of the self-regulating market.\footnote{\textcite{Polanyi188}} The “use and disposal” of land no longer took into consideration the survival of ecosystems (within which dwelt the human community). Liberal man, no longer “caught” in the complex web of natural reciprocity, custom, and law, renounces his guardianship of the land, converting it into commodified capital for free exchange.

Polanyi saw a causal connection between societal isolation and the dividing up of and dislocation of peoples from the land. He notes:

\footnote{\textcite{Polanyi187}} Polanyi, \textit{The Great Transformation}, 187.  
\footnote{\textcite{Polanyi188}} Polanyi, \textit{The Great Transformation}, 188.
“What we call land is an element of nature inextricably interwoven with man’s institutions... It invests man’s life with stability; it is the site of his habitation; it is a condition of his physical safety; it is the landscape and the seasons. We might as well imagine his being born without hands and feet as carrying on life with out the land. And yet to separate land from man and organize society in such a way to satisfy the requirements of a real-estate market was a vital part of the utopian concept of a market economy.”

These changes in the material structure of relation have implications for how we think about, practice, and understand these relationships. Our vision has changed. Land is no longer the inhabited places of community; it is the quantified space of deeds, mineral rights and potential productivity per acre. Furthermore, the economic function of land is only one aspect of its vital role in the life of the human community. Land does not simply exist as a storehouse to satisfy the wants of human material need, but provides a base for the development of human culture. One cannot imagine human social practice without the places in which these movements take form. To erase these social characteristics, defining the land primarily in the realm of commodity, uproots social life and dislocates the cultural base of human life.

Gregory Baum connects Polanyi’s description of the vital link between land and people to the later period of European expansion and colonialism. These lands were quickly occupied and reshaped by European forces quite distant from the indigenous inhabitants who had lived on the land for centuries. In order to explicitly insure the implement of the market system in a foreign context, “the social and cultural system of native life first [had to] be shattered.” The primary method for erasing the cultural and social resistance to this system was the violent separation of land and people. Here, what

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84 Baum, *Karl Polanyi*, 16.
85 Baum, *Karl Polanyi*, 16.
we witness in the colonies functions as a quick and dramatic presentation of what took place in Europe over centuries.\textsuperscript{86}

Anthony Giddens in his work \textit{The Consequences of Modernity} suggests that dislocation is found with the emergence of a notion of the “substitutability” of differing spatial units: \textit{emptied space} exists dislodged from any particular place or locale.\textsuperscript{87} Giddens’ analysis is helpful in further establish Polanyi’s assertion of the vital importance of the land for social cohesion. The land is a material element of social life, but it is not ambiguous in substance or without particularity. The collective and individual body requires land, not only for physical sustenance, but also for providing the place in which social life and culture are enacted. According to Giddens, within modernity’s conceptions of place arise the peculiar notions of substitutability and anonymity, which follow closely Polanyi’s analysis that the market mechanism makes the land a commodity. Giddens argues: “In conditions of modernity, places become increasingly phantasmagoric: that is to say, locales are thoroughly penetrated by and shaped in terms of social influences quite distant from them.”\textsuperscript{88}

For Giddens, in the process of modernization, institutions have established a nature of \textit{discontinuity} with traditional cultures, providing a radical shift in the character of relation between peoples, places and time. “The dynamism of modernity derives from the \textit{separation of time and space} and their recombinination in forms which permit the precise time-space “zoning” of social life; the disembedding of social systems; and the reflexive reordering and reorientation of social relations in the light of continual inputs of

\textsuperscript{86} Baum, Karl Polanyi, 16.
\textsuperscript{88} Giddens. \textit{The Consequences of Modernity}, 18-19.
knowledge affecting the actions of individuals and groups.” Polanyi points to the (dis)organizing logic of the market as the mechanism which spurred the reflexive division and re-organization of social space. In the space of the market, humanity and the natural world are atomized. Splitting the deeply interwoven relationships between persons, kin, and the land reorders all life and human action toward market functionality: “To detach man from the soil meant the dissolution of the body economic into its elements so that each element could fit in to that part of the system where it was most useful.” Land and people thus become anonymous: the body economic is reconfigured into units for efficient exchange.

Established networks of cooperation and reciprocity, once holding together person, community, and land, are forgone and redefined in terms of economic self-interest. A kind of cooperation exists in capitalism, but in terms of procuring good determined by self-interest. Reciprocity becomes a type of contractual exchange the person exists in a society of dislocated economic individuals.

The previously normative subordination of markets to social ends got in the way of the urge for ever growing capital increase. The flourishing of a market society required the market be freed from these constrictions. In this dislodging of the market from social ends, Polanyi argues that the social ends of society where then subordinated to the market logic. The flourishing of the self-regulating market is dependent on a society of individuals; individuals are free economic agents. Human vision, as well as experience of and practice within the world has changed. The social tissue that held the individual in identity with humanity is rent.

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**Conclusion**

Polanyi marks this deep fragmentation between peoples and land as an established norm of the self-regulating market. In this chapter, we have noted that Polanyi has argued that the market necessitates the dissolving of social bondedness in the interest of the absolutized individual. Society, once envisioned within a teleological framework and as a whole, was split apart and reorganized around the market mechanism. Further, we have seen that Polanyi argues that the vital relationship that exists between land and human societies is fractured, as both are separated and re-envisioned within the realm of ("fictitious") commodity. From here, it will be our task to explore the reparation of social fragmentation, particularly as it is addressed in the Eucharistic ecclesiology of Henri de Lubac. This will take place through analysis of de Lubac’s vision of the salvific work of Christ in history through the sacramental action of the Church.
CHAPTER III
HENRI DE LUBAC, THE CHURCH AND THE REPARATION OF SOCIAL FRAGMENTATION

Introduction:

