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## Ecclesial Events and Quotidian Struggles: An Imagination of Political Theology based on the Thought of Christos Yannaras and Alasdair MacIntyre

### Abstract

This paper imaginatively brings together the concept of the ecclesial event in Christos Yannaras' thought and the idea of virtue ethics in Alasdair MacIntyre's theory. Yannaras believes that ecclesial events are ascetical and erotic. Meanwhile, MacIntyre confirms a communitarian notion centered on three phases, namely practice, narrative, and moral tradition. As such, I understand MacIntyre emphasizing the importance of the struggle of a community with the context of its



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presence to achieve mutual benefits. Both concepts propose two things. The first ascetic-erotic character of the church as virtue ethics. Secondly, I suggest the quotidian event as an ecclesial event that wrestles with all aspects of the daily life of the church community. As a result, I propose a political theology conversation centered on an ascetic-erotic struggle in everyday life. In the end, I will have this proposal to be addressed to Eka Darmaputera, a Protestant Indonesian political theologian.

### Keywords

ascetic-erotic, quotidian event, virtue ethics, quotidian struggles

## 1 Introduction

This paper focuses on constructing a political theology based on the idea of *Being* and relational ontology that make up the *ecclesial event* in the thought of Christos Yannaras (1930) that understands as a foothold of guidelines for “relational” experiences. Yannaras strongly affirmed the implications of personhood and freedom for human beings as a rejection of the anti-individuation and priority of the community.<sup>1</sup> This imaginative process would involve a very influential Aristotelian philosopher, Alasdair MacIntyre (1929). MacIntyre indicated modern

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<sup>1</sup> Christos Yannaras, *The Freedom of Morality*, trans. Elizabeth Briere (Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1984); Christos Yannaras, *On the Absence and Unknowability of God: Heidegger and the Areopagite*, trans. Haralambos Ventis, 2nd ed. (London; New York: T & T Clark International, 2005); Christos Yannaras, *Person and Eros*, trans. Norman Russell (Brookline, Mass: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2007).

morality has failed and instead gave birth to individualism. Therefore, he argued that moral conversation should return to the *virtue ethics* of human existence.<sup>2</sup>

I argue that MacIntyre's virtue ethics ideas could further harm the ontological notion of Yannaras in a political theology conversation. MacIntyre encourages a discussion of moral philosophy centered on the community that has its narrative and its history. Therefore, in this paper, I propose a political theology that focused on ascetic-erotic struggles of church in everyday life.

This paper will consist of three parts. The first section will explain the underlying idea of Yannaras about the ontological relationship of *Being*, in this case, the Trinity. Secondly, I will describe MacIntyre's thought that rejects the notion of enlightenment morality. Thirdly, I will be the two thinkers. My thesis statement in this paper will be elaborated further in this section. The fourth part will be to have the relationship of the *quotidian event* with political theology in the context of Indonesia; specifically, I will dialogue with Eka Darmaputera (1942-2005), an Indonesian Protestant theologian.

## 2 Christos Yannaras and Ecclesial Event

Christos Yannaras was a Greek laity Orthodox theologian. Anthony Kaniaru said that to understand his thoughts, his readers must know several ontological categories that are characteristic of Yannaras. These categories are (1) the priority of particularity rather than universality, (2) person and Relationality, (3) The ecstatic character of the existence of a person, (4) Eros, (5) Uni-

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<sup>2</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 3rd ed. (Notre Dame, Ind: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007).

versality person, (6) The unity of the person, (7) Distinction of the nature/essence with energy, (8) human-divine persons, and (9) church.<sup>3</sup> These categories relate to each other in the entire building of Yannaras's thoughts.

If the ninth category is narrowed, the center of the theology of Yannaras is the erotic movement of the Trinity. Therefore, in this section, I will be working on the erotic concepts of the Trinity of Yannaras as the basis of Christian ethics. This section outlines some of Yannaras's points of thought, namely the Trinity and the erotic presence of God, the liturgical ethos as an ecclesial event, and the ascetical movement of the church.

### 3 Trinity and the Erotic Presence of God

Yannaras in *On the Absence and Unknowability of God* is constructively in the case of the Apophatic theologian, Pseudo-Dionysius (living among the 5-6 CE), and the anthology of Martin Heidegger (1889-1976). He understands God as the community of the person, the Trinity. As a Dionysius, Yannaras is also consequent to the distinction of the essence and energy of God. To imagine the possibility of a divine-human communion (*theosis*), Yannaras addressed him with the ontotheology of Martin Heidegger.<sup>4</sup>

Heidegger, as described by Yannaras, is a dialogue with Friedrich Nietzsche, who proposes the European Nihilism. For Yannaras, the claimed death of God, by Nietzsche, is not intended to suggest atheism, but an attempt to shed metaphysics con-

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<sup>3</sup> Antony Kaniaru, "Rethinking Rationality: Theological Anthropology in Light of Profound Cognitive Impairment, Relationality, Embodiment and Personhood" (Doctoral Dissertation, Durham University, 2012), p. 90.

