

## A ROLE FOR THE PRIVILEGED?

### SOLIDARITY AND THE UNIVERSITY IN THE WORK OF IGNACIO ELLACURÍA AND PAULO FREIRE

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#### **I. Introduction: Framing the Question**

I am the person referred to in the title of my paper, a privileged person. To be precise, I am white and male, and while I am far from rich (living in a one-income household on my income as a college teacher while my wife finishes a doctorate in theology), I did grow up in neighborhoods and schools where the medium income was in the top quarter.<sup>1</sup> I am not usually included in a listing of the disadvantaged, be it by race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status, and I am *not* objecting to the need to see these categories of advantage and disadvantage. Rather, in a world distorted by injustice and oppression, I want to reflect on the role of people like me (for instance, my students, most of whom come from backgrounds at least as privileged as mine), in helping to build a world with less injustice, poverty and oppression, a world in which power is controlled democratically. In other words, how does one who is not directly oppressed act in solidarity with those who are? I am interested in this question on multiple levels: as an individual who wants to do good; as a university professor who wants to interest his students in these topics; and as a thinker who wants to make sense of the difficult issue of solidarity between the privileged and the oppressed.

We should begin by defining some key terms: solidarity, the poor, and the oppressed. Solidarity is an active commitment to standing with the oppressed in their efforts to end their oppression. It can be summed up as: *acting with informed compassion to change unjust social structures in partnership with those who are disadvantaged by the unjust structures*. This formulation emphasizes the elements present in solidarity: we must care; we must do our homework and know what the situation is; we must act; the goal of the action must be to change the conditions of oppression, not merely to meet the immediate needs of the oppressed; and all of this must be done in partnership with the oppressed. The elements are interrelated: care, theory, practice and goals all influence, motivate, and are motivated by each other.

The “poor” are those who are materially poor, those whose lack of material resources causes a lack of opportunities that, in the words of Gustavo Gutierrez, leads to, among other dehumanizing consequences, early and unjust death. The “oppressed” constitute a larger category than the poor, one that encompasses the poor. When we speak of “the poor and oppressed,” it is to indicate that there are forms of oppression other than poverty but that material poverty deserves special attention. This is not to claim that there is something like a hierarchy of oppression, the inverse of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, such that one does not get to experience the “higher” forms of oppression if one is starving, weak and suffering from hunger-related illnesses. Poverty, racism, and sexism (to choose just three) overlap such that the oppressed person cannot separate out the various aspects of her identity. Still, we shall give special attention to the materially poor because they are the ones whose oppression the wealthy and powerful will hold out the longest to maintain. Other forms of oppression, e.g., racism and sexism, can be addressed (though not overcome completely—the experience of the United States is illustrative here) without calling into question in any fundamental and complete way the economic power of the ruling class. Racism and sexism are in part overcome by respect for and celebration of racial and sexual differences. Race and sex are not evils to be done away with. But poverty is an oppression of a different sort. We cannot overcome it by celebrating it; it indeed needs to be eradicated.

The concept of solidarity is fundamentally grounded in a recognition of oppression, a recognition that the world is unjust, that there are some human beings who are actively oppressing others. Solidarity requires that one enter into the situation of the oppressed. Solidarity may have a foot in guilt—how can those who benefit from the status quo know the history behind the status quo and not feel guilt?—but it is motivated by love, a recognition of the infinite, and infinitely defiled, worth and dignity of the other; and solidarity recognizes its responsibility to not be ignorant, to understand the situation of the oppressed and the reasons behind their oppression. At the same time it recognizes that an epistemological privilege attaches to the situation of the oppressed: one can see and know things from that standpoint that otherwise go unnoticed because from other perspectives they are either hidden from view or actively covered up. Those in solidarity with the oppressed need to be humble if they are to be open to the knowledge gained from the standpoint of the oppressed. On the other hand, there is a tension between the skills, knowledge and connections that the privileged can bring to the problems faced by the oppressed, and the lack of agency that is one of the hallmarks of oppression.

Outside of solidarity with the oppressed, there are important concerns like caring for one's elderly parents and small children, things that would be on most people's list of a meaningful life. But the trouble is, those of us who are not directly oppressed have the option of overlooking oppression. We can get dragged into the exigencies of meaning: we the privileged, most of us become consumed by these incontestably meaningful pursuits (e.g., care of those dependent on us) and never get around to doing anything in solidarity with the oppressed.

So the topic of this paper is: why and how should those who are not directly oppressed be in solidarity with those who are? I will focus my remarks on the situation faced by the kind of privileged people found at many universities in the "First World." I am part of this group and these reflections are part of the pursuit of the Socratic dictum to examine one's life: what are my responsibilities in an unjust world vis-à-vis those who have been disadvantaged by this injustice? In addition, the kind of group that I belong to—academics—is one whose professional responsibility is to discover the truth. Given the epistemological privilege that attaches to the standpoint of the oppressed, and the interplay between theory and practice such that theory needs practice (also vice-versa), those in my group should not excuse the call to solidarity.

Complementary ways of considering the question of the responsibility of academics vis-à-vis the poor and oppressed have emerged from two educators working among the oppressed in that part of the "Third World" that is Latin America. These thinkers—Paulo Freire and Ignacio Ellacuría—while considering the role of education in the struggle against oppression, shed light on the role of those who are not oppressed, in particular, the role of intellectuals and universities. They confront both the "why" of this kind of solidarity and the "how." Without engaging both aspects, an effort at solidarity will fail, falling into a patronizing charity or another form of elitist "assistance," or it will evaporate because its roots do not reach to the heart of the matter. Freire, working inside and outside of formal educational systems, sheds light on the role of intellectuals who want to be in solidarity with the oppressed through their research and teaching. And Ellacuría, working within and on the formal structure of a university, considers why those within that structure—teachers and students who by the fact of being at the university have either come from privilege or have their tickets of admission to a life of privilege—should be willing to focus their efforts, and those of their university, by the light of the needs of the oppressed. Freire focuses more on teaching and pedagogy, Ellacuría more on research, though both theorists are concerned with both of these key aspects of intellectu-

al activity. Freire focuses on the transformation taking place in the professor and the student as individuals, and Ellacuría focuses on the transformations needed at the institutional level. Taken together, they give us a robust vision for how intellectuals and their institutions can be in solidarity with the poor and oppressed.

*Why, then, solidarity? Why should people who are not themselves oppressed be interested in acting in consort with the oppressed to end oppression? And how? How should those who want to be in solidarity with the oppressed proceed so as to not re-instantiate the suppression of agency that is the hallmark of oppression? Finally, what is the appropriate relationship between the oppressed and the fact of oppression, on the one hand, and academics (faculty and students), on the other hand? Why/how should a university address the reality of oppression? Some answers to these questions will come out of our discussion of the models presented by Freire and Ellacuría.*

We will proceed first with a look at Ellacuría's model for a university in genuine solidarity with the poor and oppressed. We then consider Freire's model for pedagogy and research. And finally we draw some conclusions for how intellectuals, and especially First World intellectuals, can (indeed, must) be in solidarity with the poor and oppressed.