In the previous chapter, we discussed Karl Polanyi’s account of a particular instance of social and ecological fragmentation. We learned that sociality has been reordered around the individuating mechanisms of the self-regulating market. Such a break signaled a disruption of tightly woven relationships between kin, community and the land, placing the foundational elements of society in a subservient relationship to industrial production and market exchange. In this chapter we return to de Lubac’s theological vision: God willed to redeem fragmented humanity not through a multiplicity of individual salvations, but rather, by gathering a people together in the unity of a common society, one Body. Whereas sin fragments the created unity of humanity, the salvific work of Christ heals this social and spiritual division, (re)gathering a body together in visible-spiritual unity. Henri de Lubac argues that this restored unity is historically realized in the Church. This chapter will explore the social implications of de Lubac’s Christology and ecclesiology as it relates to Polanyi’s analysis of social fragmentation.
For Henri de Lubac, human destiny is inseparable from humanity’s origin: salvation is envisioned as the restoration of the unity lost in the fall. The restored supernatural unity between God and the human person and the restoration of human social unity are both part of the same salvific work of Christ. De Lubac cites Augustine: “Divine Mercy gathered up the fragments from every side, forged them in the fire of love, and welded them into one what had been broken…He who remade was himself the maker, and he who refashioned was himself the Fashioner.”91 Christ, who is unity, takes up the fragmented pieces of human nature, unites them within himself, once again making them into one. **“Divis uniuntur, discordantia pacantur”:** what was divided is united, discord becomes peace.92

Christ did not simply become a single human being, but assumed human nature, “whole and entire”. Because of this, de Lubac argues that the Incarnation is itself a unitive act: Christ offers not simply a kind of salvation for each individual part; rather human nature itself is redeemed, thus saving the whole. De Lubac sought to correct the individualism of Neo-Scholastic theology by retrieving the patristic understanding of the actions of Christ in which the supernatural union between God and humanity is restored and the lost unity between human persons is knit back together. Furthermore, de Lubac demonstrated that for dogmatic continuity, these two aspects of Christ’s singular action must remain inextricably together. The Church’s social unity bears witness to and realizes the spiritual unity restored by Christ.

91 De Lubac, *Catholicism*, 36.
92 De Lubac, *Catholicism*, 37.
The Unity of the Body of Christ

Scripture and the early Fathers profess that the efficacy of Christ’s salvific work established a people in history, which St. Paul named the Body of Christ. The re-unification of humanity does not exist merely in theological abstraction, but in lived history. This section will attend to this one Body, the Church, relative to the salvific action of Christ in history and the eschatological reality of which she is sacrament.

St. Paul’s use of the body metaphor is not original.93 The significance lies in the specific nature of its use: rather than “body of Christians”, Paul names the whole community of Christians as the Body of Christ.94 This way of naming the body reveals the particular character of post-incarnational reality and signals an ontological shift in the orientation of social unity: the Church resides in history as a manifestation of Christ’s unity.

Far from a mere gathering of local assemblages or a grouping of those who have assented to or “accepted the Gospel”, the Church is the Grace of God made manifest in history.95 The Church, continuing the work of the Incarnation, is the organism, at once both spiritual and social, which realizes this unity in history. “Humanity is one, organically one by its divine structure; it is the mission of the Church to reveal to men this pristine unity that has been lost, to restore it and complete it.”96 The Church is the world, “reconciled.”97

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94 De Lubac, *Catholicism*, 44.
95 De Lubac, *Catholicism*, 430, quoting Pseudo-Eucharius.
96 De Lubac, *Catholicism*, 53. (emphasis mine)
The unity of the Body of Christ is not an aggregate unity, that is, a whole formed by disparate elements, fragments, or particles.\textsuperscript{98} Rather, the Church is to be wholly one as God is one.\textsuperscript{99} Like the divine Image it bears, the Church is “a unity that is without externality, yet also without confusion.” In its social unity, the Church is a cohesion of individuals into one, and yet in its mystery, does not absorb the individual into an anonymous collectivism.\textsuperscript{100} Augustine, using Eucharistic language to speak of this unity, likens the Church to the bread and wine, composed of many disparate elements, brought together and transformed into a new substance.\textsuperscript{101} Distinction is to unity as the personal is to universal.\textsuperscript{102} De Lubac observes: “the distinction between different parts of a being stands out more clearly as the union of these parts is closer.”\textsuperscript{103} De Lubac uses a series of metaphors to communicate this paradox of unity and distinction in the Church. Particularly helpful is de Lubac likening of the Church’s unity to that unity of a biologically complex organism:

The experience of our senses puts us on the track. For we find that the higher a living thing rises in the scale of being the more internal unity it does require. The undifferentiated, entirely homogenous being is as little one as it is possible to be; it is only a nameless agglomeration. In certain elementary plants, composed of the one same material, unity is so weak that every piece cut from the stalk produces a new plant. On the other hand in those cases where there is a complicated network of cells, the whole organism is concentrated and the greater individuality of the parts works for the unity of the whole.\textsuperscript{104}

\textsuperscript{99} John 17:11
\textsuperscript{100} De Lubac, \textit{Catholicism}, 117.
\textsuperscript{101} De Lubac, \textit{Catholicism}, 92.
\textsuperscript{102} Wood. \textit{Spiritual Exegesis and the Church}, 132.
\textsuperscript{103} Wood. \textit{Spiritual Exegesis and the Church}, 132.
\textsuperscript{104} De Lubac, \textit{Catholicism}, 328. (emphasis mine)
Catholic unity does not negate organic differentiation and specialization of each member within the whole, instead it associates each with a greater complex unity. Rather than a static and homogenous entity, the Church is an organism in which parts are not fragments, but distinct members of the whole. The unity of the Church does not overshadow the dynamism and particularity of “each” human member; on the contrary, its complex nature requires it. It is the nature of the Body of which St. Paul commented: “For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.”