<sup>4</sup> Christos Yannaras, *On the Absence and Unknowability of God*.

versations about God dominated by epistemic knowledge. Yannaras agrees against Nietzsche's reading that claims God (God of Western metaphysics) is dead. He also claimed that the concept of the Western God was almost nothing more than a rational idea or abstract concept. "At best, 'God' stands for an idolized, conventional 'value.'" As a result, God is absent in Western thought, and the metaphysical concept is not connected with the human experience.<sup>5</sup> In short, Yannaras had harsh criticism of Western thought over God's absence in political life. Against the absence of God in Western conversation, Yannaras returned to *the unknowability of God*. He pointed out this approach does not reject the knowledge of God, but rather the acceptance of the limitation of understanding to understand God, or *via negativa*. God's essence is the reality of unknowability that is absolute and incomprehensible by humans. Though unrecognizable, God still reveals himself through his energies. Thus, man is possible to know the way God is, not his essence.<sup>6</sup> Yannaras further confirms that,

The *mode of existence* that we know only 'by participation' – only to the extent that we participate – we call *personal*. God acts in a *personal* manner, he acts as a Person, or rather as a community of persons, a Trinity of Persons. Our participation and communion in the energies of God acquaint us with the otherness of the three personal Hypostases (...). We characterize as *personal* this mode of existence that becomes known to us 'by participation,' primarily because it corresponds to the experience we have of human personal existence.<sup>7</sup>

Therefore, the Trinity as *Being-as-person*, the relational reality, is the divine reality in which man participates.<sup>8</sup> It departs from

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<sup>5</sup> Ibidem, p. 21.

<sup>6</sup> Ibidem, p. 83.

<sup>7</sup> Ibidem, p. 84.

<sup>8</sup> Christos Yannaras, *Person and Eros*, p. 19.

the terms πρόσωπον (*prosopon*) meaning dealing or the view that leads to a person or something. Thus, a person is a motion of ec-stasis (motion out of him) to another.<sup>9</sup> For Yannaras, the idea of a person is crucial in all of its theological buildings, as the person is fundamentally a relational entity.

Yannaras then expanded his theological building by asserting that the reality of *Being-as-person* occurred erotically. According to him, *Eros* is the whole way to get to the knowledge of God. It correlates *person*, *eros*, and *otherness* as the basis of ontological relations. Otherness is realized and recognized through relationships with others (*in-relation-to-the-other*).<sup>10</sup> A relational *person* is a face *being*. For him, the existence of a person must be ecstatic. Therefore, human nature is present to others. In short, human nature is erotic.<sup>11</sup> A person's idea of Yannaras is also a critique of Western individuation.

#### 4 Liturgical Ethos as Ecclesial Event

Evaggelia Grigoropoulou said that Yannaras not only spoke about personal consciousness at the theoretical level but also in elaboration on the solid base and the search for the truth of existence and the way of human life or even more specifically about how human existence is connected to church life. A practical life with a person's perspective, Yannaras is in *The Freedom of Morality*.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibidem, p. 21.

<sup>10</sup> Christos Yannaras, *Relational Ontology* (Brookline, Mass: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2011), p. 33.

<sup>11</sup> Christos Yannaras, *Person and Eros*, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> Evaggelia Grigoropoulou, "The Early Development of the Thought of Christos Yannaras" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Durham, 2008), p. 188.

Yannaras confirms that there is a connection between the nature of the *person* and the life of the church. The church life is the fullness of human nature. For Yannaras, the church is not an institution, but an “ecclesial event.” Intentionally, he used the “ecclesial event” to interpret the Greek “ecclesia,” which refers to the function of maintaining and structuring public spaces. Ecclesial event is the event of Christ and the celebration of the Eucharist. Therefore, the Church is the realization of the community of person. Ecclesial event is the elimination of the act of individualism.<sup>13</sup>

Yannaras understands the realization and fulfillment of human nature are in the life of the church. He always attributed the church’s existence of morality, and true-life was present in the Ecclesial event. The morality for Yannaras, however, is not strictly a strict rule of man. Morality is precisely related to the effort of achieving an authentic existential essence based on the image and likeness of God. Grigoropoulou says that Yannaras’ view of the “Ecclesial event” only brings out the fundamental aspects of the Church, the Eucharistic character.<sup>14</sup>

So Yannaras investigated the ethos based on the Trinity to be adapted into the human ethos. He asserted that the ethos of Christian life found in the communion of the Persons of God, who formed his essence in a hypostasis of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Because the God who constituted life is a fact of love and communion of the person.<sup>15</sup>

About human morality, Yannaras defines as a human endeavor to link with its freedom to reach man as the image of God. Thus, the fall or the sinfulness is a rejection of man, freely, to participation in the life of loving communion, as the only possibility

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<sup>13</sup> Ibidem, p. 198.