## **II. Educators for Liberation**

### *A. Ellacuría's Vision for a University in Solidarity.*

Ignacio Ellacuría (1930-1989) was a Basque, born in Spain, who joined the Jesuits at age 17 and was immediately posted to El Salvador where he was based for the rest of his life, with some lengthy periods abroad to complete his education through the doctorate in philosophy. He was a major contributor to attempts within theology to thematize liberation and liberatory struggles, and he left behind, at his death, manuscripts constituting substantial and original contributions to a liberation philosophy.<sup>2</sup> In addition to his work as a teacher and scholar of philosophy and theology, he was a frequent contributor to the discussions in the newspapers and airwaves of El Salvador during the turbulent years of the 1970s and 80s, advocating a peaceful resolution to the problems that threw that country into a civil war (1981-1992), a resolution that would acknowledge and change the structures of oppression that underlay the conflict.<sup>3</sup>

But the role that most brought Ellacuría to the attention of the powerful was his relationship to the Jesuit university of El Salvador, the Universidad Centroamericana (UCA). For 25 years he played a formative role in the shaping

of the UCA, and served as its president for the last ten years of his life. He was the driving force behind shaping the UCA as a university in solidarity with the poor and oppressed, a university that focused the instruments of university activity—its curriculum and its research—from the standpoint of the marginalized. In the strictly stratified and fractured reality of a poor Third World country, this earned him the wrath of the powerful. In the early morning hours of November 16, 1989, he and five other Jesuits who worked at the UCA, along with their housekeeper and her daughter, were taken from their house, laid on the back lawn, and executed by members of an elite unit of the Salvadoran army, literally spilling their brains onto the grass, bearing stark witness to the threat posed by intellectuals in solidarity with the oppressed.<sup>4</sup>

In 1975, on the tenth anniversary of the founding of the UCA, Ellacuría presented to its Board of Trustees a lengthy report that encapsulated the emerging vision shaping the university. The title of the report asks the key question: “Is a different kind of university possible?”<sup>5</sup> This report, along with articles written throughout his tenure as UCA president (1979-89), present the philosophical justification that grounds the substantial and concrete solidarity of that institution with the poor and oppressed.

By “different,” Ellacuría intends a university that “by its very structure and proper role as a university is *actually committed to opposing an unjust society and building a new one*” (DKU 177, emphasis added). The criteria we should use for measuring the “ultimate significance” of a university, and “what it is in reality,” is “its impact on the historic reality in which it exists and which it serves” (DKU 178). Elsewhere, Ellacuría asks bluntly, “Should the university as a university be formally and explicitly devoted to defending the fundamental human rights of the poor majority, or is that a task which at best should occupy it tangentially and secondarily?” And he answers, “Yes, the university should not only devote itself formally and explicitly to having the fundamental rights of the poor majorities respected as much as possible, but it should even have the liberation and development of those majorities as the theoretical and practical horizon for its strictly university activities, and it should do so preferentially.”<sup>6</sup> The *goal* of a university should be to solve the complicated problem of “attainment by the poor majority<sup>7</sup> both of living standards sufficient for meeting their basic needs in a decent manner and of the highest degree of participation in the decisions that affect their own fate and that of society as a whole” (UHRPM 211-212). In other words, in addition to meeting the basic needs of the poor, the goal of university activity must be to re-empower their agency as *effective* participants in society, “assuring them their proper place in the political and economic process” (UHRPM 214). And finally,

[T]he historic mission of the university should be shaped in accordance with the situation of the human rights of the poor majorities and in accordance with the stage or phase in which those poor majorities find themselves and out of which they are advancing.... Of course there is no single response to these claims [of the poor majorities], but the university must find a way to respond to them creatively. Its response must reflect a genuine love for the poor majorities, a passion for social justice, and a courage to meet the attacks, the misunderstandings, and the persecution that will ensue because of its stand on behalf of the poor. (UHRPM 219)

Thus, the different kind of university which Ellacuría sought to create is one with a real and substantial commitment to the poor and oppressed, people who constitute the vast majority of humanity. How can this be justified? Ellacuría argues for it not on moral grounds, as might be expected, but on ontological grounds. He argues that the university must be focused on the poor and oppressed *if it is to remain true to its essence as a university*.

Perhaps such a focus should not be controversial. After all, a university represents the organized efforts of intellectuals to study, understand and teach about problems faced by people. However, Ellacuría is well aware, as his call for courage indicates, that a university that insists upon its mission to understand the problems faced by *poor* people, i.e., the vast majority of humankind, will meet with substantial resistance. Such a re-focusing of the university would be criticized by many as a politicization of it. Ellacuría is willing to concede the point, but with an important caveat. He insists, in good Aristotelian fashion, that *all* human institutions are political. In other words, it is not possible for the university (or any other institution) NOT to be political—the important thing is that it be *appropriately* political, political in a way that is faithful to its identity as a university (DKU 178-79). For instance, it should not take up the role of a political party, which operates strategically, calculating where it can exploit weaknesses to gain power. The university should not be interested in gaining power because that would not be faithful to its essence as a university. Rather, it must be interested in the truth and in holding the powerful accountable to the truth.

The appropriate way for the university to be political is “universitarily”—by doing what a university, according to its essence, should do, that is, by focusing its teaching and its research on the truth of the lived reality of people today, most of whom are poor due to oppressive structures beyond their control. Such teaching and research will oppose injustice and seek to build a new, just society. “[T]he university has very explicit obligations deriving from the...specific and peculiar nature of the university; namely that the university is the theoretical and technical cultivator of truth and knowledge, so that its role transcends the mere

training of professionals to serve the needs of a particular social system” (UHRPM 209). The university is not in the service of a particular social system but rather in the interest of humanity. The truth of the world as currently structured is that it is unjust and oppressive. Thus, the cultivation of that truth will be in the service of understanding injustice and oppression, with an eye towards figuring out how to end it.