Christ and the Church form, in a certain sense, a “unity of totality”, a sharing of the same Divine Spirit given at Pentecost, likened to a vine and its branches, in which flows the same sap. As de Lubac consistently warns, there is always danger in an undisciplined and exaggerated assimilation between Christ and the Church. While the Church continues the Incarnation of Christ in history, this is an ontological reality, rather than an organic actuality (which would deny any distinction between the two modes of existence). In their profound relationship to one another, Christ and the Church are not the same entity. Like most of de Lubac’s work, there is always distinction in union, being one does not absorb the particularity of each. In this way, the social is imbued with divinity in as much as it is oriented toward its divine end. Ecclesial sociality is not simply intended for the Church’s own internal cohesion as an organization; rather it is a participation in the salvific work of Christ, reconciling the world to himself.

105 see 1 Cor. 12:12-31.
106 De Lubac, Catholicism, 121.
107 See Wood, Spiritual Exegesis and the Church, 130; 144-6.
Similarly, without a properly eschatological character, ecclesiology becomes overly imminentized, so that the kingdom is fully present in the world now. While we should unceasingly proclaim the radical continuity between God and the redeemed community, at the same time we must be ever aware of the profound “cleavage between Creator and created, savior and redeemed.”

This “mystical union” between Christ and his Church is central to de Lubac’s ecclesiology, for the unity of Church in space and time is interwoven with the eschatological reality to which she points: the visible Church is the sacrament of God’s activity in history. Therefore, it is not surprising when de Lubac concludes: “we always come back to the Church without ever being able to consider her mystic reality apart from her visible existence in time.” Because the Church is the Sacrament of Christ, the Church’s movement in space and time is ordered toward salvation. This telos of human action points towards a pronounced social ethic. The Church is Sacrament of Christ precisely when she makes present this unifying grace of Christ in the world, discernible in space and time.

Salvation gives birth to a common people, a singular Body extending through both space and time. This Body bears a sacramental character; it is the embodiment, the very workings of grace made present in human history. Continually being gathered together by Christ, this Body offers her unity as salvation to a dispersed world, so that through communion with the Body, one is in communion with Christ, her Head. The purpose of the following section will be to explore the ways in which the Church exists as

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this means of grace, paying particular attention to her sacramental relationship to the world.

*The Church and the Sociality of the Sacraments*

De Lubac’s ecclesiology arises from his sensitivity to the Church’s mystical nature. For de Lubac, mystical connotes a spiritual reality in physical manifestation; the mystical unity of the Church in space and time is thus a material-visible-spiritual reality. Catholic social unity refuses to be described as a merely natural union, along the ranks of any other political or social organization. While the Church is entirely human, she also holds within her that which is entirely Divine: the Church is “in the existence of a society, which under the appearance of a human institution hides a divine reality.”¹¹⁰ The Church is to be the efficacious sign of Christ in the world by making it one.

The Church willingly offers herself to the evaluation of sociological inquiry; no doubt, she is a visible society, containing discernable structures in which there is a division of labor.¹¹¹ But in this, her meaning far exceeds sociology’s observations.¹¹² The Church is found both “human and divine in her visibility, without division and without confusion just like Christ, whose body she is.” These seemingly opposite realities—human/divine, visible/invisible, temporal/spiritual—are brought together as one in the Church.¹¹³

“The Church is a mystery, that is to say she is also a sacrament. She is ‘the total *locus* of the Christian sacraments’ and she is herself the great sacrament that vitalizes all

¹¹⁰ De Lubac. *Catholicism*, 82-3.
¹¹¹ De Lubac. *The Splendor of the Church*, 120.
¹¹³ De Lubac. *Catholicism*, 84
The sacraments are sensible and efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which the divine life is dispensed to us. That is to say, in their efficacy, sacraments produce grace and the effect of this sacramental grace is unity among members of the Body.

As the means of salvation sacraments are rightly understood as instruments of unity. Sacraments “make real, renew or strengthen man’s union with Christ, [and] by that very fact, they make real, renew or strengthen his union with the Christian community.” These two aspects of sacramental efficacy are intimately woven together, so much so, that de Lubac maintains, “it is through his union with the community that the Christian is united to Christ”. As we have seen, for de Lubac salvation is envisioned as a restoration of unity; making humankind whole in Christ. Through union with Christ in the sacraments, Christians are joined ever more close together as a single body. In this way, the sacraments are both an expressed manifestation of our collective salvation in history, and also the means of achieving this end.

The Mass is not a private function, but exists socially as a celebration of the Church which is the sacrament of unity. The human person experiences life and communicates this experience with a system of signs and symbols. The same can be thus said regarding humanity’s experience and relationship to God, for “God speaks to man

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115 De Lubac. Catholicism, 1131.
116 De Lubac. Catholicism, 82.
117 De Lubac. Catholicism, 82.
through visible creation. The material cosmos is so presented to man’s intelligence that he can read there traces of it’s Creator.”

While sacramental grace is communicated to individual persons, it is fundamentally social, insofar as the “grace which is produced and maintained by the sacraments does not set up a purely individual relationship between the soul and God or Christ; rather does each individual receive such grace in proportion as he is joined, socially, to that one body whence flows this saving life stream.” Sacraments receive their causality from the Divine reality embedded within and wrapped up in her human structure. Wood notes that this emphasis in de Lubac’s sacramental causality results in a theology of the sacraments that is primarily social and ecclesiological in nature. For some, this may be alarming. But for de Lubac, this social aspect of the Church is not solely human, but is itself sacramental; it is a physical-material reality imbued with the Divine. Sociality in the Church has an eschatological telos through the presence of Christ, “because the Church is not a purely human society,” but, as Augustine claims, is a “society of the Spirit.”