<sup>14</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>15</sup> Christos Yannaras, *The Freedom of Morality*, pp. 16–17.

for man to be a hypostatic person. The human being was born of a human-free decision to reject communion with God and limited themselves to autonomy and independence. People need repentance, which is a quest for a life that realizes fellowship with God, a thirst for communion with Him.<sup>16</sup>

The Eucharist as the center of the liturgy manifests the person's life in the theanthropic nature of Christ, restoring the image of God to man, and the fullness of life in Trinitarian life. The liturgical ethos is an existential manifestation as well as the perfection of human ethics through the Eucharist that emits it into Trinitarian life. Therefore, the ethics of the Church rejects all philosophical, social, or religious ideas of individualistic values, private space, and individual standardization.<sup>17</sup> The liturgical ethos is not limited to humans, but also the world. Because the eucharist is the relationship between creator and creature.<sup>18</sup>

## **5 The Ascetical Movement of Church**

Orthodox Christianity is not a matter of individuation. The ascetical concept confirms the way of the human being who loves the others in the communion of person. The goal is to transform the human impersonal desires, manifest freedom of the person, and bring humanity to the life of Trinity.<sup>19</sup>

*Philokalia* is one of Christian tradition who proposes a love of "imperfect beauty" that is the fulfillment of the person and the restoration of the image of God that has been corrupted in man to achieve true beauty. Therefore, the ascetic movement of the

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 29–30.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 82.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 85.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 109.



church aims to give human beings the distinction and freedom of the person.<sup>20</sup>

Christian life rejected self-autonomy to participate in the divine life. These are the forms of the Eucharistic characters and the liturgical ethos extended into everyday life.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, Yannaras strongly resisted Pietism, even his refusal to be an ecclesiastical heresy. He affirmed Pietism as the moral alienation of salvation and thus abstain from the life of the Trinity.<sup>22</sup> The ontology of Trinity is a strong foundation to restore the essence of the church's ethics that transcends individualism and Pietism ethics. Thus, an ethical conversation transcends legalistic matters between good and wrong.<sup>23</sup>

The Christian ascetical characters are an essential event, a work of communion and person. Primarily, nature centers on the sacrament or mystery in liturgical celebrations.<sup>24</sup> For Yannaras, Western thought has no adequate moral idea. He proposed the liturgical ethos as a communal even social ethos. Being Christian means acting actively in opposition to social injustice and political oppression.<sup>25</sup> The standard of a communal ethos of the church is express in the Eucharistic event as the precondition. The bread and wine of the Eucharist are the Body and Blood of Christ and is a theanthropic reality. It is the first fruits or leaven of life, to transfiguration every facet, and every activity of human life becomes an opportunity for the communion.<sup>26</sup> The reason is that liturgy also understood as a mode of existence that not limited in church space but spreading into the world as

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<sup>20</sup> Ibidem, pp. 111–12.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem, p. 117.

<sup>22</sup> Ibidem, pp. 124–25.

<sup>23</sup> Ibidem, p. 37.

<sup>24</sup> Ibidem, p. 137.

<sup>25</sup> Ibidem, p. 211.

<sup>26</sup> Ibidem, p. 217.

a social and political event, which can also be the beginning of a social and political transformation.<sup>27</sup> Morality in Yannaras's thought is dominant with the eschatological dimension. It concentrates on morality at the liturgical celebrations. Liturgy is a way of having a changing church in society. Therefore, it is very apparent that Yannaras is very commune-centric.

