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Summary of Talia Feldman's Thesis

Grade's, The Yeshiva, An Analysis of the Relationship Between Teachers and Students By Talia Feldman

This thesis provides an in-depth analysis of Chaim Grade's novel first published in Yiddish as *Tsemakh Atlas* and appearing in translation, in two volumes, as *The Yeshiva* and *Masters and Disciples*. The thesis seeks to analyze Grade's novel in its historical context, to compare the various teaching models it describes, and to explore how these models relate to traditional Jewish ideas about education. It is informative for those who want to learn more about Grade and his work and also for those looking to explore the complexities of the relationship between teachers and students.

In total, there are twelve chapters. The first chapter explores Chaim Grade's life and the world in which he lived. In Chapter Two, connections are drawn between the historical figures, Israel Salanter and Hazon Ish and the two central teachers of the novel—Tsemakh Atlas and Shaye Avraham Kosover. Chapters Three and Four consist of a detailed précis of *The Yeshiva* and *Masters and Disciples*.

Part II of the thesis analyzes the novel using texts from *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* in order to compare the novel's themes with traditional Jewish views. The analysis of the novel is divided into six chapters: The relationship of *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* to *The Yeshiva*, The idealization of Yeshiva Life, Teachers' Ideals vs. the Reality of Life with Students, Judgment vs. Mercy as a Teaching Tool, The Teacher as Replacing the Parent, The Student as Embodying the Teacher's Philosophy and Consciousness. Each chapter includes verses from *Hilkhot Talmud Torah*. These passages from the *Mishneh Torah* and passages from the novel itself form the basis of the analysis. Part III, the novel's conclusion, evaluates the success of the Tsemakh and Shaye as teachers. The addendum includes four Talmudic passages about the relationship of teachers and students.

**Chaim Grade's
The Yeshiva,
An Analysis of the Relationship
Between Teachers and Students**

Talia Feldman

**Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for Ordination**

**Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
Graduate Rabbinic Program
New York, New York**

**March 1st, 2001
Advisor: Dr. Stanley Nash**

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PART I
The Yeshiva and the Context in which it was Written

Chapter I. *Introduction- Chaim Grade's Life and the World in which He Lived*

Chaim Grade's novel, *The Yeshiva*, is to a large extent, autobiographical, mirroring the intellectual, religious, and social trends and conflicts experienced by the author. Grade was born in Vilna in 1910 and died in 1960. While he began life as a traditional religious Jew and attended several Musar Yeshivas, he later became a member of the literary movement, "Young Vilna." As a Yiddish writer, Grade strove to integrate secular Yiddish culture into the trends of world literature. He wanted to bring traditional Jews into contact with the progressive, contemporary world.

Grade's works include *The Muserniks*, a poem on the spiritual struggles of Yeshiva students and the story, *My Quarrel with Hersh Rassayner*, the story of an argument between a secular and religious Jew in Canada after the second world war. Grade's most prevalent themes include- the conflicts between traditional religious and secular ways of life, the tragedy of the Holocaust, the details of daily Yeshiva life, and the specific challenges of the Musar philosophy. His novel, *The Yeshiva*, was first published in Yiddish in 1967 with the title *Tsemakh Atlas*. Grade's portrayal of the Yeshiva is far from sentimental. Like many who rejected their religious upbringing in favor of a secular life, Grade sees the shortcomings and limitations of the Yeshiva world. An enlightened Jew, Grade examined traditional belief systems under a highly critical and objective lens. Yet, Grade's portrayal of the Yeshiva is multi-faceted. He does not aim solely to condemn the Yeshiva world. Perhaps in light of its devastation in the Holocaust, Grade also seeks to portray the beauty and uniqueness of Yeshiva life, now

gone forever. Grade writes with sensitivity. He depicts characters and scenes of Yeshiva life with photographic accuracy and pointed specificity. He describes struggles, conflicts, and personalities that he himself experienced and which remained a part of him long after he had abandoned Yeshiva life.

At the start of the novel, Chaikl is taken in as Tsemakh's student, but he is soon drawn to Shaye. Chaikl's attraction to these two mentors, each with his own distinctive style, may represent Grade's own attraction to the two modes of thought and the two pedagogical philosophies represented by each teacher. As a child, Grade was, in fact, a student of the Hazon Ish. Later, as a secular Yiddish writer, Grade still felt the influence of his old teacher.¹ While Grade may have had no direct contact with Israel Salanter, he surely felt Salanter's influence. In *The Yeshiva*, the juxtaposition of Israel Salanter and Hazon Ish, Tsemakh and Shaye, is a primary focus. In many ways, the philosophies of Tsemakh and Shaye conflict with one another. Chaikl's confusion over which path to follow may represent Grade's own ambivalence.

¹ Kaplan, Lawrence, "Hazon Ish: Haredi Critic of Traditional Orthodoxy," in Wertheimer, *The Uses of Tradition* (New York, 1992), p.146.

Chapter II. *Tsemakh Atlas & Israel Salanter Shaye, Avraham Kosover & Hazon Ish*

It is worthwhile to examine the similarities and differences between the characters of Tsemakh Atlas and Avraham Shaye Kosover and the two historical figures, Rabbi Israel Salanter and Hazon Ish, on whom the fictional characters are based. First, a word about Israel Salanter, the founder of the Musar movement. He was born as Israel ben Ze'ev Wolf in Zager Poland in 1810. He had a traditional Jewish upbringing and began to feel, as a young man, that traditional Judaism needed to be strengthened against the temptations of modern life and the *haskalah*.

...unlike certain other leaders in the traditional camp who thought there was room for a certain degree of cooperation with the *maskilim*, already in the 1840's Rabbi Israel took a vigorous stand that negated any form of cooperation with that movement... The establishment of the Musar movement, a voluntary movement that raised the banner of ethical and religious renewal, must therefore be seen as one of the earliest and most important expressions of a traditional society that had become aware of the dangers confronting its values and forms, and which organized itself to take action in their defense.²

While Salanter remained rooted in traditional forms of *halakhic* discourse, he emphasized moral perfection and the transformation of the self as the goal of religious observance. Salanter believed that, through the observance of the *mitzvot*, both ethical and ritual, one could overcome his *yetzer ha-rah*. He wrote,

There are two kinds of character transmutation: one in which man turns the powers of his soul to the good, so that the power of evil is totally uprooted and not seen at all... This is required in the case of the rational (ethically self-evident) commandments, pertaining to his fellow... The second way involves the "transmutation" of his general will, to love and heed that which comes from the mouth of God in the traditional commandments (ritual or ceremonial law reflecting arbitrary, Divine will) known to us by revelation, and to seek out and reduce the power of the appetite in each detail.³

² Etkes, Immanuel. *Rabbi Israel Salanter and the Mussar Movement* (Philadelphia, 1993), p.174.