[T]he origin of the need for the university to be devoted negatively to the struggle to end injustice and positively to support the struggle for freedom [lies in the] intrinsic tension between truth and injustice.... Truth and freedom are intimately connected: ultimately, it is more that truth leads to freedom than that freedom leads to truth, although the inter-relationship can in no way be disconnected—each is necessary for the other. Truth and justice are also connected negatively, however, only insofar as injustice is the great suppressor of truth. The relationship is dialectical in nature, since *truth will really become possible only in the struggle against injustice* and in forcing it into retreat. (UHRPM 211, emphasis added)

Truth and injustice are opposed to each other: the oppressor, in the interest of facilitating the oppression, needs to hide the fact of oppression; the fact of oppression means that we have not figured out how to arrange social structures such that they are not oppressive. That knowledge is lacking. “[T]he existence of the poor and oppressed majority in itself represents the most powerful existential and material negation of truth and reason. Overcoming this massive, unjust, and irrational fact...is one of the greatest challenges facing the intelligence and will of the university...” (UHRPM 211). And echoing the call by El Salvador’s assassinated Archbishop Oscar Romero that the Church must be the voice of the voiceless, Ellacuría states that the university “must be the public and developed reason of that popular reason, which although it is true reason, cannot manifest itself as such because the people have not been permitted to articulate their reason with reasons and reasonings” (UHRPM 216).

The university must maintain itself as a “place of freedom.” Here, Ellacuría does not intend the important and oft-contested academic value of freedom of inquiry, but rather a “prior [and more] fundamental freedom which is won by continually striving for liberation from the existing social structure” (UHRPM 216). The university cannot be faithful to its essence if it is only training people to take up positions in the existing social structures. It must also maintain the space for critiquing those structures, holding them up for critical scrutiny, and envisioning new structures that would answer the problems revealed in such inquiries.

The emphasis on envisioning new, just, non-oppressive, life-affirming social structures is a vital part of the university’s activity. “Criticism and tearing apart

are not enough; a constructive criticism that offers a real alternative is also necessary.... Not only must we unmask the ideological trap in the this tidal wave of ideology. We must also produce models which in a fruitful interchange between theory and practice may really generate ideals intended to stimulate...the task of building history.”<sup>8</sup>

Ellacuría underlines five aspects of the mission of a university committed to opposing injustice and contributing to the formation of a just society: (1) the poor, the marginalized, the oppressed must be the horizon of the university’s activity; (2) national reality must be cultivated as the sphere of university activity; (3) the method of university activity is the effective word; (4) the correct attitude for the university to have as it engages in its activity is aggressiveness; (5) the goal of university activity is the structural transformation of society (DKU, *passim*). Ellacuría develops this complex and interwoven vision at length. Here, we can only highlight parts of it.

Having the poor and oppressed as *the horizon of university activity* grounds all other aspects of the university’s mission. It means that everything the university does takes place within an awareness of the manifest injustice of the world as currently structured. The “ultimate standpoint and deepest purpose” of the university is the reality in which it exists. That reality is social and historical, hence the university should study society, as currently structured, and the history that brought it to its present structure. What are the causes of this reality? What is its moral significance? What are the possibilities latent within it, and the obstacles to the realization of those possibilities? The university, given its mission as the pursuit of truth, is in a unique position to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the possible answers to these questions. The results of such investigations show society to be fundamentally divided with the various sides having clashing interests. In such a situation, the university must take sides. And while this may appear to be a betrayal of the university’s mission to pursue truth it is not. In the first place, in a divided situation in which power differentials are part of the division, it is not possible not to take sides: not to take sides is automatically to side with the dominant side. In such a situation, the university has only two options: will it work for a future that continues the status quo (which is oppressive) or for a future that ends it? There is no middle ground between maintaining the current structures and transforming them. The university, in its pursuit of truth must be free and objective, “but objectivity and freedom may demand taking sides. [The UCA is] freely on the side of the popular majority because they are unjustly oppressed and because the truth of the situation lies within them...” (CPM 175).



Perhaps the most concrete instantiation of the activity of the university is the curriculum and research put together by its faculty. And this is where the implications of restructuring the university along the lines suggested by Ellacuría are made apparent. If a university opts for the poor as its ultimate ground and focus, it cannot grant absolute status to the preferences of its students and its faculty. The research interests of the faculty, and the curriculum for the students, must be molded by the interests of solidarity with the poor in struggle for a better world. If the university is to take the needs of the poor as the horizon of university activity, “[i]t follows that the university cannot take as the fundamental criterion and ultimate horizon for its activity the subjective interests of students and professors, unless these subjective interests coincide with the objective interests of the oppressed majority” (DKU 181). Ellacuría has little patience for the argument that students are consumers of education and get to choose what it is they will purchase. Students do not get to choose the “ultimate horizon” of the university “since they would not have this ability to pay [for their education] if it were not as a result of a particular structure of society, and that fact by itself would limit and relativize [their] right [to determine the direction of the university]. A similar argument can be made with regard to the subjective interests of professors and even more justifiably, since they are paid for their work...” (DKU 181). Designing a university around the needs of the poor gives the university the criteria needed to decide such difficult and contentious issues as research priorities, the curriculum, and the majors that should be offered (UHRPM 214).

If students are coming to the university campus in order to secure a dominant and profitable place in an unjustly structured society, we find ourselves with a serious constraint on the ideal of the university’s mission. Even worse, if teachers come to the university with the same attitudes and concerns of the other professionals who enter the labor market, very little indeed will be possible. (UHRPM 217)

In other words, the university is justified in hiring its faculty to the mission of the university: the pursuit of truth, which in an unjust world means expecting that one’s research priorities will be influenced by the existence of injustice.

This might be the most controversial part of the model of university, and Ellacuría does present an argument, as part of a later aspect of the model, that may soften the sting. In the third aspect of the model he describes the method of university activity as the *effective* word. The knowledge discovered by the university must not remain cloistered there but must, rather, find a way to insert itself *effectively* into society; this insertion, indeed, is part of the problem that

universities must research. Ellacuría notes that the word will take time to be effective, but here is where he makes an observation that softens the sting of faculty and students having their research and curriculum circumscribed by the needs of the poor:

[I]f a culture [of justice]...is created and this culture is communicated to the nation and to national consciousness, its impact will be unquestionable. Things may move slowly because history has its own pace, which is not the same pace as that of individual lives, but [this culture of justice] will make history. Moreover, *what does not become history, and more specifically, historic structure, is in danger of being for others merely an evanescent blossom* even if it is very important for oneself. (DKU 186, emphasis added)

The claim that Ellacuría puts forth here—viz., that one's actions in solidarity with the poor are the only actions that contribute to the building of historical structures—is firmly rooted in his liberation philosophy, a full development of which is beyond the scope of this paper.<sup>9</sup> But the basic idea is that the direction in which human beings, as the responsible part of reality and the agents of history, must take history can be figured out, and that that direction is towards the full realization of freedom for all human beings. So any actions that are not contributing towards building that history are not building structures that will last because structures that do not contribute towards the freedom of all human beings are either irrelevant or obstacles that will have to be undone. In other words, constraining oneself by the needs of the poor is the condition of the possibility of contributing to the humanization of history, the history that, given the capacity of human beings to learn from their mistakes, will triumph sooner or later. Submitting to the discipline of *the poor as horizon* is the condition for the possibility of lasting, i.e., real meaning.