De Lubac notes that there are two aspects to sacramentality, the first of which discerns the Church as sign:

“Signs are not things to be stopped at, for they are, in themselves, valueless; by definition a sign is something translucent, which dissolves before the face of that which it manifests—like words which would be nothing if they did not lead straight to ideas. Under this aspect it is not

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119 De Lubac, Catholicism, 82.
120 De Lubac, Catholicism, 82.
121 Wood. Spiritual Exegesis and the Church, 148.
122 De Lubac, Catholicism, 83.
123 De Lubac, Catholicism, 83.
something intermediate, but something mediatory; it does not isolate, one from another, the two terms it is meant to link. It does not put a distance between them; on the contrary, it united them by making present that which it evokes.”

Second, sacraments are more than signs; they go further: Sacraments are efficacious, mediatory signs between the human and divine that make present what they signify. Therefore, as sacrament, the Church really makes Christ present in the world, but as efficacious sign it is in the process of making God’s salvation a reality in history. Thus, to speak of Church as Sacrament is to never come to the end of this “passing through”, never to stop merely at the Church, but only perceive her in relation to her cause and end, Christ. The Church differs from a simple sign also, in that she will never be cast aside, for the Church exists eternally as the glorified Body of Christ.

The Eucharist and the Unity of the Church

“The offering of the many become, by the infusion of the Holy Spirit, One Body of Christ, that is why we who receive communion of this holy bread and chalice are knit together as one sole body.” Above all then, it is in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in which we find the culmination of the sacramental life and the origin of the unity of the Church. The sacramental ecclesiology of Henri de Lubac can only be properly understood in relation to the Eucharist. For de Lubac, the Eucharist is to Church

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124 De Lubac, Catholicism, 202.
125 Wood. Spiritual Exegesis and the Church, 106.
126 Wood. Spiritual Exegesis and the Church, 106.
127 De Lubac. The Splendor of the Church, 203.
128 De Lubac. Catholicism, 103.
as cause is to effect and sign is to reality. The Eucharist is the primary means to the Church’s end.129

De Lubac illuminates in the tradition the primary place and function of the Eucharist, for it contains the whole mystery of salvation and is rightly called the Sacrament of Unity.130 Leo XIII, in his Apostolic Constitution on the Eucharist (1902), asserts that the Eucharist is the root and principle of Catholic Unity.131 The Eucharist is efficacious sign and cause of the Church’s participation in the divine life and its unity, and due to the integral relationship between the Eucharistic Body and the Ecclesial Body, much of what has been said thus far about the Church could equally be said of the Eucharist. This being the case, we will refrain from repeating those elements they hold in common, focusing our attention primarily on their correlative relationship and the effect of their mutual causality.

The whole ecclesial life is bound up with and oriented towards the Eucharist, “it is the source and summit of the Christian life.”132 De Lubac observes that from their institution, Christ has entrusted the Eucharist and the Church to one another, each mutually working toward the others fulfillment. While it can be maintained that through its liturgy the Church produces the Eucharist, it can equally be asserted that the Eucharist makes the Church.133 Wood states that “by partaking of one bread we become One Body, and at that moment, the Church is formed.”134 For de Lubac, this particular vision of

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129 Wood, *Spiritual Exegesis and the Church*, 54.
130 De Lubac, *Catholicism*, 88.
131 De Lubac, *Catholicism*, 90.
132 Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1324.
133 De Lubac, *The Splendor of the Church*, 133; and *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1396.
134 Wood, *Spiritual Exegesis and the Church*, 145.
Eucharistic/ecclesial causality is echoed throughout sacred tradition, in the Fathers and councils throughout history.

De Lubac’s notion of the Eucharist/Church correlation allows us to further demonstrate that the efficacious grace conferred on the Church in the Eucharist moves beyond any simplistic notions of unity, for the Church is not only knit together as one, but becomes that which she consumes. Cyril of Alexander echoes Augustine: “The participation of the Body and Blood of Christ effects nothing short of this: that we pass over into that which we receive.” Further, commenting on Hugh of St. Victor’s De Sacramentis, de Lubac notes: “And just as the body of Christ was signified more exactly by the bread and his blood by the wine, so the Church, which is also the Body of Christ, seemed signified by the consecrated bread, whilst the wine changed into the blood of Christ was naturally the symbol of love, which is like the blood wherein is the life of this great Body.”

The major thrust of de Lubac’s ecclesiology is the assertion that the sign of Bread and Wine thus presents two realities: the True Body of Christ and the Church. This is no assertion of a new theology; rather it is a retrieval of pre-medieval Eucharistic theology. A significant portion de Lubac’s theological work is oriented at a recovery of a Eucharistic theology that adequately addresses the full dimension of Christ’s presence in the Sacrament. By the eleventh century, a certain shift took place regarding sacramental theology, which once crystalized, laid the groundwork for the Eucharist/Church correlation to be split apart.

135 De Lubac, The Splendor of the Church, 158.
136 De Lubac, Catholicism, 94.
137 See Henri de Lubac, Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007)
Previously expressed as sign/reality, this correlation began to break apart in the midst of medieval controversy. Doctrinal emphasis on the real presence of Christ in the Eucharistic species won out over the Eucharist as the Mystical Body. De Lubac notes, that while in the end one aspect of orthodoxy was preserved (real presence), the social aspect to the Eucharist (a no-less defining characteristic of its orthodoxy), in all of its necessity, was made secondary, slowly forgotten over time as “change was gradually wrought in men’s habit of mind.”\(^{138}\) The “Mystical Body,” a term that signified both the Eucharistic Body and the Ecclesial body, came to only designate the latter, and practice followed suit.