³ *Kitvei*, as cited in Etkes, p. 294

Even though Salanter believed in the power of traditional observance, he felt that traditional learning, on its own, is insufficient and must be supplemented by studying the ethical works of Musar philosophy.⁴ Salanter supported the classical rabbinic notion of God as the One who grants reward and punishment. He placed particular emphasis on God's ability to punish and on our need, as sinners, to live in fear of God. Salanter believed that fear of God is the basis of faith.

The first condition of wholeness is fear. And observance of the *mitzvot*, which are between man and his fellow man, is not possible if the *mitzvot* are based on human principles alone and if they are not connected to belief in God and in the pure fear of God. All of the rational, logical, and human reasons are nullified the moment they encounter experiences of reality, and they are shattered on the hard rock of the impulses and animal desires. Fear of God alone is the factor that has the strength to restrain a person and to curb his impulses and animal desires. Moreover, even for the very essence of faith, fear serves a primary factor. There is no stability and force for faith without fear, and therefore it is written, "And the people feared God and believed in God." (Exodus 14:31) Without fear, faith is liable to be misdirected and distorted according to the inclinations and desires (*of a person*) and to take different forms. Only fear of God serves as a compass to direct faith to its pure channels.⁵

Salanter struggled to integrate his desire for a life of asceticism and anonymity with his desire to spread the ideas of Musar. He did not take up any official rabbinic position, but considered becoming a *maggid*, an itinerant preacher, or a *mashgiah*, a model and guide of Musar education.⁶ In 1840, he moved from Salant to Vilna. Despite political pressure, Salanter refused to become the head of the Vilna rabbinical seminary. Instead, in order to be able to support his wife, he accepted the position of *resh metivta* or head of one of on of the Vilna yeshivot.⁷ Since Vilna was a major center of Jewish life, Salanter was exposed to a broad range of political, social, and religious trends. In

⁴ Etkes, p. 196

⁵ Salanter, Israel, *Ituray HaTora B'shalach* For Hebrew, see Appendix A

⁶ Etkes, p. 74

⁷ Etkes, p. 74

particular, Salanter witnessed the influence of the *haskalah* and its adherents. He also came into contact with working class Jews who inhabited Vilna and who suffered from poor economic conditions. Thus, in Vilna, Salanter developed a sense of empathy for those on the lower rungs of society.⁸ At times, he took an active role in communal matters. For example, he worked to improve the living conditions of Yeshiva students and mandated his fellow Jews to help the sick during a cholera epidemic, even if it meant working on Shabbat. Throughout his life, Salanter continued to move from place to place, establishing Musar yeshivot and attracting huge crowds with his fiery sermons. From 1849-1857 he lived in Kovno where he cultivated communities centered upon Musar philosophy. One of his primary settings for disseminating his philosophy was the *beit Musar*, Small study houses where discourses on Musar philosophy and practices were delivered. In 1857, Salanter moved to Prussia, where he lived in Memel, Koenigsberg, and Berlin. He began to wear German dress, preach in German and to master secular subjects, such as science, while continuing his religious studies. Salanter died in Koenigsberg in 1883. Salanter left few written works except *Iggeret ha-Musar*, his Musar Epistle, and his letters and discourses which are compiled in *Or Yisrael*.

Tsemakh Atlas lived after the founding of the Musar movement and so cannot be historically equated with Israel Salanter. However, many parallels can be drawn between the two figures. Both Tsemakh and Salanter traveled in order to recruit young students and, with them, establish Musar yeshivot. Essential to Musar education was the presence of a *mashgi'ah*, a spiritual mentor, who would guide students. Both Salanter and

⁸ Etkes, p.80

Tsemakh had the capacity to be mentors. Both are both distinguished by their strong charisma and ability to express the beliefs of Musar in sharp and fiery terms. Here, an observer describes Salanter's sermonic style,

When we were privileged to stand before him here in the holy community (that is Kovan)... there was a long period during which our teacher, of blessed memory, isolated himself all week long in self-abstention and seclusion in the nearby town of Aleksot, across the River Neimen, and would only come to his home here in the city on the holy Sabbath. Then some of his closest disciples would go to him once a week to his place of seclusion, a full *minyan* of ten. When he had recited the Afternoon Prayer, our master wrapped himself in a *tallit*, and began to preach to us concerning the fear of God, may He be blessed, as he was wont to do, and at times he would preach for several hours. In the middle of the sermon, he would begin to say words of reproof and spiritual awakening with great excitement, until our hearts melted and he would weep a great deal... And we prayed together with him in public concerning the spiritual Evil Impulse, to remove the heart of stone from our flesh and to purify our hearts to serve Him in Truth.⁹

Both Tsemakh and Salanter engage in moments of ecstatic prayer and extreme behavior designed to enhance their fear of God and to purge themselves of the desires of the ego. In addition, each man acknowledges that rational thought could be a foil for the *yetzer ha-rah*.¹⁰ Both are painfully aware of the insidious quality of the evil impulse which can be present even in acts that appear, on the surface, to be good.¹¹ Thus, Tsemakh and Salanter examine all actions, including their own, with a probing and judgmental eye in order to expose what sins their actions might conceal.¹²

⁹ Blazer, Isaac, as cited by Etkes, p. 232

¹⁰ Etkes, p.100 & Grade, Vol. I, p. 208

¹¹ Grade, Chaim, *The Yeshivah*, (New York, 1967), p.206

Hereafter all References to Grades *The Yeshiva* will be referred to as Grade, Vol. I and references to *Masters and Disciples* will be referred to as Grade, Vol. II

¹² Etkes, p.211

Both Salanter and Tsemakh shy away from positions of public, rabbinical office. Just as Tsemakh spent much of his time alone in the Musar attic, so too Salanter went through phases of seclusion.¹³ In the novel, Tsemakh vacillates between practicing extreme asceticism and then indulging in the pleasures of secular life. Salanter, too, veered away from the trappings of traditional observance when he moved to Memel and took up secular studies. The societal context of each figure also binds them together. Vilna, the place where Salanter developed much of his Musar philosophy, mirrors, to a certain extent, Valkenik, the town where much of *The Yeshiva* unfolds. Both settings contain a broad range of political and religious groups ranging from the *maskilim*, to Zionists, to traditional *litvaks*, to members of the impoverished working class. Interaction with all of these groups causes both Salanter and Tsemakh to define and to defend their personal philosophy. Thus, their Musar ideals immerse in bold relief. Musar philosophy is heavily concerned with issues of morality. Just as Salanter addressed the social inequalities of his day, so too Tsemakh exhibits righteous indignation when characters such as Stasya the maid are treated unjustly. In addition, Tsemakh rails against the materialism of certain characters such as Volodya Stupel, the owner of the flour shop in Lomzhe and Reb Zushe Sulkes, the Trustee of the Free Loan Society in Nareva.¹⁴ Another interesting similarity between the two men. Arye Leib Shapiro, the rabbi of Kovno from 1849-1854 led a strong movement of opposition to Salanter. In the novel, Reb Mordekhai-Aaron Shapiro becomes the head rabbi of