Ellacuría insists that the university should approach its task with an attitude of aggressiveness. The current reality is unreasonable, and there can be no conciliation or conformity with irrationality. “The university should be aggressive...by means of the efficacious word. University protest does not require shouting or violent actions to make its protest. But it is quite the opposite of a passive and contemplative attitude; it is active and nourishes hope; it wants to struggle for a better future....” But this struggle will bring it into conflict with those who benefit from the unjust status quo. “[The university] knows that [its] protest is going to engage it in ongoing conflict with those who defend...other interests, and that it cannot retreat....” Hence the need for an aggressive disposition.

We do not live in a society that is disinterested and in equilibrium, but in one that is torn and in conflict, one in which solidarity can be conceived as possible only through a

dynamic process that overcomes its polarizations. That can be achieved only by advancing in such a way that objectivity is not at odds with aggressive assertiveness. (DKU 187)

In the fractured and unjust world in which the university operates, its efforts to shed light on the contradictions and to find ways to move beyond them will be met with, to say the least, complaints. Its objective pursuit of truth, and the justice that truth requires, will need to be carried out aggressively and, as we have already noted, with courage.

Finally, the goal of university activity must be the structural transformation of society. In other words—and again, this will fly in the face of much of the received wisdom about the current role of universities—the university should not be interested, primarily, in changing persons but in changing structures.

This accent on the structural may jeopardize the personal; however, the salvation of the personal cannot be realistically conceived by leaving aside the structural. Hence the question is: what way of structuring society permits the full and free development of the human person and what kind of personal activity should those persons undertake who are involved in transforming structures? The major instruments with which the university works are collective in nature and have structural implications. That is the case with science, technology, professional training, the very makeup of the university, and so forth. To personalize this set of instruments does not mean destructuring and privatizing it but [rather] pursuing one's own fulfillment in a historic praxis of transforming structures, and by thus objectifying an effective universal love, recovering the real sphere for authentic personal commitment. (DKU 189)

The personal and the structural cannot be separated: structures have to be changed in order for persons to be free to exercise their full personhood, and persons are the agents for changing structures. What's more, the call to love, the highest calling of a person as such, is concretized universally and effectively through work that creates and changes structures that liberate others to exercise their full personhood.

There are many potential objections to Ellacuría's model for what a university should and could be. Before we leave the model, I would like to consider some of them. First, dedicating the university to understanding poverty and oppression and to contributing to their solutions does not mean compromising the standards of excellence of the university. Poverty and oppression are among the most serious and pressing problems facing humanity today; these complex and difficult problems have been with humanity for millennia and human beings have not yet figured out how to solve them. Society needs well prepared minds

*and hearts* that are equipped and motivated to tackle these problems—the preparation of these minds and hearts falls within the very *raison d'être* of the university. The university's role in the pursuit of knowledge demands that it enlist itself in this struggle to solve these heretofore unsolved problems. A university's role is to identify the questions confronting society and to seek answers to those questions. Poverty and oppression are important and fundamental questions, and the university would not be faithful to its core mission without seeking to understand the challenges they pose, to envision responses to those challenges, and to prepare students to examine these questions and take on these challenges.

Secondly, the university over which Ellacuría presided is Catholic and Jesuit and one might think that he was suggesting this model for universities with a similar kind of foundation in a faith-tradition. But there is nothing uniquely Jesuit, Catholic or even Christian in his model. His argument is more radical: a university, by its very nature *as a university*, should adopt this model; indeed, without adopting such a model, the university is failing to live up to its essence as a university. He did suggest that a Christian university that correctly understands the gospel call for a preferential option for the poor has a double responsibility; but the radicality of his vision lies in the argument that any and all universities, if they are to remain faithful to their callings as such, should adopt this model.

Third, does Ellacuría's focus on poverty, among all forms of oppression limit the overall efforts of the university? There are many other forms of oppression (e.g., racism, sexism, etc.) and many other obstacles to a full human existence (HIV/AIDS, cancer, environmental degradation) against which the resources of the university (teaching and research) could be effectively deployed. Does Ellacuría intend that all of these other obstacles take a backseat to the struggle against poverty? As argued in the Introduction, there are reasons for granting primacy to material poverty—that this will be the form of oppression whose eradication will be resisted most completely and uncompromisingly by the powerful, and that the other forms of oppression (e.g., racism and sexism) are not overcome by eradication of their material basis (race and sex) but poverty is overcome by eradicating poverty. Still, are there not important contributions that the university can make to society outside of a direct confrontation with poverty? The question is complicated by the fact that these other obstacles to a full human existence impact the poor more harshly because they have fewer resources for removing obstacles of any kind. Does Ellacuría's model intend that the university forego, for example, research into HIV/AIDS and global warming, and devote its limited resources instead to poverty? Not necessarily. The model asks that decisions about how to focus the activities of the university be

made from the standpoint of the poor. Given the devastation of poor communities around the world by HIV/AIDS, and the devastation that predictably will be caused by global warming, there may be good reason for Ellacuría's model university to devote resources to these obstacles. On the other hand, given that these obstacles can also devastate the non-poor, one can expect that resources will be forthcoming from other institutions in society. It is the irrationality of ignoring that which makes the poor poor—poverty as such—that calls for the special attention of the university. On yet another hand, the university can do the research into HIV/AIDS and global warming really well and, with all the disciplines that can be brought to bear, in a way different from and better than other institutions because it can do the research without ignoring the interests of the poor. For example, the work of a scientist who researches HIV/AIDS can be complemented interdisciplinarily by the work of medical ethicists, public health scholars, sociologists, political scientists, etc., so that a fair and equal distribution of medication and prevention is advocated. All in all, it would seem either that Ellacuría's model university can accommodate a focus on the broad range of problems that effect the poor, or that it can be easily changed to accommodate them.

Fourth, Ellacuría's model was developed in the context of a Third World country, and some adjustments are appropriate in moving to a First World context. We will take up this topic in the conclusion.

We turn now to a consideration of the thought of Paulo Freire. While Ellacuría was concerned more with the ways in which structures, and primarily the structure of the university, must be changed to promote the fullness of our humanity, Freire's thought sheds light on how professors, in their research and teaching can be in solidarity with the poor and oppressed.

*B. Paulo Freire: Intellectual Activity and Pedagogy for Solidarity.*

Paulo Freire (1921-1997) was born in Northeastern Brazil, one of the poorest regions in the country, and, although he was born to a middle class family, the depression of 1929 gave him first-hand experience with the reality of poverty. Later, he studied law and philosophy, then spent a number of years teaching grammar at the high school level before focusing on the work that would become his life-long passion—adult education. As Freire involved himself in adult literacy efforts he came to be dissatisfied with traditional methods of education which fostered an authoritarian relationship between students and their teacher, sought to transfer content which was divorced from students' everyday lives, and implicitly reproduced the dominant ideology of an unjust social sys-

tem. His interest in education for adult literacy led him to focus his graduate studies on the topic and, after receiving his doctorate in 1959, he became a professor of the history and philosophy of education at the University of Recife.