De Lubac eagerly sought to repair this split, recovering the social aspects of the Eucharistic dogma. In hopes of this reparation, he describes the shift found in the eleventh century Eucharistic doctrine that articulated three stages of depth or three distinctions between particular elements revealed within the sacraments. This distinction is seen in the notion of the three-fold Christic Body: Christ, the Church (Ecclesial Body) and the Eucharist. For orthodoxy, these three must be held together in unity, for all three are essential to the sacrament’s integrity. Held together thus, this distinction does not necessarily separate each reality apart from its interrelated union with the other two aspects. Its aim is to recognize a differentiation in order that each function can be perceived distinctly (\textit{distinguish to unite}).

Wood suggests that, for de Lubac, the potential problem of the three-fold Christic Body is resolved sacramentally.\(^{139}\) This is significant in that, rather than identifying this Christic Body solely with the historical Jesus, such a “sacramental resolution” identifies

\(^{139}\) Wood, \textit{Spiritual Exegesis and the Church}, 147.
the three-fold body Body in terms of sacramental manifestations of the Whole Christ.\textsuperscript{140} For de Lubac, just as the Church is not an organic continuation of the historical Jesus, the Eucharist in the same way does not make the historical person of Jesus sacramentally present on the altar; rather both can be understood as the sacrament of the glorified \textit{Totus Christus}.\textsuperscript{141} In this way, inasmuch as the Eucharist is a sacrament of Christ, it is also a sacrament of the Church, so that it can be said by Master Simon in the middle of the Twelfth Century: “Why is Christ received under the form of bread and wine? It may be said that in the sacrament of the altar, there are two things: the true Body of Christ and what it signifies, namely his mystical body which is the Church.”\textsuperscript{142}

As an outward sign of mystery, the bread and wine proclaim that the faithful should also be gathered together in imitation of the material elements of the sacrament.\textsuperscript{143} Regarding Augustine’s commentary on the Gospel of John, some remarked, “the food and drink, the Flesh and Blood of Christ, is the society of the saints.”\textsuperscript{144} The Eucharist is a simultaneous participation in both Christ and in the Ecclesial Body, and therefore the doctrine of the Eucharist is synthetic, bringing together two realities into one. True to the realism of the sacraments, the Eucharist makes present what it signifies, that is, the glorified Body of Christ: Christ and his Body, \textit{Christus Totus}. The Eucharist makes the Church—it is her principle and cause, means and end—both in her gathering into one on earth and her movement towards her eschatological fulfillment.\textsuperscript{145}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{140} De Lubac, \textit{Catholicism}, 147.
\item \textsuperscript{141} Which is to say the historical person is a part of, but not the entirety of the sacrament.
\item \textsuperscript{142} De Lubac, \textit{Catholicism}, 94.
\item \textsuperscript{143} De Lubac, \textit{Catholicism}, 95.
\item \textsuperscript{144} Wood. \textit{Spiritual Exegesis and the Church}, 58.
\item \textsuperscript{145} \textit{Catechism of the Catholic Church}, 1396.
\end{itemize}
The Eucharist reveals that the “spiritual life” of the members is realized in the Body’s sociality; communion is not an “object” to be received but the “concorperation” of members into the ecclesial Body of Christ.\textsuperscript{146} In this light, the Eucharist intertwines our adoration of Christ in the Most Holy Sacrament with our social practices in/as His Body. De Lubac’s plea to the Church can be summed up in Augustine’s exhortation to his catechumens preparing to receive the Eucharist,

“‘One bread,’ [St. Paul] says. What is this one bread? Is it not the ‘one body,’ formed from many? Remember: bread doesn’t come from a single grain, but from many…Be what you see; receive what you are…In the visible object of bread, many grains are gathered into one just as the faithful (so Scripture says) form "a single heart and mind in God" [Acts 4.32]. And thus it is with the wine. Remember, friends, how wine is made. Individual grapes hang together in a bunch, but the juice from them all is mingled to become a single brew. This is the image chosen by Christ our Lord to show how, at his own table, the mystery of our unity and peace is solemnly consecrated. All who fail to keep the bond of peace after entering this mystery receive not a sacrament that benefits them, but an indictment that condemns them.\textsuperscript{147}

In the Eucharist, humanity is gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, made into a host,\textsuperscript{148} consecrated, and becomes the Body of Christ. Eucharistic unity, as described by the Fathers, is illustrated by materiality: separate elements, being diverse and independent, are joined together as one, not in the form of a conglomerate but of a new substance. Dispersed grains of wheat are gathered and made into bread; individual grapes are crushed and made into wine. It is the dispersed, individualized and fragmented humanity that is brought together by Christ in the work of the Church. As this humanity is gathered

\textsuperscript{146} Wood.\textit{ Spiritual Exegesis and the Church}, 58. See also Wood, 148.
\textsuperscript{147} Augustine, Sermon 272.
\textsuperscript{148} De Lubac,\textit{ Catholicism}, 87 (n. 14).
by the Holy Spirit around the altar, she becomes One in the Eucharist, and truly a new Body is born, that is, the Body of Christ.

Conclusion:
In this chapter we have discussed Henri de Lubac’s sacramental ecclesiology, specifically as it pertains to the reparation of social fragmentation. De Lubac argues for a theological interpretation of this fragmentation, identifying it as the social result of the sin endured at the Fall. Christ’s work in history then is understood as initiating and bringing to fulfillment the reuniting dispersed humanity into one body. This one body is the Church, who de Lubac names the sacrament of the redeemed humanity united with Christ. This body is born in the Eucharist and is active in history, seeking to dismantle those social, political, and economic structures which individuate, rather than unify, humanity. From here we will bring de Lubac’s abstract categories into a more critical conversation with the particular instance of social fragmentation as described by Karl Polanyi in his analysis of the emergence of the self-regulating market. De Lubac’s account of the organizing logic of the Eucharist, which is working to bind us together as a singular body, must be brought into conversation with the counter logic of the market that, at the same time, is splitting us apart.
CONCLUSION:
TOWARDS A SYNTHESIS

The previous three chapters have sought to provide an interpretive synopsis of Henri de Lubac and Karl Polanyi’s theories of human sociality. Both have particular ways of thinking about how this sociality is organized around the formal influence of theological and economic structures that give shape to the practice of everyday life. For De Lubac, social fragmentation and unity are central theological categories for understanding both the first instance of sin and the unfolding of salvation in history. God is at work in the world as an active agent in the reparation of discordant humanity, restoring humankind to its original state as one collective body in the Church. The Church is born in the Eucharist and exists as the sacrament of salvation to the world.