¹³ Etkes, p. 233

¹⁴ Grade, Vol. I, Part I, Ch. 5 & Grade, Vol. II, Part III, Ch. 9

Valkenik. Like Rabbi Shapiro of Kovno, Rabbi Shapiro of Valkenik does not approve of Tsemakh.¹⁵

Despite the many similarities between Tsemakh Atlas and Israel Salanter, there are significant differences. In *The Yeshiva*, Tsemakh appears to completely abandon a life of Talmud learning for that of Musar meditation and study. Salanter too separated himself from the traditional world. His emphasis on spiritual and ethical renewal represented an inherent criticism to religious world he encountered. Like Tsemakh, Salanter placed himself in opposition to the status quo. Yet, in spite of his departure from accepted norms, Salanter retained a strong connection to traditional learning. He wanted traditional learning to be *enhanced* by the study of Musar but not for one to preclude the other. Tsemakh, on the other hand, speaks out against study of Torah as a means of purging oneself of the *yetzer ha-rah*. He argues this point with Shaye who understands Torah study as an essential element for perfecting one's character.¹⁶

Both Tsemakh and Salanter strive to establish an inner circle of disciples through whom they disseminate their philosophy. As *The Yeshiva* shows, Tsemakh is unable to establish close relationships with his students. Salanter, on the other hand, was able to create such bonds.¹⁷ More than Tsemakh Atlas, Israel Salanter was willing to adapt his expectations in order to meet students' at their level of ability and to exercise compassion

¹⁵ Grade, Vol. I, Part V, Ch. 11

¹⁶ Grade, Vol. I, Part V, Ch. 19

¹⁷ Etkes, p. 110

when necessary.¹⁸ Tsemakh and Shaye also relate differently to their families. Whereas Tsemakh leaves his wife Slava soon after their marriage, Salanter took on the position of *resh metivta*, in Vilnius, in order to be able to support his wife.¹⁹ Thus, it appears that Tsemakh Atlas is a character loosely based on Israel Salanter, but more than this, the character of Tsemakh is an expression of Musar philosophy and its distorting effects, should it be embodied and taken to an extreme.

The Hazon Ish and his relationship to the fictional character, Reb Avraham Shaye will now be addressed. Avraham Yeshayahu Karelitz, lived from 1878-1953. He was educated by his father and, as an adult, lived a modest life, supported by his wife. His first work on *Orah Hayim* and other parts of the *Shulchan Aruch* was published under the pseudonym, "Hazon Ish." In spite of his desire for anonymity, Karelitz became a worldwide authority on *halakhah* and exercised a huge influence on religious Jewry. He published forty books, models of lucid *halakhic* argument, and became a guide to thousands of students. Unlike members of the Musar movement, who focused on matters of morality and ethics, the Hazon Ish was interested in spiritual development through the perfection of religious observance. Rather than modern man's emphasis on the assertion of the self, the Hazon Ish believed that Jews must subjugate of themselves to religious law. The Hazon Ish felt that the individual must strive to understand the *peshat* of Torah. He adopted a text-centered approach to Torah study, believing that, through study of

¹⁸ Etkes, p. 179 & p. 112

¹⁹ Etkes, p. 74

Torah and perfection of observance, one could over-come their *yetzer harah*.²⁰ Veering away from the legalistic creativity of the *mitnagdim*, the Hazon Ish went so far as to deny the authority of the rabbis of his day to issue any kind of *taqqanah* at all.²¹

The Hazon Ish never headed a Yeshiva or acquired an official rabbinic position. He was reluctant to state his position on communal matters. Yet, solely by virtue of his character, he gained authority in the *haredi* community. His charisma, saintliness and great compassion became the source of his power. He wrote,

It is incumbent upon us to draw them (the nonbelievers) to us with bonds of love, so that the light of truth will illuminate their ways to whatever degree possible.²²

In the *Yeshiva*, Reb Shaye's method of teaching and manner of living mirror that of the Hazon Ish. Shaye lives a humble and solitary life. Like the Hazon Ish, he is supported by his wife. Shaye seeks to study Torah for its own sake and does not wish to indulge himself, over-much, in arguments of philosophy and morality. Here Shaye speaks with Chaikl about the importance of study. Chaikl begins,

"One can understand Truth in one hour, but to follow it- one must struggle a lifetime."

"Is that your own original thought?" the rabbi asked, astonished.

"I heard it from our *rosh Yeshiva*, Reb Tsemakh Atlas."

"One can understand truth in one hour, but to follow it, one must struggle a lifetime." That's a good saying," Reb Avraham Shaye Kosover murmured. Suddenly a youthful ruddiness spread over his cheeks and his eyes twinkled cleverly as he looked at the youth. "It's a good saying, but it has nothing to do with sitting down and studying. If you're not in a hurry to get back to your father, come to the *beth midrash*." He slowly led the way to the door and Chaikl followed.²³

²⁰ Kaplan, p.150-2

²¹ Kaplan, p. 156-165

²² Kaplan, p. 147

²³ Grade, Vol. I, p. 335

According to Lawrence Kaplan, *The Yeshiva* brings the character of Hazon Ish to life.

Grade's portrait dovetails beautifully with what we know of the Hazon Ish from both his own writings and the more conventional biographies, and it serves to bring the Hazon Ish to life in a way more conventional and uncritical biographies cannot hope to equal.²⁴

Just as Shaye has interacts with Tsemakh in *The Yeshiva*, so too the Hazon Ish has contact with members of the Musar movement. Shaye interacts with Tsemakh, at times criticizing Tsemakh's method but being careful to rebuke him too severely, so too the Hazon Ish tempered his criticism of members of the Musar movement.

...the Hazon Ish felt very strongly that the Lithuanian yeshivas of his day were the last bulwarks of a tradition under siege, and that the analytic method and Musar ideology were the foundation stones of these Yeshiva's. One would have to very circumspect, then, in leveling any critique, lest by overly sharp and explicit remarks about the analytic method or about Musar one would somehow inadvertently weaken these Yeshiva's and thereby the tradition as a whole... An oft-told story about the Hazon Ish relates that he once attended a Musar discourse... At the discourse's conclusion, the Alter approached the Hazon Ish and queried, "What is my friend doing here? I thought he was opposed to the Musar doctrine?" The Hazon Ish replied, "True, but I am even more opposed to your opponents."²⁵

The historical/biographical elements of *The Yeshiva* contribute to our understanding of the novel as arising out of Grade's life experience and out of the historical context in which he lived.

²⁴ Kaplan, p. 149

²⁵ Kaplan, p. 163

Chapter III. *Précis of Volume One, "Tsemakh Atlas"*

The novel begins by introducing Tsemakh Atlas from Lomzhe who became a student of Musar philosophy in Navaredok. Unlike the *mitnagdim* typically associated with Lithuanian yeshivot, these disciples of Musar do not strive after the acquisition of Talmudic knowledge. Rather, moral perfection is their goal. Students of Musar must study central Musar texts. The most extreme students study in Navaredok. They believe that they must undergo many trials in order to purge themselves of their ego and elevate themselves to a higher moral level. Tsemakh the "Lomzher" as he is called, along with many other Musar emissaries, travels through Russia and Poland recruiting young students, taking them from their homes, and establishing Musar yeshivot in Poland and Lithuania. Yet, despite his role as a representative of Musar, Tsemakh struggles constantly with issues of faith, with his desire to purge himself of his evil inclination and with his yearning to live a moral life.