The ontological base of Yannaras also affirmed in his relationship with political theology, especially in *A Note on Political Theology*. He cited Nikolai Fedorov (1829-1903), who said: "The political theory of the Church is the truth of the Holy Trinity." According to Yannaras, the truth of the Trinity is not a metaphysics principle or intellectual idea, but rather a historical incarnation. The Word becoming flesh through the Holy Spirit is a marker of the presence of God the Father. The church as the body of Christ is fully present in history at once, an eschatological reality. The church is the historical benchmark of *Eschaton* and eschatological manifestations of historical meaning.<sup>28</sup>

## 6 Alasdair MacIntyre and Virtue Ethics

After explaining the thought of Yannaras, I would elaborate on the idea of Alasdair MacIntyre, who could help Yannaras to assert her struggle with a particular context further. The particular that I mean is the local community. I think that the idea of Yannaras tends to be a Universalist, although, on the above exposure, Kaniaru says he is very particular.<sup>29</sup> In my opinion,

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<sup>27</sup> Ibidem, pp. 217–23.

<sup>28</sup> Christos Yannaras, "A Note on Political Theology," trans. Steven Peter Tschlis, *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 27, no. 1 (1983), p. 56.

<sup>29</sup> Anthony Kaniaru, "Rethinking Rationality: Theological Anthropology in Light of Profound Cognitive Impairment, Relationality, Embodiment and Personhood," p. 90.

however, Yannaras eventually designed an ecclesiological blueprint. However, I will not discuss it further in this paper. Therefore, I glanced at the virtue philosophy of MacIntyre.

MacIntyre believes that the time of Enlightenment that prioritizes rationality and self-autonomy (unplugging from history and context) affects the communities and morality that constituted within it. Morality became ineffective, and quite the contrary had been a competing moral framework since they separated from the original context in which they had emerged. Therefore, MacIntyre asserted that the Enlightenment project should be rejected.

According to him, the project of Enlightenment stuttering answered a direct question like, "What sort of person am I to become?" The issue has a teleological character that is precisely fundamental in human life in a commune because the answer will depend heavily on the capacity of the building and caring for the community. Addressing the matter, MacIntyre says that moral conversation needs to return to *virtue first of all* in Aristotle's thinking. He developed his thoughts on virtue ethics in three stages.

The first stage requires a background of what I shall call *a practice (italics mine)*, the second an account of what I have already characterized as *the narrative order* of a single human life and the third an account a good deal fuller than I have given up to now of what constitutes a *moral tradition*. Each later stage presupposes the earlier, but *not vice versa*. Each earlier stage is both modified by and reinterpreted in the light of, but also provides an essential constituent of each later stage. The progress in the development of the concept is closely related to, although

it does not recapitulate in any straightforward way, the history of the tradition of which it forms the core.<sup>30</sup>

MacIntyre's commitment to *Virtue Ethics* includes (a) meaningful social activities from which there is a virtue derived and discovers the main objectives, (b) narratives, and (c) traditions that investigate reasoning for human development and *telos*. I'll expose the three stages.

MacIntyre believes that *virtue ethics* allows people to achieve good in meaningful *internal activities*. The Internal meaning of MacIntyre refers to *internal good*, which differs from external goods such as money, wealth, and power. The use of the word practice refers to human efforts to achieve internal goods.<sup>31</sup> He proposed that every internal good be unique and can only be found in meaningful activities in question. Virtue is necessary to accept, nurture, organize, and bequeath meaningful activities. A newly initiated activity means requiring diligence, wisdom in the effort to achieve internal goodness.<sup>32</sup>

Any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative *human activity* through which *goods internal* to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those *standards of excellence* which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are *systematically extended*.<sup>33</sup>

Based on the definitive explanation, MacIntyre concentrates on meaningful social activities on the achievements of internal

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<sup>30</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, pp. 186–87; Jean Porter, “Tradition in the Recent Work of Alasdair MacIntyre,” in *Alasdair MacIntyre*, ed. Mark C. Murphy, *Contemporary Philosophy in Focus* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 40.

<sup>31</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 191.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 197.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 187.

goods in a meaningful activity. Internal goods are values that divided into an activity as well as a marker of the quality of the activity. Meaningful activities always practice in the community (human activity) for the achievement of internal goods.<sup>34</sup> Thus, each meaningful activity has the standards of excellence or benchmark of quality. Every meaningful activity has the moral benchmarks that allow it to endure. Lastly, the happenings of meaningful activities, the Community must familiarize (systematically extended) meaningful activities in the daily life of the community. MacIntyre confirms that virtue ethics maintain collective desire sustainability against the good of life. On top of internal goods, MacIntyre believes that human life is heading to fullness “for a conception of the good which will enable us to order other goods, for a conception of the good which will enable us to extend our understanding of the purpose and content of the virtues.”<sup>35</sup>

MacIntyre also confirms that meaningful activities are always communal. Therefore, for the continuity of a meaningful activity that has quality, a community requires *justice*, *courage*, and *truthfulness*. Justice is necessary for every member of the community to treat each other based on his or her services based on fair benchmarks. Communities need the courage to grow awareness and commitment to the interests of community members and communities. Meanwhile, the community needs truthfulness.<sup>36</sup>

Meanwhile, MacIntyre occupied a person’s narrative position as a constituent part of communal life. His activities may only un-

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<sup>34</sup> Ibidem, p. 188; Jean Porter, “Tradition in the Recent Work of Alasdair MacIntyre,” p. 41.