Karl Polanyi, in his analysis of the rise of market economics, provides a historical account of the emergence of social and ecological fracture. This account provides the possibility of relating de Lubac’s theological argument in a particular historical context. These accounts describe two competing logics of social formation in the contemporary context: 1.) the Eucharist implicates human sociality toward deep forms of community in the Church; and 2.) the self-regulating market actively dissolves these thick forms of community, by organizing sociality around capital markets and industrial production.
Placing de Lubac and Polanyi in conversation provides a way of thinking theologically about the history of social unity and break.

My first chapter explores de Lubac’s theological anthropology of Creation and Fall. His description of human origins as *one body* helps us understand the development and implications of fragmentation in society as *contrary* to our created nature. De Lubac argues that the Christian understanding of creation, incarnation, and salvation envisions both a natural and supernatural ordering towards unity. Sin, inasmuch as it is an internal infidelity to the divine image, is also a social disordering of our collective image-bearing nature.

By linking the unity of God to the unity of the human race, de Lubac provides a foundation for understanding Creation, humanity’s fall and Christ’s salvific work in history. The sociality inherent of human nature is present due to the principle and cause of humanity’s creation: the divine image. Our sociality has its origins in the Triune God who creates, and in whose image we are created. Just as in God’s singularity of being there exists a plurality of persons, so that a particular member of the Trinity cannot be isolated from their identity with the whole of the Godhead, so too the human person is not adequately addressed as an individual only, disassociated from the collective body that is humanity. When studying the nature of the human person, both the singular and the collective must be held in tension with each other. Due to this principle of creation, de Lubac argues, human nature resists individualization.

What then are we to do about the obviously divided reality of human communities? De Lubac narrates the emergence of social fragmentation that consequently acts to dislodge the human person from their proper place in the created
order. This first chapter establishes the theological categories necessary for a theological interpretation of Karl Polanyi’s analysis of the emergence of the self-regulating market.

The second chapter traces Polanyi’s account of the emergence of the self-regulating market and the consequential reordering of human sociality away from unity and towards individuation. Like de Lubac, Polanyi envisions social fragmentation as a loss of a pre-existing unity. The emergence of the self-regulating market required a break in the traditional ordering of society. This break disrupted the tightly woven relationships between kin, community, and the land, placing these foundational elements of society in a subservient relationship to production and markets.

In this second chapter I note that prior to the emergence of the self-regulating market, Polanyi argues that reciprocity between social groups, redistribution of goods and householding preserved the common good, and defined this good in extra-economic terms. As Gregory Baum notes: “Polanyi shows that throughout history economic activity has been embedded in social relations: economics in short, was accessory to society.”149 These changes in the material structure of society implicate changes in the way we think about, experience, and practice sociality. In capitalism, the market is allowed to operate precisely through deregulation and the dissolving of these institutional, religious, and social bonds that ordered human sociality toward unity. The logic of the market splits human communities into individualized and competing units. This shift in the structure of social interaction effectively redefined the good of the social body in terms of capital gain through market exchange. Such a radical re-ordering of

149 Gregory Baum. Karl Polanyi on ethics and economics (Montreal; Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 12.
economic ends coincides with the transition from economy as homecraft to economy as the buying and selling of commodities.

This is an important shift. If we remember, “economics” designates the management (νόμος) of one’s household (οἰκία). Aristotle notes that home-management is an exercise of prudence, aimed at procuring the “good life” for those within the household or extended family matrix. This association of economy within virtue is one of its most significant structures of regulation. While the economy necessarily involved the acquisition and allocation of property and wealth, Aristotle argues that economics “takes more interest in the human members of the household than on its inanimate property.”

Thus economics consists of those human acts that are ordered towards the end (telos) of human flourishing, both within the family and wider society. For Aristotle, as Polanyi rightly notes, it is virtue, not material gain, which orders the human person in their relationship to the land and its inhabitants.

De Lubac’s theology of sin reminds us that humanity’s natural and primordial ordering towards oneness has been disrupted, both in the Fall and in historical instances of fracture. Sin disrupted humanity’s union with God, and subsequently the original unity of Creation has been marked with disintegration. This motif of disintegration is de Lubac’s primary way of understanding the implications of sin. Sin is a social, not merely individual, disruption; it is a disordering of our collective image-bearing nature. Acting contrary to this collective-social nature causes a confusion of the integral cohesion that binds the collective human organism as this one Image. Sin disrupted humanity’s union with God, and subsequently the original unity of Creation has been marked with

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150 Aristotle. *Politics*, I, v3 1259
disintegration. According to Polanyi’s analysis, the market undoes many of the vital principles that maintain social unity. In de Lubac’s theological categories, the Fall sets the stage for a multiplicity of fractures; it is a disordering of our impulse towards unity. Polanyi’s analysis of the self-regulating market, held together with the theological categories of de Lubac, provides a historical account of the emergence of a socio-economic and political structure that manifests this social disintegration inaugurated at the Fall.