The novel begins with Tsemakh's choice to abandon a potential fiancé, Dvorele Namiot, in Amdur and to return home. This decision, in addition to many others, will haunt Tsemakh for the rest of his life. Tsemakh returns to the care of his aunt Tsertele and uncle in Ziml in Lomzhe. Reb Ziml Atlas seems to walk in a trance with his head facing up to the ceiling. He speaks of the pleasures of Yeshiva life compared to the baser trials of the business world. This tension between the ideal of scholarly living versus the material demand of family life is revisited throughout the novel. In Amdur, Volodya Stupel, a childhood friend of Tsemakh's from *heder*, is introduced. With his fleshy wife, gluttonous appetite, and penchant for tossing coins in the air, Stupel stands in sharp

contrast to Tsemakh with his sharp features, dark eyes and bouts of melancholy introspection. Tsemakh is constantly trying to rid himself of the materialism and desire that Stupel represents. Also on his trip home, Tsemakh meets Slava a fashionable beauty. While she too represents a sharp contrast to Musar philosophy and way of life, she remains a central character in the life of Tsemakh Atlas. At the start of Part II, they are married.

With his marriage, Tsemakh descends into a wholly secular life, dressing in fine clothes and enjoying himself with his beautiful wife. Unable to live out the Musar ideal, Tsemakh seems to have abandoned it entirely. Thus, one of the novel's central themes is raised: Can the ideal of humble piety be embodied in the daily life of a Yeshiva scholar who is surrounded by a world of materialism and desire? After Tsemakh's marriage, emissaries from the Yeshiva, Duber Lifshitz and Zundl Kondoper come to rescue him from his apostasy. In their dialogue, Tsemakh restates his belief that moral perfection cannot be derived from Talmudic hairsplitters who use legal quibbling to justify their actions or even by strict adherence to the *mitzvot* but must be derived from cold reason alone. Later, Tsemakh will come to question whether reason is indeed a path to moral perfection or whether it too can be used to indulge the *yetzer harah*. The two emissaries from the Yeshiva are unable to convince Tsemakh to return but their visit affects Tsemakh and leaves him depressed.

Eventually, disenchanted with the pleasures of secular life, Tsemakh decides that he will return to the Yeshiva and resume his spiritual quest. Since his marriage, he has

been working as a shopkeeper. Now he scrutinizes all who surround him- the clerks, customers, and even the charity collector and judges them according to moral standards. As a *musarnik*, Tsemakh feels it his duty to weed out falseness and to uncover people's moral failings. Of particular concern to him is Stasya, a maid of the Stupel family, who lost her inheritance to her neighbors when her parents died. When she becomes pregnant by Lolla, Volodya Stupel's son, the family tries to abandon her.

Throughout the novel, weak and vulnerable characters emerge, many of them women, who are put to shame by more elite members of society. In this incident, Stasya's complete lack of power contrasts sharply with Lolla's coarse, self-centered brutality. Tsemakh and Slava end up taking Stasya into their home. Slava wants to send Stasya away, but Tsemakh refuses and even threatens to tell of Slava's earlier affair with Bernard Frankel in order to protect Stasya's dignity. This threat reveals an important aspect of Tsemakh's relationships. While he strives to protect those in the larger society who are vulnerable, he often fails to see the vulnerability and needs of those who are the closest to him, in particular, his wife and students. Despite her coquettish and materialistic nature, Slava is one of the more vulnerable characters in the novel. She wants, more than anything, to be a wife to Tsemakh, but this is precisely what Tsemakh, as he struggles with his relationship to sensuality and the material world, is unable to allow her to do.

The battle rages on between Tsemakh and the Stupel family. Tsemakh wants to be sure that the Stupels do not send Stasya to a Christian family. The more angry

Volodya becomes with Tsemakh, the more badly he treats his clerks. This is representative of another pattern that appears throughout the novel. However lofty his motivations, Tsemakh seems to bring conflict with him. With this conflict often comes hurt and injury to many. Still, despite her husband's harsh nature and the conflict he seems to inspire, Slava idolizes his high moral standards. She wants to try to make peace between Tsemakh and her family. Yet, when her husband continues to show so little interest in her, Slava is not motivated to take the necessary steps to resolve his conflict with her family. This is an example, to be repeated later in the novel, of how Tsemakh's callousness to those closest to him breeds their resentment and ultimately results in his inability to achieve his highest moral and spiritual potential. Slava's feeling of being ignored by her husband keeps her from traveling back to the yeshiva with him and from wanting to live as a *rebbetsin*. Also, although the bond of marriage is, perhaps, her only connection to Tsemakh, she will not grant him a divorce.

In Part III of the novel, we are introduced to Chaikl, the character in the novel who most closely represents Grade himself. He is the son of Rabbi Shlomo Motte who is a Hebrew teacher and a *maskil*, an enlightened Jew, who hovers between the world of the Yeshiva and that of the truly secular *maskilim*. Shlomo Motte wants his son to become an artisan so that he will not live the life of a Yeshiva student, dependent on others for food and housing, and robotically repeating what he is told. Chaikl's mother Vella, on the other hand, loves the idea of her son becoming a Yeshiva scholar. Vella, like Grade's own mother, works long hours as a fruit peddler in order to support her son and her dreams for him.

In the beginning of Part III, Vova Barbitoler, one of the more pathetic characters of the novel, is introduced. He is a tobacco merchant and the town drunkard. Vova spends much of his time raving about his second wife, Confrada, who ran away to Argentina where she had a second child. Without the rabbi's consent, Vova got married for a third time. Still, he is unable to rid himself of his lust for Confrada. However crude his character, Vova enjoys doing *mitzvot* and buys a suit for Chaikl. Vova then humiliates Chaikl by asking him to publicly display his new clothes. Chaikl is furious but is rebuked by Menakhem Mendl, a student of Temakh's, who reminds Chaikl that true students of Musar are not supposed to be bothered by public humiliation. Still, unable to stand Vova's pestering, Chaikl raises his prayer stand against Vova who comes to taunt him at the *beit midrash*. Chaikl's show of disrespect to his elders brings shame to his whole family.