<sup>35</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 219.

<sup>36</sup> Ibidem, p. 192; Steven A. Stolz, *Alasdair MacIntyre, Rationality and Education: Against Education of Our Age* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2018), p. 55.

derstand in his narrative, along with his community. MacIntyre believes that virtue ethics work in a community narrative that understands and directs its goals on human Telos. His narrative also provided him with a broad exposure to the integrity of life.<sup>37</sup> The last stage that MacIntyre initiated is a moral tradition. For him, human life is an actualization of the human capacity to achieve the goods. In the teleological-communitarian perspective of MacIntyre, the human capacity can only be active in the community process. He pointed out that

the communal nature of *the quest for the good (italics mine)*, in turn, implies that it has a *history extending beyond the life of the individual*. It is the historical character of the quest for the good that situates it within a tradition: "I find myself *part of a history* and that is generally to say, whether I like it or not, whether I recognize it or not, *one of the bearers of a tradition*."<sup>38</sup>

The path to achieving virtue ethics is essentially a historical procession that transcends individual interests for the achievement of communal living goodness. Interestingly, Jean Porter, a lecturer from the University of Notre Dame, captures the presence of MacIntyre realism towards tradition. The traditions for MacIntyre do not need to be repaired and defined clearly. On the contrary, MacIntyre affirmed the character of the tradition open to the fact that they gained their unity from the orientation of the goods (external goods) contested in the tradition itself. The community requires a struggle for life and sustainable traditions. MacIntyre believes that a living tradition

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<sup>37</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 205; Brad J. Kallenberg, "The Master of Argument of MacIntyre's *After Virtues*," in *Virtues & Practices in the Christian Tradition: Christian Ethics after MacIntyre*, ed. Nancy Murphy, Brad J. Kallenberg, and Mark Thiessen Nation (Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1997), p. 23.

<sup>38</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 221.

plundered, his ideas embodied in a social body, and the concept of internal goodness becomes the constitution of the tradition.<sup>39</sup> MacIntyre's virtue ethics provides the best source for creating and confirming Christian ethical order claims, or Christian meta-ethics. Nancey Murphy identifies Christianity as a tradition (or related tradition) with formative texts.<sup>40</sup> MacIntyre started by identifying meaningful activities that constituted Community formation. How Christian traditions understand the human telos and how they have inflamed the life of the ecclesial quotidian at once in its encounter with the contemporary world. According to him, *virtue ethics* inspire how the Church understands his moral life.<sup>41</sup>

About the *virtue ethics*, I've been collecting the conclusion from Porter. He said,

in order to move toward a *conception of virtue* (italics mine), we must move to the next stage of development, namely, *a conception of human life as a unified whole*. MacIntyre develops this conception through a reflection on the intelligibility of *human actions*, which on his view presuppose that actions are embedded in an *ongoing narrative that gives them meaning and point*. This in turn implies that our lives as a whole are held together by a narrative unity, which is central to the identity of the subject and forms the precondition for responsibility for one's past actions. At the same time, *the narrative unity of an individual life is teleological*; it presupposes the possibility of *evaluating a human life*, in terms of its success or failure, as a life well lived or a life perverted, frustrated,

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<sup>39</sup> Jean Porter, "Tradition in the Recent Work of Alasdair MacIntyre," 42; MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 222.

<sup>40</sup> Nancey Murphy, "Using MacIntyre's Method in Christian Ethics," in *Virtues & Practices in the Christian Tradition: Christian Ethics after MacIntyre*, ed. Nancey Murphy, Brad J. Kallenberg, and Mark Thiessen Nation (Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 1997), p. 30.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 31.

or wasted. This, in turn, presupposes that human lives are oriented toward a good that *transcends the individual*, and at this point we move to the last stage in the development of the concept of a virtue.<sup>42</sup>

In short, MacIntyre's preference is an effort to reach community benefits and exceed individualist practice. The process also continues to evaluate the various things that have been undertaken.