Finally, my third chapter explores de Lubac’s theological response to fragmentation as envisioned by his Eucharistic ecclesiology. For Henri de Lubac, human destiny is inseparable from humanity’s origin: salvation is envisioned as the restoration of the unity lost in the fall. The restored supernatural unity between God and the human person and the restoration of human social unity are both part of the same salvific work of Christ.

The salvific work of Christ is realized through the sacramental action of the Church. Whereas sin fragments the collective body, the work of Christ in redemption (re)gathers the body of humankind together in the Church. The Church’s social unity bears witness to and realizes the spiritual unity restored by Christ. Accordingly, that which individuates and causes social fracture is not of God: de Lubac’s theological categories show that social unity is natural and normative, while social fracture is pathological. The social logic prescribed by the self-regulating market defines sociality in terms contradictory to social logic of the Church’s participation in the Eucharist.
An important point of divergence arises between de Lubac’s and Polanyi’s account of human sociality: the role of the land. De Lubac’s account largely takes for granted that humans are creatures that inhabit and are dependent upon a created world. It is not that de Lubac disputes this fact; rather it is simply not engaged as a contributing factor or defining characteristic of human social life. On the other hand, Polanyi understands the land to hold a central place in the enacting of human sociality, actively giving shape to social life and providing its necessities. While in de Lubac’s account one is not forced to recognize our creaturely dependence on the rest of Creation, Polanyi asserts that for one to imagine the person without the land, it would be like imagining them without hands or feet. Following Polanyi’s assertion, I maintain that for a full understanding of human sociality, we must consider the human community’s place within the larger order of Creation. De Lubac’s turn to the Eucharist provides a fruitful path to address this.

The unity envisioned by de Lubac for the Church is not only a human unity. De Lubac is right in tying this unity inextricably to the Eucharist, for such an assertion illuminates the binding of the Church’s unity to the Divine unity of the Trinity. But I would suggest the this Eucharistic unity brings the Church closer to its earthly identity as well, for the Church’s unity is one in accord with all redeemed Creation. From the land is gathered wheat, taken and crushed in to the flour that will become the Bread of Life. It is my argument that the land itself can be understood to be a participant in the social formation provided by the Eucharist.
According to Polanyi, “Traditionally, land and labor are not separated; labor forms part of life, land remains part of nature, life and nature form an articulate whole.”\textsuperscript{151} The shift from natural acquisition and sustenance to (artificial) industrial production and wage labor placed a new-found distinction between humanity and the land. The atomized individual exists not only as stranger among kin, but lives estranged from the natural world.

As “Fruit of the Earth, and work of human hands,” words often passed over quickly or not even verbalized in the Mass, the Eucharist is brought before God as a deeply agrarian offering. In these words we realize that our giving thanks to God and his response of giving a worthy sacrifice are both, in some way, tied up with the soil and human work. Should the earth refuse to yield its fruit, we would have no Eucharist. In these word also is found the articulate whole just described by Polanyi. In the Eucharist, land and life are not estranged, nor are they commodities.

At one time, this sacrifice was deeply intertwined with the communities of its celebration. The wheat was grown. Vines where tended. Bread was made. Wine was fermented. Ironically, in our technologically driven age, we can talk about the sacraments offering some sort of immediacy between us and God. It seems to me, in a different material structuring of society, one would (or maybe should) be painfully aware of how much these sacraments point to our eschatological \textit{waiting}. The few of us who may garden know that feeling, the long (yet no less active) pause before the ripening of that precious fruit. But realistically, we have little, or probably no, conception of what it means to tend to and grow the elements of the Mass. Further, it is likely we have no idea

\textsuperscript{151} Polanyi, \textit{The Great Transformation}, 187.
who or where these elements came from. We are seriously divorced from the back-breaking work of what it means to offer to God the fruits of such labor. Furthermore, the production of the elements used in the Mass are wed very intimately to the industrial agricultural complex, so that the materiality of our offering seems to be something quite different. Thank God for his Grace and ex opere operato—the sins of His people still seem to inflict themselves on His most precious body.

Polanyi argues that prior to the rise of the market economy the land and body were held within an integral system of reciprocity. These deeply interwoven relationships sustain a social importance of the land for habitation, nourishment, and also the place in which community is enacted. To inhabit a place is to be shaped by its landscape, boundaries, and frontiers, making the land necessary not only for the cultivation and acquisition of sustenance, but also for the cultural vitality of a people. Polanyi argues that this deeply knit social fabric between the land and a people was the normative context for pre-market social life.

Pre-market economic action requires a tacit, experiential knowledge of the land. Land could not be regarded in terms defined merely by production and gain; rather land and peoples made up an integrated whole, a system of sustenance and reciprocity. Economy is not simply the provision of material objects for the physical survival of the family, but also includes training in the life of wisdom and work. Unlike the market society of the modern era, limitless production aimed toward superfluous gain is not in accord with the natural order. An economic system built on such models of production places the human person in disordered relation to the natural functioning of Creation. To erase these social characteristics defines the land primarily in the realm of commodity, a
passive storehouse to provide for human want-satisfaction, and subsequently uprooting and dislocating the socio-ecological base of human life. Land and people become anonymous: the body economic is reconfigured into units for efficient market exchange.

My argument is not that ‘community’ or some form of social unity cannot exist in a capitalist order; rather these pre-existing thick forms of community tend to be exchanged for thinner, more superficial forms of connectivity. As de Lubac affirms, the Fall was a dis-ordering, not a complete loss, of our impulse toward unity. Such a social impulse remains, but in dis-integration and substitution. A sort of cooperation between people groups may still exist in capitalism, but it is most often understood not in terms of reciprocity, but defined by contractual exchange. Certain types of ‘communities’ of persons may still exist, but largely as aggregate assemblages whose practices are ordered toward or defined by the “liberty” of individuals in the market. It is the task of the Church in history through her sacramental practice to struggle against those forces which divide and substitute, showing-forth the true unity which is our redemption.