Much of Vova's rage about his second wife, Confrada, is poured out on Hertzke, Confrada's son. Feeling towards Hertzke both his love and his hate for Confrada, Hertzke's mother, Vova alternately kisses and beats his son. Hertzke, a bizarre character himself, screams and smiles as he endures his father's brutality. Shame is an important theme throughout the novel. Because of his overwhelming sense of shame at being rejected by Confrada, Vova attempts to humiliate others such as Chaikl and Hertzke. Even Vova's third wife Mindl is not immune. A particularly poignant incident unfolds on Yom Kippur when Vova enters the synagogue drunk and is mocked by Reb Senderl. Finally, Vova is doused with water. Although his wife Mindl shows his compassion,

Vova rips the wig from her head, exposing her baldness to the entire community. Then, at the last minute, Tsemakh, a stranger to most of the worshippers, rushes in, grabs Vova, and berates him for his behavior. This act prompts the question- are harsh words an effective response to a character, such a Vova, who is already so humiliated? This scene also contrasts the pious ideal, represented in the synagogue observance of Yom Kippur, with the base, ego-driven events that unfold within the community, even on the holiest day of the year. This dissonance highlights another central question raised by the novel- Can a life of piety be integrated into the real world, into real communities, inhabited by real people with pressing needs driven by ego and by desire?

As Tsemakh Atlas resumes his Musar existence, he is plagued by his longstanding questions of faith. Tsemakh is unmoved by the rational, Aristotelian notion of God as "First Cause." He longs, not for a God whose existence he can prove, but rather a God whose existence he can feel. Tsemakh longs for faith. Even as he struggles with questions of belief, Tsemakh begins to try to recruit students from Vilna and bring them to the Musar Yeshiva in Valkenik. He tries to convince Vella to send Chaikl and has a standoff with Chaikl's father, Reb Shlomo Motte, in the synagogue. Motte tells Chaikl not to say *kaddish* for him if he decides to go to Valkenik. Tsemakh argues that the only way to ward off the *yetzer harah* is to distance oneself from the evil influences of the secular world. Tsemakh tells Reb Motte that there is no way to integrate secular, enlightened life with a life of piety. Throughout the novel, many characters, in particular Tsemakh and his students, feel themselves torn between secular/enlightened and religious ways of life. Also, this scene, with a parent and Tsemakh Atlas arguing over the fate of a

child illustrates how, in the world of *The Yeshiva*, a teacher became, to a certain extent, a child's new parent, especially if the child joined a Yeshiva far from home.

In Vilna, Tsemakh recruits other students besides Chaikl. Among them is Melechke, a young delicate student studying at a local Yeshiva who is picked on by the local boys. Tsemakh also pursues Hertzke, Vova's son. While Hertzke is crude, clownish and a thief and may not be a good influence on the Yeshiva, Tsemakh wants to rescue him from his father's cruelty. In his usual way, Tsemakh approaches Vova with anger, thus strengthening Vova's resolve not to release his son. Later, when Vova hears Hertzke trying to leave, he locks him in a pantry. After several rough encounters, the last of which leaves Vova weeping on the floor, Vova agrees to let Hertzke go with Tsemakh. He hopes that raising Hertzke to be a religious Jew will keep his son from Confrada and will be some kind of revenge for Vova. At the end of Part III, the parents gather to say tearful goodbyes to their children. Chaikl is particularly struck by the sorrowful image of his parents bidding them farewell. With the young boys' departure, the role of Tsemakh, as his students' new parent, is underscored.

In addition to Chaikl and Hertzke, Tsemakh also recruits Menakhem Mendl Segal, a shopkeeper who gets permission to study from his wife. Tsemakh promises that he will make enough money at the Yeshiva to support his family. With Menakhem Mendl, another central issue is raised. To what extent should a life of piety and study remove an individual from his wife and family? This question is raised in Tsemakh's

own life concerning his relationship with Slava and in the lives of many of the Yeshiva students.

With this rather unimpressive collection of students, it appears that Tsemakh's Yeshiva will be more of a haven for the persecuted than a place of serious learning. Tsemakh himself worries whether, given the caliber of the students, he will in fact be able to enact his high Musar ideals. This tension between Tsemakh's ideals and the reality of his students' abilities sets the stage for Tsemakh's eventual alienation from the students he has set out to lead.

Part IV of the novel opens with the students' arrival in Valkenik. The beautiful description of Valkenik's *shul* calls to mind the ideal of religious life to which Tsemakh and others, aspire. The widow, Gitl, is introduced with her two daughters, Leitshe and Ronya. It is Gitl's job to feed the Yeshiva students. These interactions with the townspeople, especially the women, who provide room and board for students, provide them with a constant source of temptation, and pull them from the life of piety for which they are being trained.

There already exist a community of Yeshiva students in Valkenik, each with their own quirks. There is the cross-eyed prodigy Sheeya Lipnishker and Yoel Uzder, a former orphan with joined eyebrows who has amassed a small fortune. There is also the pale, delicate Yosef Varshever who wears a pinc nez and who is fastidious about his dress. Such portraits, with their extreme specificity, are characteristic of *The Yeshiva* and

give the impression that Grade experienced, first-hand, the Yeshiva world about which he writes.

The beginning of Part IV, also introduces Rabbi Hirshe Gordon whose honesty and piety have earned him respect among the inhabitants of Valkenik. Reb Gordon is a traditionally religious Jew and a member of the *agudah* party. Chaikl often eats at Reb Gordon's house and is tempted by lust for his daughter Tsharne. Tsemakh Atlas boards at Reb Lippa Yosse's home. Lippa Yosse is the ritual slaughterer of the town and a *ba'al tefillah*. Tsemakh finds himself drawn to Reb Yosse's daughter, Ronya, whose husband is away. She begins to prepare late dinners especially for Tsemakh.

In order to conquer his desire for Ronya, Tsemakh resolves to spend his nights in the Musar meditation room. There he meets Chaikl and speaks to him of the challenge of uprooting evil desires, a challenge that far exceeds simply doing good deeds. Tsemakh describes how an evil motivation can hide behind what appears to be a holy act and how, even rationality, can be used to serve of the *yetzer harah*. In this diatribe, Tsemakh expresses many central aspects of Musar philosophy. Tsemakh's sharp tone with Chaikl is only one example of how Tsemakh's critical relationship to his students reflects his own self-criticism, his personal struggles and conflicts. Eventually, Tsemakh's students begin to embody their teacher's consciousness and way of life. For example, throughout the novel, Tsemakh's relationship with women is characterized by guilt and strife. Chaikl also experiences similar conflicts in his relationship with women. One is

prompted to wonder whether Tsemakh's personal struggles actually engender similar struggles in his students.

Mid-way through Part IV of the novel, there is a poignant scene in which Tsemakh discovers Melechke asleep over his Talmud in the *beit midrash*. In one of the few examples of tenderness between Tsemakh and a student, Tsemakh carries Melechke back to Reb Gordon's home, holding Melechke as though he is a *sefer Torah*. Here Melechke assumes the role of Tsemakh's child and also the sacred vessel of Tsemakh's teachings. Part IV also illustrates some of the political and religious conflicts within Valeknik and the surrounding world. Eltzik Bloch, Reb Gordon's brother in law, speaks out at dinner from his extreme *mizrachi*, Zionist perspective. An enlightened Jew, he disagrees both with the philosophy of the *agudah* party and with the excessive behaviors of students of *Musar*. Political tensions mount when the former Valkenik rabbi, Yaakov Lev, decides to leave for Palestine, and a new rabbi must be chosen. Will it be a *maskil*, an enlightened Jew? Eltzik block thinks so, but Reb Lippa Yosse stridently disagrees.