As a university professor, Freire remained involved in adult literacy campaigns and in 1963 he spearheaded a remarkably successful literacy campaign in Northeastern Brazil which spread to the rest of the country when Freire's good friend Paulo de Tarso became Minister of Education. The program was short-lived, however, due to the military coup d'état which ousted the progressive government and commenced many brutal years of military dictatorship. Freire was jailed for some months and then spent sixteen years living in exile, during which time he continued his work as an academic and a popular educator, both publishing groundbreaking works on revolutionary pedagogy and leading adult education projects for progressive governments (most notably in Chile, Guinea-Bissau, and the Cape Verde Islands). While his main focus was on a pedagogy to guide educators' work with oppressed groups of adults, his approach to education is not limited to either adult learners or the oppressed. Indeed, Freire often had at least one foot in the academy and insisted that a focus on the liberation of the oppressed is just as necessary in the formal academic setting. For him, the task of intellectuals necessarily involves entering into solidarity with the oppressed and their struggles for liberation. While Freire's own personal praxis of solidarity as an educator primarily involved working directly with the oppressed classes, his approach to intellectual activity and pedagogy can shed light on how academics can enter into solidarity with marginalized populations, albeit more indirectly, through their research and teaching.

*Research: Intellectual Activity for Solidarity.* Authentic intellectual activity, according to Freire, cannot be "of the ivory tower sort, because ivory-tower academics occupy themselves with high-sounding works and descriptions of ideas, rather than with a critical understanding of the real world which, instead of being simply described, has to be changed."<sup>10</sup> Valid academic work must heed the dialectical relationship between theory and practice, which dictates that understanding reality is inextricably bound up with attempts to transform reality. Unfortunately, intellectuals often attempt to theorize without an awareness of concrete reality, let alone practice, and as such,

[o]ur experience at the university tends to form us *at a distance* from reality. The concepts that we study in the university can work to amputate us from the concrete reality they are supposedly referring to. The very concepts we use in our intellectual training and in our work are abstracted from reality, far away from the concreteness of society. In the last analysis, we become excellent experts in a very interesting intellectual game,

the game of concepts! This is a 'ballet of concepts.' Then our language risks losing contact with concreteness.<sup>11</sup>

It is only through understanding reality in its unjust concreteness that transformation of the world is possible. We can only act on the world for justice insofar as we understand the world. For Freire, then, critical knowledge is necessarily a) knowledge of the real world in its concreteness and b) knowledge which critically reflects on and is directed at concrete efforts for the transformation of that world. Thus, the critical pursuit of truth by intellectuals must take into account both concrete reality and efforts to transform that reality. Further, by its very nature, knowledge demands some form of solidarity with those who are most adversely affected by the reality which we propose to describe and change: without taking on their struggles, their problems, their hopes, joys and aspirations, we cannot know the reality of the poor.

One way in which Freire suggests that academics both avoid isolation in the ivory tower and enter into solidarity with the oppressed is through learning from the knowledge of the oppressed themselves. When the people describe reality, they begin with concreteness as opposed to concepts. Therefore, critical engagement with the knowledge of marginal groups will hopefully prevent intellectuals from falling into the abstraction and idealism which can plague academic pursuits of knowledge. While insisting on a critical approach to popular knowledge, as opposed to uncritical acceptance, Freire agrees with his dialogue partner Antonio Faundez, who asserts that

[n]on-philosophers have an empirical knowledge of how action affects reality, which they express in their language...politics, music, personal relationships, customs, and so on.... Thus the philosophy of the philosophers who are ignorant of this philosophy of the non-philosophers is remote from reality and creates its own reality independently of the global reality in which the masses play an important role.<sup>12</sup>

Intellectual understandings of reality and visions for its transformation must take into account the knowledge and practice of non-intellectuals, especially those who bear the largest burden of an unjust reality. This will not only stave off academic isolation in the "ivory tower" of abstractions and concepts, it also represents a step towards genuine solidarity with the oppressed.

Without a more comprehensive, concrete understanding of reality, one which takes into account the concrete experiences of the people, the solidarity of the intellectual with the oppressed is impossible. Not only does the knowledge of the people complement intellectual knowledge to allow for a more rigorous and

critical understanding of reality; dialogue with marginalized groups prevents the intellectual from assuming sole agency as the creator of a vision of a more just future. Such intellectual “ownership” of a vision precludes solidarity because it truncates the agency of the oppressed. Indeed, solidarity requires struggle in partnership *with* the people, not struggle *for* the people. As such, Freire posits that “new” intellectuals, who learn from the people, perceive that

the departure point for the changing society is not inherently or exclusively in their vision of the future...but in the understanding of the popular classes. Beginning from there, immersing themselves in the culture, history, aspirations, doubts, anxieties and fears of the popular classes, they discover organically with them true paths of action, and increasingly disassociate themselves from the false paths of arrogance and authoritarianism.<sup>13</sup>

Both critical knowledge of reality and solidarity with the oppressed in the struggle to transform reality require critical engagement with the knowledge of the people. Without respecting and learning from the active participation of the oppressed as subjects of knowing and doing, true solidarity is impossible, for solidarity between intellectuals and the oppressed must be solidarity between *subjects*. To truncate the agency of the oppressed is to truncate solidarity.

A caveat is in order here, one which is best illustrated with a story told by Freire about an academic who had been working with a group of peasants for a couple of months before he was invited to their regular weekly meeting. When the academic went to the first meeting, he was introduced by the leader of the meeting in the following manner: “Today we have a new member, and he’s not a peasant. He’s a well-read person. I talked about this with you at our last meeting, whether he could come or not.” Freire continues the story:

Then the leader gave the group a bit of personal data about the new member. Finally, he turned to the [academic] himself, and, fixing him intently, said: “We have something very important to tell you, new friend. If you’re here to teach us that we’re exploited, don’t bother. We know that already. What we don’t know...and need to know from you...is, if you’re going to be with us when the chips are down.”

Freire comments that the peasants “might have said, in more sophisticated terms, whether his solidarity went any further than his intellectual curiosity. Whether it went beyond the notes that he would be taking in meetings with them. Whether he would be with them, at their side, in the hour of their repression.”<sup>14</sup>

This story alerts us to the fact that solidarity between academics and the oppressed must never be a matter of mere “intellectual curiosity.” Intellectuals



are to learn from the knowledge of the people not because it is fascinating or exotic, nor because such learning provides just another source for the production of good publishable research. Rather, going to the oppressed and learning from and with them is to be directed at the transformation of an oppressive reality. Furthermore, the story points to the fact that the solidarity of the intellectual with the oppressed in the struggle for a more just world involves risks which are very real. The consequences can be quite severe. Solidarity is impossible without running the risks run by oppressed people when they try to change the conditions of their oppression. Solidarity is impossible without accepting the danger involved, not backing away when “the chips are down.” In this vision, intellectual activity does not merely involve research for publication in prestigious journals, but research which contributes to the denunciation of an unjust world and the announcement of a more just future. Let us not be fooled, those who benefit from the unjust world will not stand idly by when their power and privilege are threatened. The risks of solidarity, then, are very real.