## 7 Conversation between Yannaras and MacIntyre: A Construction of Political Theology

Before further enshrining the constructive ratio of the two thoughts above, Demetrius Harper, an Orthodox theologian of Holy Trinity Orthodox Seminary, United States had attempted to further the weft of Yannaras and MacIntyre. He also discusses the dimension of *incommensurability* between Yannaras and MacIntyre. The only point of the rally that Harper talks are that they both admire the moral ethic of the Western thought that tends to produce individualism. Yannaras bases his criticism on the person in the Trinity ontology relationship, while MacIntyre found it on the integrity of a community that directs the process to human purpose.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless, Harper has not shown a constructive ratio and relationship between the two. Therefore, in this section, I will be able to have the two thinkers to construct political theology.

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<sup>42</sup> Jean Porter, "Tradition in the Recent Work of Alasdair MacIntyre," p. 42.

<sup>43</sup> Demetrius Harper, "The Purpose of Morality in The Theological Schema of Christos Yannaras," in *Christos Yannaras: Philosophy, Theology, Culture*, ed. Andreas Andreopoulos and Demetrius Harper (New York: Routledge, 2019).



## 8 *Eros-as-Virtue* and Political Theology

In my opinion, MacIntyre's struggling with self-communitized for the *Telos* can find answers in the theological buildings of Yannaras. This achievement prioritizes interests and community benefits. Yannaras with radical says that ontologically, humans are *being-as-relation*. For example, in the teleological scheme of Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics referred to by MacIntyre, it confirms that,

within that teleological scheme there is a fundamental contrast between *man-as-he-happens-to-be* and *man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realized-his-essential nature*. Ethics is the science which is to enable men to understand how they make the transition from the former state to the latter. Ethics therefore in this view presupposes *some account of potentiality and act*, some account of the essence of man as a rational animal and above all some account of the human *telos*.<sup>44</sup>

MacIntyre outlines human nature that has the potential to realize its naturals and ethics as a human mover to realize nature. The first two schemes, nature and potency, seem very prescriptive, and the final scheme becomes the standard of human morality. If Nicomachean ethics as perspective in reading Yannaras's thoughts, then the results will be as follows; Very much looked at Yannaras using different diction with a slightly similar goal. *Man-as-he-happens-to-be* in the idea of Yannaras is *being-as-relation*. Therefore, according to me, Yannaras more radically radiated human nature rather than MacIntyre. For Yannaras, people are ontologically relational beings.

*Man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realized-his-essential nature* is freedom. The definition of freedom for Yannaras is that human being essentially has the freedom to realize their nature. There-

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<sup>44</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 52.

fore, ethics in the thought of Yannaras is *person-as-eros*. The person who presents himself (ecstasy) to the other as the realization. The erotic fact, it is an ecclesial event that continues to celebrate the Eucharist in the liturgy.<sup>45</sup>

The ecclesial event is the erotic face of Trinity's relationship. With the Trinity as the ontological basis, the ecclesial event is also supposed to be erotic events. Erotic event affirms Christian anthropology that transcends individualism towards the motion of the person in the community. The person is the constitution of the community and disclosure from *Being-as-relation*.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, in the dialogue with MacIntyre, I believe that *person-as-Eros* is an ethical virtue or *eros-as-virtues*. Thus, Eros is the internal goodness that is narrated and practiced in the face of the tradition of a community.

Concerning political theology, MacIntyre said that virtue ethics might only express in the life of *polis* or the public sphere. It seems the conversation about virtue ethics, in the end, does have relates to the discourse of the public area. He said,

what is *central to that tradition is the notion of a public good* which is prior to and characterizable independently of the summing of individual desires and interests. Virtue in the individual is nothing more or less than allowing the public good to provide the standard for individual behavior. The virtues are those dispositions which uphold that overriding allegiance.<sup>47</sup>

Nancey Murphy also asserts that virtue ethics is the form of the collective life of the church and their relationship with the world.<sup>48</sup> MacIntyre even suspects if a religious community separate from political discourse, then there is inconsistent with

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<sup>45</sup> Christos Yannaras, *The Freedom of Morality*, p. 85.

<sup>46</sup> Christos Yannaras, *Person and Eros*, p. 223.

<sup>47</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, pp. 236–37.

<sup>48</sup> Nancey Murphy, "Using MacIntyre's Method in Christian Ethics," p. 31.

the idea about God's power. This irrelevance marked God's inability to work in the public sphere; even he said that aloud,

if our religion is fundamentally *irrelevant to our politics*, then we are recognizing the political as a realm outside the reign of God. To divide the sacred from the secular is to recognize *God's action only within the narrowest limits*. A religion which recognizes such a division, as does our own, is one on *the point of dying*.<sup>49</sup>

In short, the effort to achieve goods is political. I also argue that erotic character as a priority precisely practiced in the political framework or to make goods in public space. Therefore, communitarianism should be erotic or self-offering to others, or extra-communitarianism.