As with Tsemakh and his first fiancé and similar to the incident with Stasya the maid, Part IV presents another instance of a woman being abandoned. This time Yosef Varshever, the pale delicate Yeshiva student, abandons Leitshe, Gitl the cook's daughter, in favor of Nekhoma, the daughter of a local merchant. Leitshe is mocked by all the local youths, and Gitl realizes that all her past favors to Yosef were for naught. She gives all the Yeshiva students less food. Thus, all suffer because of Yosef's decision. However, Reb Lippa Yosse does not think this punishment is severe enough and says that, in the

past, Yosef would have been fined. Tsemakh knows that he must speak to Yosef about his misconduct but fears that the student will bring up Tsemakh's own broken engagement. Yosef does exactly that. This is only one of many times in the novel when the conflicts and failures of Tsemakh's own life impede his ability to be a mentor to his own students.

Yosef Varshever is not the only student who misbehaves. Hertzke, Vova's wayward son, is also up to no good. He has taken up with Sroylezer the bricklayer and his depraved crowd. Tsemakh tracks Hertzke down at the local dance and tells Sroleyzer that he is a *Haman* for not chasing Hertzke back to the Yeshiva. Grade describes, in crude terms, the sensuality of the couples at the dance. Thus, we return to a central theme in the novel, the tension between sensuality and religious life. Also, the novel once again presents the question- are Yeshiva students capable of achieving the ideals set forth by their teacher or will they be constantly dragged down by their *yetzer ha-rah*.

Towards the end of Part IV, Confrada arrives to take Hertzke back to Argentina with her. She is no longer the beauty she once was. Vova realizes he has needlessly pined away for her and that, for all these years, his mania has been self-induced. Vova kisses his son and weeps, begging him to stay. Then he falls into a faint. At first the townspeople side with Confrada. Then they condemn her. Vova shows up at Lippa Yosse's house and tells Tsemakh that he has destroyed his life. He believes that, if Hertzke remained at home, Confrada would not have come. Despite his father's

pleading, Hertzke decides to leave for Argentina with his mother. The episode concludes in a painful scene with Hertzke taunting his father as his train pulls out of the station.

After Hertzke's departure, Slava comes to find Tsemakh and impresses the Yeshiva students with her beauty. In spite of her hopes, Slava sees that Tsemakh has not changed. He is still incapable of loving her and can only hate himself for desiring her. The description of the deadness of winter around them seems to reflect the frozen quality of Tsemakh and Slava's relationship.

In spite of Hirshe Gordon's disapproval, Reb Arye Leyb Miadovnik, "The Misagoleh Rabbi" is considered as a potential candidate for the position of the head rabbi of Valkenik. Unable to restrain himself, Reb Gordon heckles Reb Arye as he speaks from the pulpit and undermines the community's faith in this candidate. Usually one to gravitate towards situations of conflict, Tsemakh Atlas does not speak up. Reb Arye Leyb is furious at Tsemakh for not supporting him, but Tsemakh cannot risk losing Reb Gordon's support of the Yeshiva. This is a pointed of about how the Yeshiva's survival is contingent upon a favorable political relationship with its supporters. Thus, we see that Tsemakh will, at times, adapt his strict ideals and opinions in order to insure the well-being of the Yeshiva.

During her visit to Valeknik, Slava learns about Ronya and guesses that this vulnerable woman, left so often by her husband, could easily fall in love with Tsemakh. She also meets Yosef Varshever who tells her that he wants Tsemakh to perform his

wedding, and thereby condone his broken engagement. Yosef plans to use Tsemakh's own broken first engagement as blackmail. Slava understands the explosive nature of community politics and sees that people must not be provoked. As she continues to interact with the residents of Valkenik and to charm the Yeshiva students, her cultured manner contrasts sharply with their unsophisticated behavior. Finally, sure that Tsemakh doesn't love her, Slava decides to leave. If he did love her, she thinks, he would not feel so guilty about his first fiancé. Besides losing the companionship of Slava, Tsemakh decides to distance himself from Ronya as well and to move to a different home.

At the conclusion of Part IV, Soyah Etle is introduced. She is a member of the *hevra kaddishah* who lovingly tends the Valkenik graveyard. A bit senile, she treats graves, and those that lie beneath them, as her companions. She tends each plot lovingly and knows the location of every one. Soyeh Etl also owns a guesthouse where many of the Yeshiva boys stay. She enjoys watching the boys through holes in the walls to their room.

Part V opens with a description of Chaikl's return home to his parents for *pesach*. He tells them about Hertzke's departure for Argentina and his cruelty to Vova. The *seder* in Chaikl's home proceeds listlessly with Chaikl's mother, Vella, dozing off and his father, Shlomo Motte, falling ill. Melechke, the once vulnerable young Yeshiva student, also returns home to Vilna for Passover. His *seder*, like Chaikl's is less than ideal. While away at the Yeshiva, Melechke has become so pious that he seems to his family both fanatical and arrogant. Among other things, Melechke is angry at his mother, Zelda,

for opening her store on *pesach* even though it could contain leaven. Melechke's rigid observance contrasts sharply with his father, Kasrielke's, philosophy. His father believes that moral behavior is far more important than religious observance. After experiencing these changes in Melechke, his family does not want him to return to the Yeshiva. The contrast between both Chaikl's and Melechke's piety and the religious interest of their families points to the question of whether the ideals of the Yeshiva conflict with the demands and the best interests of family life.

Freyda Vorobey, another of the novels' eccentric characters, appears in Part V. Freyda, who has been abandoned by her husband for a peasant woman, is supported by her sister who sends money from America. Freyda spends most of this money, however, on candy. Chaikl meets Freyda because he teaches Nokhemke, Freyda's son at the *beit midrash*. Freyda offers to take Chaikl in, to live as a boarder with her and her reclusive daughter. Chaikl resists until his father, Shlomo Motte, comes to Valkenik to recover from his illness and Chaikl can find nowhere else for them to stay.

Toward the beginning of Part V, Tsemakh meets Ronya's husband, Azriel Weinstock, who has returned home because of a financial dispute. Wanting Ronya to be happy, Tsemakh tries to convince Azriel to stay home and teach a Talmud class. Azriel laughs at the suggestion, and Ronya is privately warmed by Tsemakh's display of care. Still, Tsemakh continues to live as a hermit. In his solitude, his usual doubts loom large as ever. He longs for faith, not a faith proved by logic but one felt with all his senses.

Despite the fact that he has devoted himself to a life of Torah, he doubts its Divine origins. He imagines himself burned by the rising sun, longing for a life of virtue.