*Teaching: A Pedagogy for Solidarity.* Freire is most well-known for his philosophy of education, in which he critiques traditional modes of education and sets forth his theory and practice of a pedagogy for liberation. This pedagogy is based on the idea that education is really about *humanization*, or the transformation of persons into free agents who name the world (reflect on it critically, see it for what it is in all its complexity) and change it, free subjects who engage in reflection and praxis for the transformation of reality, the humanization of themselves and others, and the betterment of the world. While his pedagogy focuses on the empowerment of those whose agency has been historically denied, it is also valid for education with those whose agency has not been denied, but rather employed in ways which either contribute to or benefit from the unjust systems of oppression. Members of the dominant classes are also dehumanized by the unjust status quo<sup>15</sup>—they too must undergo the humanizing process of what Freire calls “conscientization” in order both to gain a critical vision of an unjust reality for what it is and to enter into solidarity with the dominated classes in their struggles to transform that reality. Universities are a prime location for the conscientization of the power elite and thus have great potential for educating non-oppressed persons for lives lived in solidarity with the oppressed.

Education for solidarity is impossible in what Freire calls the traditional “banking concept” of education, for in this type of pedagogy it is the teacher who teaches and the students who are taught; the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing; the teacher is the subject who deposits his/her knowledge in the students who are objects receptive and adaptive to that knowl-

edge.<sup>16</sup> In other words, the student-teacher relationship in this model embodies much of what solidarity is *not*, for “[s]olidarity requires true communication and the concept by which [a banking] educator is guided fears and proscribes communication.”<sup>17</sup> Education for solidarity with the oppressed begins with student-teacher solidarity in the classroom and thus cannot be taught through transference of information, imposition of world-views, propaganda, or indoctrination, all of which methods are employed by authoritarian styles of education. In Freire’s words, “[a]ny situation in which some individuals prevent others from engaging in the process of inquiry is one of violence.”<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, banking education is antithetical to solidarity with the oppressed in that it is a sure way of passing on authoritarian ways of relating and thus either truncating the agency of the oppressed or molding the agency of the privileged in ways which reproduce the dominant ideology.

In contrast, Freire advocates a liberating pedagogy in which we are all simultaneously students and teachers, some of us teacher-students and others student-teachers. This pedagogy prizes true communication and dialogue between educators and learners and rejects any arguments from authority. It strives for emergence of consciousness, and critical intervention in reality; it facilitates a critical and democratic spirit which transforms the individual and seeks the transformation of the whole of society. Rather than imposing solidarity on students, teachers who practice liberating pedagogy for solidarity are to engage in “problem-posing” education,<sup>19</sup> in which teachers present the status quo to students as a problem for critical inquiry and reflection. The teacher, of course, has the right, the duty and the authority to present her reading of the status quo, including her denunciation of it and vision for a more just alternative. Furthermore, the teacher has the responsibility to make available to students various perspectives on the topic at hand, including and especially those voices which have historically been marginalized in both theory and practice. However, these critiques and visions are not to be imposed on the students, but are rather to serve as resources for the students as they reflect critically on the situation in dialogue with the instructor, the texts, and one another in order to participate in the process of coming to critical awareness of reality.

Dialogue is essential to this vision of education for solidarity, since, in Freire’s words, “[d]ialogue, as the encounter among men to ‘name’ the world, is a fundamental precondition for their true humanization.”<sup>20</sup> For Freire, dialogue is “a horizontal relationship between persons” which creates a “critical attitude.... It is nourished by love, humility, hope, faith, and trust. When the two ‘poles’ of the dialogue are thus linked by love, hope, and mutual trust, they can

join in a critical search for something. Only dialogue truly communicates.”<sup>21</sup> Without dialogue, without raising our own voices and respectfully (and critically) listening to the voices of others in their attempts to name and change the world, there is no community, no education, no humanization, and no possibility of solidarity. If university professors hope to educate their students for solidarity with the oppressed, then, they must first model solidarity with their students in a joint effort to name the world in dialogue with each other and with those marginalized voices from whom we have much to learn.

But for Freire, who never fails to ignore the indissoluble link between theory and practice, students are educated for solidarity not only through critical reflection on ideas in the classroom, however dialogical that reflection may be. Raising students’ awareness in the classroom is not necessarily enough for the process of conscientization, which involves students’ (and teachers’) critical reflection on the world *in order to change it*. Critical reflection alone simply will not cut it and, indeed, is not truly critical without *praxis*. Rather than through classroom dialogue alone, teachers and learners alike come to critical consciousness through participation in transformative praxis:

Although there can be no consciousness-raising without the unveiling, the revelation, of objective reality as the object of the cognition of the subjects involved in the process of consciousness-raising, nevertheless that revelation—even granting that a new perception flow from the fact of a reality laying itself bare—is not yet enough to render the consciousness-raising authentic. Just as the gnoseological circle does not end with the step of the acquisition of existing knowledge, but proceeds to the phase of the creation of new knowledge, so neither may consciousness-raising come to a halt at the stage of the revelation of reality. Its authenticity is at hand only when the practice of the revelation of reality constitutes a dynamic and dialectical unity with the practice of transformation of reality.<sup>22</sup>

In other words, problematizing the world as it is and presenting it to students for critical reflection is not enough. Students (and teachers) must get out in the real world and participate in efforts towards its transformation in order for conscientization to be truly critical and authentic. A conscious and critical commitment to solidarity with the oppressed cannot be learned or inspired in a classroom alone, for it is in and through the praxis of solidarity that students will come to truly know and commit themselves to what solidarity means. As such, universities’ endeavors in service-learning, engaged learning, community-based learning, and service/immersion trips are of utmost importance. To teach and learn solidarity requires the praxis of solidarity, for truly “[t]o affirm that men and women are persons and as persons should be free, and yet to do nothing tangi-

ble to make this affirmation a reality, is a farce."<sup>23</sup> To teach solidarity without a commitment to practicing solidarity, would also be a farce.

### III. Conclusions

Taken together, the models proposed by Ignacio Ellacuría and Paulo Freire give a well developed sense of the reasons and ways in which a certain group of privileged people, the faculty and students associated with universities, can be in solidarity with the poor and oppressed.<sup>24</sup> Why the privileged should be in solidarity, and how one enters appropriately into solidarity, are treated at the institutional level and the personal level, in one's research and in one's teaching/learning. We now turn, by way of conclusion, to an examination of the added complication of distance. Both Freire and Ellacuría spent their professional lives in the Global South. Their models were developed under those circumstances and were meant to apply, first and foremost, to people living there. But my own circumstances, those of my students and of many of the readers of this journal are such that we do not live in the Global South, hence we live at a great distance, physically and metaphorically, from the poor and oppressed about whom Ellacuría and Freire were most concerned.