## 9 Ecclesial Event and Quotidian Struggle

In this part, I argue that the moral tradition is not the inheritance of the unbroken tradition, but the church's struggles in daily life. Therefore, I appreciate MacIntyre's attention that centered on the community process to reaching their *telos*. The community should put common goods in mind rather than personal interests.

MacIntyre's idea may give different lenses to understand the Christian traditions that generally always put the big narrative. Narrating the meaningful activities and Christian traditions must also appreciate local tales of Christianity. Diana Butler Bass in *A People's History of Christianity* says that the modern history of Christianity is the Big-C History of Christianity, name-

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<sup>49</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *Marxism: An Interpretation* (London: SCM Press, 1953), p. 10.

ly Constantine, Christendom, Calvin, and Christian America.<sup>50</sup> Bass shows that Christian traditions always dominated by great narrations or specific figures. Therefore, in my opinion, in MacIntyre's *narrative* discourse, each local Christian community also needs to build awareness of the local narratives of their community.

The local narratives are the narratives of their struggles with various things in everyday life, such as struggles with rice-repellent to harvest, life rituals that are collectively practiced, struggle with education, poverty, and many other things. This kind of narrative confirms that God Trinity is genuinely present and plundered in every aspect of human life. I understand that the ecclesial event can understand as the struggles of the church in the context of his presence. I call this *quotidian event*,<sup>51</sup> i.e., The struggles of the church as a Eucharistic-erotic community in quotidian life.

About participation into the ecclesial event, Yannaras affirmed, "participation to the ecclesial event is an *empirical knowledge of the end* or ultimate purpose of my existence: it is a foretaste of the fulfillment of the relationship, which is the same hope and purpose that the Church proclaims for the end of times: 'That they all be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us' (John 17, 21-23)."<sup>52</sup>

Based on Yannaras's idea, I understand the *quotidian event* as I have defined it, which is an empirical knowledge of eschatology.

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<sup>50</sup> Diana Butler Bass, *A People's History of Christianity: The Other Side of the Story* (New York: HarperOne, 2010), p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> I borrowed the definition of quotidian from *vocabulary.com* that defines *quotidian events* as *the everyday details of life* "Quotidian," *Vocabulary.com*, accessed October 24, 2019, <https://www.vocabulary.com/dictionary/quotidian>.

<sup>52</sup> Christos Yannaras, "Eschatology: End of Time or Freedom from Time" (November 14, 2005), p. 2.

The empirical knowledge is inherent in the ecclesial struggle in their quotidian life, which continues towards the divine-human communion.

Thus, the idea of tradition becomes more dynamic. Yannaras believes that tradition is not the process of undermining the doctrine and meaningful activity but transmits the *mode of existence* from one generation to another in every momentum. Therefore, tradition becomes dynamic in this matter. For him, the forms which have been handed down also do not need to be improved, but the way of existence is still vital for tradition.<sup>53</sup> The transmission process realized in quotidian life. The Church, according to him, has always been the divine mode of being in life. If understood in the MacIntyre lens, the ecclesial event is a logical extension of the Christian narratives on an ongoing basis. The actors, creatively, can continue to develop tradition to maintain its continuity.<sup>54</sup>

Erotic community as an ethic of Christian virtue embodied socially because it is a way of being in community. Then becomes an authoritative text or voice that is meaningful activities again by each generation.

Nevertheless, the tradition will remain alive as long as the text conversation is relevant and has a continuing meaning.<sup>55</sup> Tradition, of course, is a longstanding argument. However, the narrative will help evaluate the current state of moral tradition. In my opinion, at this point, MacIntyre stressed that the speech would continue to develop creatively. Traditions continue to live if their ideas are developed collectively and develop over

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<sup>53</sup> Christos Yannaras, *Against Religion: The Alienation of the Ecclesial Event* (Brookline, Massachusetts: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2013).

<sup>54</sup> Brad J. Kallenberg, "The Master of Argument of MacIntyre's After Virtues," p. 25.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*.

time and give birth to compromises<sup>56</sup> that are formulated and reformulated.<sup>57</sup>

## 10 Contextualization in the Indonesian Context: Dialogue with Eka Darmaputera<sup>58</sup>

Gereja-gereja kita sedang menuju kepada *irrelevansi total!* Padahal sesuatu yang tidak relevan, tidak mungkin berfungsi. Dan sesuatu yang tidak berfungsi? Mati! ... Gereja-gereja kita mengalami *insignifikansi total*. Sesuatu yang dianggap tidak berarti, sulit sekali bisa berfungsi. Dan sesuatu yang tidak berfungsi? Mati!"<sup>59</sup>

Our churches are heading for *total irrelevance!* Even if something is not relevant, it might not work. And something does not work? Die! ... Our churches experience *total insignificance*. Something that is considered meaningless, it is tough to function. And something does not work? Die!"