Similarly, a kind of integration between people and land is still present in the market economy: “pieces” of the land still surround us, but in an entirely different translation. They appear in post-production form for use and enjoyment. Raw material, mined and scraped from the earth, is fed into mills to be refined and processed. Factories reconfigure their elements, fashioning them into objects (both of necessity and pleasure), to then be placed on the market for buying and selling. While these actions are by Aristotle’s definition artificial, human work does not produce ex nihilo: that which is made by human hands has its source already within the created order. Human bodies and nature are no-doubt integrated in the current market system, but the principle their
connection is wholly different: they are connected via their inclusion in the chain of artificial production. This “new integration of man and nature” that is in Polanyi’s words “so unsuccessfully attempted”, renders the very body of society and its “old social tissue” cut to pieces. Flesh and blood, soil and root no longer form a cosmos, a created world of reciprocity and natural order, but are now pieces and parts able to be configured for the highest capital gain.

Polanyi’s emphasis on the land as a central contributor to the social unity of humanity shows us a blind spot in the social theory of de Lubac: any attempt to “fix” fractured human sociality without addressing the false notion of land as commodity will not provide any lasting “fix”. It will only seek to correct one aspect of a disordered whole. The work of Christ is tied up in a reconciliation involving the whole Cosmos. The fall cursed the ground, bringing forth thorns and turning human work to toil: the redemption would not be complete if it did not release this curse too. The redeemed human community is one which lives in the reality of a redeemed Cosmos, a re-entrance into the Garden to till and keep.

While de Lubac’s ecclesiology passes over or misses the social role of the land for human unity, his understanding of the Eucharist can be used to address this failure of imagination on the land. The Eucharist itself binds our sociality to a mystical materiality of that which is both “fruit of the earth, work of human hands” and Christ our Redemption. The materiality of the Eucharist shows-forth a unity-of-totality that is true to de Lubac’s social analysis: Creation and Creator knit back together in the saving work of Christ. Similarly, it bears a profound witness to a redeemed integration of land and body (as opposed to that which is “so unsuccessfully attempted” by market society). In
the Eucharist, land and body are not only tied up in the redemption of the world, but through the Holy Spirit become that which they proclaim: the Body and Blood of Christ. In this way, the social reparation wrought by the Eucharist, as described by de Lubac is extended to encompass the social fragmentation of the land so described by Polanyi.

*Toward Defining Social Practice in the Eucharist*

I have argued that the Eucharist and Market present us with competing logics of social formation. How do we understand these two logics of formation when the body, social and individual, occupies the space of their confrontation? We receive the Eucharist, which according to de Lubac is actively knitting us back together and redeeming us from our fragmented state, while at the same time participating in a Market society, which according to Polanyi is working ever to further individuate us. Holding Polanyi in conversation with de Lubac allows us to envision lived social practices which can counter this intersection of contrary social logics, giving primacy to the social formation of the Eucharist. It is this starting point which further reflection must begin.

The Eucharistic and sacramental unity of the Mystical Body is disruptive to the distinct categorization of the modern atomization of everyday life. The principle logic of the Church’s Eucharistic unity cannot be maintained as an addendum to daily life and practice; it is enfleshed in the movements of redeemed humanity. The Body’s movement in the liturgy and participation in Eucharist demystifies and finds curious the “invisible hand” of the autonomous, self-regulating market. Fidelity to the Mystical Body of Christ qualifies and holds questionable one’s participation in those particular structures which inherently individualize and further disintegrate human communities.
The fundamental question for the material enactment of de Lubac’s ecclesial vision is how “politics”, “economics”, “ecology” and “social life” are to remain intertwined in a social body that exists in liberalism. Modern society, much to the benefit of liberal economics, makes politics, economics, and social life distinct and autonomous moral spheres. The character of “ordinary life” in the spheres, far from demonstrating any form of authentic unity, becomes an aggregate of divergent influences, to which the “supernatural” or “divine” occupies one facet among many. The unifying grace embodied by the Church refuses to be relegated to an abstract sphere outside of, or merely an additive to the activity of “ordinary life”. Thus social action within the Church produces a single body, transforming the nature of ordinary, everyday life in relation to the sacramental and liturgical practices of the Body of Christ.

It seems that the season has come for the Church to return her hand to the plough, to let her hands sink once more into God’s good earth. The Eucharist provides for us a radical pedagogy, returning us to the deep roots of our restoration. Christian tradition holds that the particularity of the world’s redemption was, in its earliest moments, contained in Nazareth, in the home of a holy family. Nostalgic imagery aside, the material-divine elements of Eucharist where instituted by hands which knew also the plane and plough. A wholly Catholic vision of a radical human-ecology, the work of re-embedding economics in the relationships of kin, community and land is not foreign to our great Tradition, though it must be cultivated once more.\textsuperscript{152} Inherently, the

\textsuperscript{152} There are those who are doing this good work of cultivation, seeking to re-vision an economics based on home, hand, and land. Among those are Ched Myers, whose Watershed Discipleship seeks to challenge contemporary notions of ‘Creation Care’ by re-situating ecological theology and practice within the places of their enactment (literally, in their own watershed). Others, following the fertile path of the early 20\textsuperscript{th}
sacramental unity envisioned by de Lubac must include all facets of life: kin, community, land and polis.

century Catholic Land Movement are seeking to return their families to the land and relearn the skills necessary for a radical home and village economy. In a similar vain, there are those seeking out the original vision of the Catholic Worker, whose co-founder Peter Maurin understood the only remedy for capitalism and urban plight was to scrap the whole experiment and get people out of the cities through houses of hospitality and land-based schools (or agronomic universities, as Peter called them).


Speltz, George H. 1945. *The Importance of Rural Life according to the Philosophy of St.*