Freire has a description of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed that bears on our questions by sharpening them:

In order for the oppressed to be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of oppression not as a closed world from which there is no exit but as a limiting situation which they can transform. This perception is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for liberation.... The oppressed can overcome the contradiction in which they are caught only when this perception enlists them in the struggle to free themselves.

The same is true with respect to the individual oppressor as a person. Discovering himself to be an oppressor may cause considerable anguish, but it does not necessarily lead to solidarity with the oppressed. Rationalizing his guilt through paternalistic treatment of the oppressed, all the while holding them fast in a position of dependence, will not do. Solidarity requires that one *enter into the situation* of those with whom one is solidary; it is a radical posture.... [T]rue solidarity with the oppressed means *fighting at their side* to transform the objective reality which has made them these "beings for another." The oppressor is solidary with the oppressed only when he stops regarding the oppressed as an *abstract category* and *sees them as persons* who have been unjustly dealt with, deprived of their voice, cheated in the sale of their labor—when he stops making pious, sentimental, and individualistic gestures and *risks an act of love*. True solidarity is found only in the plenitude of this act of love, in its existentiality, in its praxis.<sup>25</sup>

Academics in the First World find ourselves far from the poor of the Global South—at this distance, what does it mean to “fight at their side,” to “enter into their situation?” How do we see them as *persons* rather than as *abstractions*? How, in short, do we love them?

The challenge for academics from the Global North is to keep the poor of the Global South present as persons. This happens most directly by living among them, and it may not be possible to make them present without living among them, fighting at their side, entering into their situation. We can at least say that the most immediate and powerful way to overcome seeing the poor as abstractions is to get to know and love them as people and friends, and this is only possible by being with them. Perhaps part of the dues that First World academics must pay is putting in our time at the side of the poor of the Global South—a significant amount of time, many months, perhaps years; enough time to be able to appreciate some of the deep rhythms of their lives, their aspirations, joys and sorrows. And many of us are able to do that. But it is rare to find First World academics who will spend their whole lives literally at the sides of the poor of the Global South. So we face the problem: how to keep them present?

In the 1990s, as part of a solidarity effort with workers locked out of their factory, I came to know an elderly member of the clergy who was also part of the solidarity effort. The lockout went on for three years, so I saw this man at numerous rallies, union meetings and protests. He engaged in acts of civil disobedience and was arrested a few times during the effort, and he frequently gave moving talks. After one of his talks, I remarked to him that I admired the way he practiced what he preached, and he responded quite matter-of-factly, “If I don’t practice, I forget.”

To keep the poor present to us, we must practice what we preach, we must stay connected to them. Three factors should be kept in mind. First, the distance that separates us from the poor *of the Global South* does not separate us from the poor in general. There are parts of the Global South present in every city of the Global North, both literally in immigrants and figuratively in all those afflicted by poverty. There are ways to stay connected to the poor without constant travel to the Global South. But the connection cannot be with “the poor,” with an abstraction. It must be with this particular person who happens to be poor, this person whose hopes and aspirations matter to me, this community whose children are dear little soccer players. It must be a relationship. Only then, with real, non-abstract people and their communities present to me can I successfully keep my research and my teaching focused from the standpoint of the oppressed.

But the second point is that in our solidarity work with the poor of the Global North we cannot forget the poor of the Global South. This is true because the

poor of the Global South are the vast majority of the poor (indeed, of all humankind); and more importantly because their poverty and my privilege are connected in the unjust history behind the status quo in which each of us inhabits the realm of possibilities bequeathed to us. To be concerned only for the poor of the Global North would amount to acting on behalf of those poor who managed to get inside the walls of our gated community. It is in solidarity with the poor of the Global South that we privileged First World academics turn the harsh light of criticism on the walls themselves and reveal the illegitimacy of the very concept of a gated community. The misery of the Global South is not unconnected to the privilege of the Global North. To some significant degree (deciding how much is beyond the scope of the paper), the poverty and oppression of the Third World is due to centuries of exploitation through slavery, colonialism, and the neocolonialism that continues today.<sup>26</sup> This recognition gives additional clear direction to solidarity work in the First World. Our governments and corporations could be run differently in ways more beneficial to the poor and oppressed. How they could be run differently, and how to transition to that new situation, are topics requiring study and are thus appropriate for the academy.

Third, in addition to physical distance from the poor, my life circumstances can take me far from them. It is important to live a life that is not so caught up in what wealth can provide that my everyday concerns have nothing to do with the everyday concerns of the poor. If I am not living simply, then my lived reality becomes so different from that of the poor that the distance may become unbridgeable.

The First World is awash in problems of meaninglessness that derive from the options opened up by wealth: consumerism, hyper-individualism, and isolation due to walling ourselves off from the poor. The experience of melancholy, numbness, despair and vacuousness is rampant amongst the privileged (thus calling into question, in dialectical fashion, the value of privilege)—solidarity is a remedy, not instrumentally but because of what it means to be human. Solidarity is the path to meaning for human beings because we are relational beings. Without being in relation with the poor, we are left only with the consumption of things, and that is an ultimately empty way of being.

This may be the answer to the mystery of why our lives are richer when lived in solidarity with others. My life feels fuller, more meaningful, more profoundly happy and fulfilled in those times when I am living in solidarity with the poor; my students report a similar experience. Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero once said in a homily, "It is a caricature of love when we try to cover with charity what is *owed by justice*."<sup>27</sup> Solidarity work embraces that which is owed by

justice. As such, it is motivated by and anchored in love. It necessarily moves us beyond the isolation of not being concerned for others.

The thought of Ignacio Ellacuría and Paulo Freire sheds light on the questions of *why* and *how* to move beyond this isolation and be in solidarity with the poor and oppressed. It is a resource that academics and universities of the First World can draw upon in our quest to create a more human and humanizing world.