In *Pergulatan Kehadiran Kristen di Indonesia* (The Struggle of Christian Presence in Indonesia), Darmaputera said that the prophetic voice of the churches in Indonesia increasingly decayed in the public sphere. The dread of Darmaputera by Joas Adiprasetya is called the milestone of Darmaputera's theologi-

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<sup>56</sup> Kompromi dari kata Anglo-French *com-promise* yang berarti janji-janji yang disepakati bersama "Compromise."

<sup>57</sup> Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, p. 222.

<sup>58</sup> Eka Darmaputera is pastor-theologian of Gereja Kristen Indonesia (The Indonesian Christian Church). He finished his doctoral degree (1982) in Boston College, Amerika Serikat. His dissertation title is *Pancasila and the Search for Identity and Modernity in Indonesian Society - An Ethical and Cultural Analysis*.

<sup>59</sup> Eka Darmaputera, *Pergulatan Kehadiran Kristen Di Indonesia: Teks-Teks Terpilih Eka Darmaputera (The Struggles of Christian Presence in Indonesia: Selected Texts of Eka Darmaputera)*, ed. Martin L. Sinaga et al. (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2001), p. 470.

cal repentance. Because, previously, Darmaputera believed in the idea of participatory ecclesiology. In Adiprasetya's observation, Darmaputera rejects the concept of participatory because the idea is easily trapped in equalizing participation in the Kingdom of God with government projects. As a result, the church weakens its critical lust towards the government, even when the government opposes the values of the Kingdom of God.<sup>60</sup>

The milestone located when Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia (PGI: Councils of Churches in Indonesia) as representatives of Indonesian Christians handed the two kilograms of gold to Suharto (second president of Indonesia). The Darmaputera protests did not receive any positive response from the PGI's members. Therefore, Darmaputera asserted that the church had already lost its *credibility* and no longer respected its people and society. He has directly said that his immediate cause is the ecclesiology that is too resting on the development of the institution and the structure of the church.<sup>61</sup>

Towards the irrelevance of the church, Darmaputera proposed that the church should present herself as a community of exemplary, particularly in the moral and spiritual aspects. By making the church as the exemplary community, the church will not be a frightening community, and maybe respected, unmatched, and his voice heard.<sup>62</sup>

I agree with Darmaputera mainly because the church is increasingly in the context of its presence, even there are many more

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<sup>60</sup> Joas Adiprasetya, "Eka Darmaputera: Sang Teolog Di Rute Penghubung Gereja Dan Masyarakat (Eka Darmaputera: The Theologian on the Route Connecting the Church and the Society)" (Agustus 2019), p. 5.

<sup>61</sup> Eka Darmaputera, *PKKI*, 472; Joas Adiprasetya, "Eka Darmaputera," p. 4.

<sup>62</sup> Eka Darmaputera, *PKKI*, pp. 472–73; Joas Adiprasetya, "Eka Darmaputera," pp. 5–6.

church irrelevance happening in Indonesia. Using the event's quotidian lens, I believe that the Church's irrelevance or relevance characterized by its struggle and struggles with all aspects of its attendance context. The Darmaputera Model of precision confirms its political significance. Although it seems he is very keeping the distance with the ruler. I tried reading Darmaputera's model exemplary of the *quotidian event's* lens.

*Quotidian event* is a *mode of existence*, a community of churches that wrestle with the context of its presence in all aspects. The reason is, the exemplary model can referred as a mode of existence. However, does this model wrestle with the context of its presence? My answer, yes, at once not! Yes, because of the background of the idea of the emergence of exemplary precisely due to the struggle Darmaputera with the context of his presence. But it is not, because it says that the church would return to the missionary identity, the pilot community as a moral force.<sup>63</sup> In my opinion, the model also obscures the struggles of the church community in the context of a broader presence, by merely making themselves as examples for others. Lastly, as an alternative, I propose the model of the precision Darmaputera as an event of daily life or quotidian event, I call it *exemplarity-as-event*. A model of presence that is not merely concentrating as an example for the context of its presence, but on an erotic basis reflects the erotic community that is present for others.

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<sup>63</sup> Eka Darmaputera, *PKKI*, p. 338; Joas Adiprasetya, "Eka Darmaputera," p. 5.



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