As Tsemakh hides out alone and struggles with himself, Valkenik undergoes a major transition. The old Valkenik rabbi, Yaakov Lev, leaves for Palestine. Reb Lippa Yosse weeps at the departure of his dear friend, and Eltzik Bloch braces himself, knowing that, with his father-in-law's departure, his own prestige will decline. Reb Yaakov Lev is replaced by Reb Mordekhai Aaron Shapiro, a man who happened upon Valkenik purely by chance. Reb Shapiro is not aligned with Hirshe Gordon's pious *agudah* faction, nor with Eltzik Bloch's faction of enlightened *mizrachi* Jews. Tsemakh worries about Reb Shapiro's arrival because in Tsemakh's youth, Tsemakh studied with Reb Shapiro's sons. Tsemakh does not believe they have forgiven him for his decision, years ago, to embrace the secular world.

Rabbi Shapiro is welcomed with much fanfare. The level of celebration accompanying the rabbi's arrival seems almost absurd, especially given the reality of the community's life with various rabbis. Whoever the leader, political squabbles and discontent remains. Still, the joy with which Reb Shapiro is welcomed serves to underscore the people's need for a rabbi and their desire to devote themselves to a religious leader. While the novel spends much time on the more base aspects of communal life- politics, eccentricity, and desire, the people's idealistic attachment to their religious leaders, at moments, emerges from the narrative, pristine and undaunted.

Soon after Reb Shapiro is appointed as the Valkenik rabbi, almost halfway through Part V, the summer residents begin to arrive. Among them is Reb Avraham Shaye Kosover who plays almost as important a role in the novel as Tsemakh himself. Reb Shaye is the author of *The Vision of Abraham*. Yet, despite his fame, Shaye has not chosen to live the life of a rabbi or a *rosh Yeshiva*. Rather, he has chosen to study Torah *lishmah*, for its own sake. Since he was a child, Reb Shaye has considered himself something of a stranger on earth and has shied away from mediating legal and religious disputes even when asked. Shaye carries with him a certain mystique, and the students of the Valkenik Yeshiva can't wait to meet him. One by one, Sheeya, Yoel, and Mendl travel out to Shaye's cottage with moral and scholarly questions for him to answer. Shaye greets each student with peace and humility. Mendl wants to know whether or not he should leave the Yeshiva and return to care for his family. He is not making enough money at the Yeshiva to bring them to Valkenik, even though Tsemakh had promised that he would. Shaye leaves Mendl's question unanswered. During his visit, Shaye must lie down because he has a weak heart. In his soft-spoken manner and physical vulnerability, Shaye provides a rabbinic model entirely different from that of Tsemakh Atlas. According to Tsemakh, the yeshiva students are far too distracted by Shaye's arrival. Tsemakh does not think, as do others, that Shaye's a visit to the Yeshiva will increase the yeshiva's chances of receiving financial support. Nor does Tsemakh agree with Mendl about Shaye's virtue and modesty.

On his way to visit the Yeshiva, Shaye meets Chaikl. Plagued by lust for Kreyndl, his landlady's daughter, Chaikl speaks of the difficulty of following the moral

path even when one knows what it is. Shaye expresses the idea central to his philosophy, that achieving moral perfection is far less important than sitting down and studying Torah. This interaction between Shaye and Chaikl is a prelude to the relationship that will form between them in the ensuing chapters.

While Shaye is unwilling to join Reb Shapiro in his denigration of Tsemakh, Shaye does not have a positive first impression of Tsemakh. He provokes Shaye, saying that if he truly doesn't want students to take time away from their studies to come visit his cottage, Shaye should come to the Yeshiva to visit them. Shaye asks questions of various Yeshiva students in order to learn more about the Yeshiva itself and the character of its students. He is unsure whether Mendl's returning home would have too much of a negative impact on students. Rabbi Shapiro and Shaye continue to speak about Tsemakh's character and philosophy, his dedication to rational and moral *mitzvo*t alone and his failure in the eyes of the Narevnik proponents of Musar. Shaye points out Tsemakh's extreme honesty and analyzes his reasons for wanting to run a school.

Later, Chaikl arrives at Shaye's cottage in order to find out whether Shaye thinks that Mendl should return home and to report Shaye's answer to Mendl. Shaye then enters into a more substantive critique of Tsemakh's philosophy. Shaye does not believe, as Tsemakh does, that an individual can search out all of his own faults and destroy them. Such a quest, according to Shaye, can only result in the destruction of the self. Shaye believes, instead, that one must elevate his flaws through Torah study. In this dialogue, Chaikl speaks for Tsemakh his teacher, explaining how the worm of evil can be hidden,

even in the holiest act, and condemning sensuality. Shaye concludes the conversation by saying that Jews love those who study Torah not those who are out to find others' faults. Chaikl travels back to the Yeshiva thinking that Shaye's greatness is derived from his simplicity. Chaikl carries with him a message from Shaye telling Mendl that he should remain at the Yeshiva. Mendl is overjoyed.

As Chaikl's relationship with Shaye develops, so does his relationship with Kreyndl, Freyda Vorobey's daughter. Freyda knows of her daughter's liaisons with Chaikl but guards their secrecy, hoping, as Kreyndl does, that the two will be married. As Tsemakh did with Slava, Chaikl vacillates between lust and disgust for Kreyndl. Chaikl is ashamed about his false piety in Shaye's presence. Towards the end of Part V, news of Chaikl's affair begins to spread among the women of the town. Tsharne, the cook's daughter, no longer broken-hearted by Chaikl's rejection, mocks him all through dinner. Chaikl flees to the synagogue to find some peace and instead finds Tsemakh.

Tsemakh is ashamed of his own lust for Ronya and does not feel worthy enough to condemn Chaikl's behavior. Still, he feels that he has no choice and begins to yell at Chaikl. Chaikl then begins to speak for Shaye. He reports the rabbi's philosophy that evil urges cannot be purged through confrontation and criticism. Tsemakh asks if Chaikl has mentioned his love affair to Shaye. In the course of the conversation, it becomes clear that Chaikl's former idolization of Tsemakh has turned to anger. When Chaikl begins to cry, the vehemence of Tsemakh's words only increases. This, in turn, fuels Chaikl's anger at Tsemakh and strengthens Chaikl's resolve not to move out of Kreyndl's

home. Chaikl confronts Tsemakh about his own past history with women, and Tsemakh agrees that his zealousness for morality is driven by personal failure. This interaction between Tsemakh and Chaikl is typical of Tsemakh's interactions with his students in that it is characterized by bitterness, anger, and alienation. The scene ends with Chaikl stumbling out of the shul, leaving Tsemakh to struggle with his lack of faith and his inability to find beauty in the world.