### END NOTES

<sup>1</sup>For example, in 1980 in the United States the poorest *family* in the top quarter (in other words, the family at the 76th percentile) had an annual income of about \$65,000 (corrected for inflation, i.e., in 2006 dollars)—that this income is far from what most of “us” (i.e., the people with the educational and cultural background that brings them to this journal) consider to be “rich” may be a comment on both our experience with poverty and how skewed the income distribution of the US, let alone the world, is. (Data from U.S. Census Bureau at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov))

<sup>2</sup>A brief overview of Ellacuría’s liberatory thought can be found at Gandolfo, “Ignacio Ellacuría,” *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/e/ellacuria.htm>), and more in depth analysis at Gandolfo, “Human Essence, History and Liberation: Karl Marx and Ignacio Ellacuría on Being Human” (doctoral dissertation, Loyola University Chicago, 2003), especially chs. 3-5. A very thorough presentation of Ellacuría’s liberation philosophy is the impressive work by Héctor Samour, *Voluntad de Liberación: El Pensamiento Filosófico de Ignacio Ellacuría* (San Salvador: UCA Editores, 2002). Samour is the scholar who has done the most to pull together, from the thousands of pages of unpublished and published material, Ellacuría’s liberation philosophy. In English, Kevin Burke, *The Ground Beneath the Cross: The Theology of Ignacio Ellacuría* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2000), is an excellent presentation of Ellacuría’s liberation theology; see also Kevin Burke and Robert Lassalle-Klein, eds., *Love that Produces Hope: The Thought of Ignacio Ellacuría* (Liturgical Press, 2006). The best intellectual biography on Ellacuría is Teresa Whitfield’s *Paying the Price: Ignacio Ellacuría and the Murdered Jesuits of El Salvador*, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995).

<sup>3</sup>Cf., Gandolfo, “Ignacio Ellacuría: Liberation Struggles and the Question of Non-Violence,” *Journal for the Study of Peace and Conflict*, October 2004, pp. 1-17.

<sup>4</sup>19 of the 27 military officers eventually convicted of the crime were trained at the School of the Americas at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. (The School subsequently moved to Ft. Benning, Georgia.) The commander of the unit of the Atlacatl Battalion responsible for the murders, Lieutenant José Ricardo Espinoza “had spent several months in the last year [before the murders] on an advanced commando course at the Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg. Until the previous Monday [i.e., two days before the murders],

Espinoza's entire company had been involved in special training exercises overseen by thirteen U.S. Special Forces experts flown in from Ft. Bragg" (Teresa Whitfield, *Paying the Price*, op. cit., p. 8). According to Major Samuel Ramirez, a member of the US Army familiar with Espinoza's unit, "they were probably the best unit of the Atlacatl" (Marta Doggett and the Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, *Una Muerta Anunciada: El Asesinato de los Jesuitas en El Salvador* [San Salvador: UCA Editores, 1994], pp. 535-536).

Ellacuría's murder by the Atlacatl Battalion that night, along with seven of his co-workers, was hardly an isolated instance. The United Nations' Truth Commission found in its 1993 report on El Salvador that the Atlacatl Battalion was also responsible for the December 1981 massacre of nearly a thousand civilians at El Mozote (10 of the 12 military officers convicted of this crime were trained at the School of the Americas); for the massacre of over 200 civilians at El Calabozo (August 1982), 118 civilians in Copapayo (November 1983), 68 civilians in Los Llanitos (July 1984), and over 50 civilians at the Gualsinga River (August 1984). See Scott Wright, *Promised Land: Death and Life in El Salvador* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994), pp. xxii, and 220 n. 6. It is sobering to recall that all during this time the Reagan Administration was regularly certifying before Congress that the human rights record of the Salvadoran government and armed forces was improving. After the war was brought to a close in 1992, the UN truth commission found that 85% of the atrocities committed were the responsibility of the Salvadoran government, 5% were the responsibility of the rebel groups, and 10% were unattributable. (Belisario Betancur, et. al., *From Madness to Hope: The 12-year War in El Salvador—Report of the U.N. Commission on the Truth for El Salvador*, 1993). The report can be found at the following websites: <http://www.derechos.org/nizkor/salvador/informes/truth.html> or [http://www.usip.org/library/tc/doc/reports/el\\_salvador/tc\\_es\\_03151993\\_toc.html](http://www.usip.org/library/tc/doc/reports/el_salvador/tc_es_03151993_toc.html).

<sup>5</sup>Ignacio Ellacuría, "Is a Different Kind of University Possible?" [1975] in *Towards a Society that Serves Its People*, Hassett and Lacey, eds. (Washington DC: Georgetown, 1991), pp.177-207, hereafter cited parenthetically as DKU.

<sup>6</sup>Ignacio Ellacuría, "The University, Human Rights and the Poor Majority," [1982] in *Towards a Society that Serves Its People*, op. cit., pp. 208-219, here p. 209. This work will be cited parenthetically as UHRPM.

<sup>7</sup>Ellacuría's constant use of the phrase "poor majority" is meant to emphasize that the poor make up the overwhelming majority of humankind, both in a poor country like El Salvador and in the world as a whole.

<sup>8</sup>Ignacio Ellacuría, "The Challenge of the Poor Majority," [1989] in *Towards a Society that Serves Its People*, op. cit., pp. 171-176, here pp. 173-174. This work will be cited parenthetically as CPM.

<sup>9</sup>For a full treatment of Ellacuría's liberation philosophy, see the sources listed in footnote 2, above, especially Gandolfo (2003) and Samour.

<sup>10</sup>Paulo Freire and Antonio Faundez, *Learning to Question: A Pedagogy of Liberation* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1989), p. 6.



<sup>11</sup>Paulo Freire and Ira Shor, *A Pedagogy for Liberation: Dialogues on Transforming Education* (New York: Bergin and Garvey, 1987), pp. 105—106.

<sup>12</sup>Freire and Faundez, *Learning to Question*, p. 46.

<sup>13</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 56.

<sup>14</sup>Paulo Freire, *A Pedagogy of Hope* [1992], trans. Robert R. Barr (London: Continuum, 1994, 2004), p. 58.

<sup>15</sup>Cf., Freire, *Pedagogy of Hope*, p. 85 and *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1970, 1993), p. 66.

<sup>16</sup>Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, p. 54.

<sup>17</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 58

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 66.

<sup>19</sup>Cf., *ibid.*, pp. 60 - 62.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 118.

<sup>21</sup>Paulo Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness* (New York: Continuum, 1973), p. 45.

<sup>22</sup>Freire, *Pedagogy of Hope*, p. 88.

<sup>23</sup>Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, p. 32.

<sup>24</sup>I hope it goes without saying that no claim is being made that this particular group of privileged people has a privileged access to solidarity with the poor and oppressed. Privileged people in other professions can envision other appropriate ways in which to be in solidarity with the poor and oppressed.

<sup>25</sup>Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, pp. 31-32, emphasis added.

<sup>26</sup>These ideas are explored in detail in Gandolfo, “The Ethical Threshold: Democratic Supranational Governance As A Necessary Condition for Non-Neocolonial Globalization,” *Philosophy in the Contemporary World*, Spring 2008; and Gandolfo, “The Past, Present and Future of Globalization: Colonialism, Terrorism, and the Need for Democratic Supranational Governance,” *Review Journal of Political Philosophy*, forthcoming.

<sup>27</sup>Homily of April 12, 1979, in Oscar Romero, *La Violencia del Amor*