In spite of his harsh criticism of Chaikl, Tsemakh does not want him to leave the Yeshiva. Tsemakh fears that the world outside would destroy Chaikl. Menakhem Mendl, however, is concerned that Chaikl's immorality will undermine the town's support of the Yeshiva. When Shaye gets word of Chaikl's affair, he calls for him. When Chaikl arrives at Shaye's cottage, bracing for the worst, Shaye simply extends an invitation for them to study together. At that moment, the world stands still for Chaikl. With this invitation, Shaye enacts the philosophy of which he has spoken. Shaye raises up this sinner, speaking to the highest in Chaikl rather than condemning his faults. With Shaye's gesture of support, Chaikl's lust melts away.

Kreyndl's desire, however, is unabated, and when Chaikl throws her out of his bed, her weeping can be heard by everyone in the house. Now Chaikl flees to the *beit midrash* where he meets Tsemakh. Tsemakh offers him a place to sleep, but Chaikl, afraid of becoming indebted to his teacher, rejects his offer. Knowing that he will only be mocked at Reb Gordon's, Chaikl sees that he will have to return to Vilna, and upon

this realization, he falls ill. Shaye pays Chaikl a sick call, and Chaikl's father, Shlomo Motte, despite being a *maskil*, is moved by Shaye's kindness.

Tsemakh Atlas and Reb Shaye then engage in a debate about whether the study of Torah can purge one's *yetzer harah*. Shaye thinks it can. He finds fault with the Musar way of life because it provides no comfort or hope to a person who is burdened by the normal cares and obligations of the world. Talmud, Shaye believes, can be applied to and integrated with daily life. Tsemakh says that only Musar fire is an antidote to human lust. Tsemakh tells Shaye that he has too much faith in people. Shaye responds that Tsemakh is compelled to hide from his students because he fears they will discover Tsemakh's own lack of faith. Thus concludes the first Volume of the novel.

Chapter IV. *Précis of Volume Two, "Masters and Disciples"*

The second volume of the novel, entitled *Masters and Disciples*, opens with Tsemakh still in isolation. He has been warned by Shaye not to speak too much with his students lest they discover his lack of faith. While Shaye is drawn to Tsemakh and wants to help him, he fears being put in a position where he will have to rebuke Tsemakh. Shaye avoids the use of confrontation when teaching. This characteristic sets Shaye apart from the surrounding political climate, which is one of great conflict. As students from various yeshivot come to Valkenik for vacation, they clash with one another. In particular, the Navaredok students of Musar disapprove of the *litvaks* from Mir who, according to the *musarniks*, do not sufficiently occupy themselves with issues of morality.

As Shaye's relationship with Chaikl grows and deepens, many aspects of Shaye's character become apparent. Quite different from Tsemakh, Shaye exhibits great affection for his students and speaks of them in complimentary terms. His manner is gentle. Shaye does not believe that a *ben torah* should be rebuked for lack of observance. For example, he is careful to protect his students' dignity. Knowing that Chaikl is hungry, Shaye finds a way to get Chaikl to eat without his needing to ask for food. At the end of the day, Shaye gives Chaikl his own pillow. Shaye's relationship to Chaikl is characterized by intimacy and tenderness. Sometimes this closeness is too much for Chaikl. For example, Chaikl turns away and does not want to see his teacher unclothed when they go swimming together.

Shaye tells Tsemakh that he does not think Tsemakh is a hero for trying to save Hertzke because ultimately, Tsemakh ended up causing more damage than good in Hertzke's life. Vova reinforces this sentiment when he tells Tsemakh that he destroys all he touches and that he lives for conflict, turning sons against their fathers. Vova adds that, when it comes to Tsemakh's personal life, he does not practice what he preaches.

Shortly afterwards, in the middle of Part I, Tsemakh's aunt Tsertele dies, leaving his uncle Ziml alone. Tsemakh's uncle had always advised him to become a recluse, to live for Torah alone, and to not become tied down by family commitments. When his wife dies, however, uncle Ziml realizes that he had never fully appreciated his family life. Again the question is raised, how should a pious scholar balance his religious commitments and his family duties? The question remains unresolved for Tsemakh. Not only is he estranged from his wife, he becomes increasingly cut off from his students. They constantly disappoint him, for example, when they seem not to understand a sermon of his that raises questions about faith.

After confronting Tsemakh, Vova goes to Shaye's cottage. Shaye's manner is firm enough to keep Vova from violence, but he also treats Vova with respect thereby awakening in him the desire to behave respectably. Shaye feels compelled to interfere in the dispute between Vova and Tsemakh in order to prevent the desecration of God's name. Although he doesn't want to, Shaye opens his home to Vova and invites him to stay for the night. As Shaye makes Vova's bed, Vova tells him that he has taken an oath to have Tsemakh driven out of town. Shaye says that he will take on Vova's oath and,

with it, the burden of its being broken. Shaye emphasizes that students of Torah must not be made to suffer and speaks to Vova about the power of forgiveness. This attitude is quite different from Tsemakh's Musar philosophy in which suffering and penitence plays a central role. Part I of *Masters and Disciples* ends with Vova at Shaye's home and Tsemakh alone in the his attic.

Part II begins with a description of the irreverent practices of the summer visitors to Valkenik. The local girls become frustrated at their inability to find suitors. Then fires break out as if to symbolize the simmering passions of the young people and the tensions between them. *Mizrachi* students conflict with those who are members of the *agudah*. The townspeople, for whom Hirshe Gordon speaks, are angry at the members of the *maskilik* "library group" who promote secular books. The religious townspeople also disapprove of the firemen who give a concert just before *Tisha B'Av*. Tensions between the Zionists and the anti-Zionist members of the *agudah* come to a climax on *Tisha B'Av*. The Zionists can't stand all the helpless wailing about the Temple's destruction. In addition, they resent the passive hope for the people's return to Zion. Eltzik Bloch, a Zionist himself, asks for an *aliyah* on the Shabbat of Consolation. Instead, it is given to his brother-in-law, a member of the *agudah*. Tensions erupt in a knock-down brawl in the synagogue. Finally, the crowds disperse, and the mournful worshipper continue in peace.

Not long into Part II, Soyeh Etl's boarders begin to read books which are forbidden books because of their scientific and sexual content. Meyerke Podoval, a

Bolshevik and a former Yeshiva student, is the ringleader. Meyerke is frustrated by the Yeshiva students' willingness to lead a double life, remaining in the Yeshiva and keeping up a pious front but reading forbidden books on the side. Menakhem Mendl goes rummaging through the boys' possessions and finds their heretical books. The boys tell him that they are reading these books in order to be able to refute heretics. Mendl then realizes that they have no awe or fear of him. Thus, if he speaks to them too harshly, he will lose them for good. Mendl's dilemma points to two larger questions raised by the novel- to what extent is condemnation an effective pedagogic tool? Are the ideals and values of traditional religious teachers too far removed from the beliefs of students and the reality in which they live?

During this time of conflicts among the townspeople and Yeshiva students, both Shaye and Tsemakh choose not to intervene. This has long been Shaye's stance when it comes to communal matters. Tsemakh, on the other hand, does not feel that he is in any spiritual condition to take a more active role in students' well-being. The conflicts and scandals rage on, the library supporters taking up with the local girls and Reb Gordon being mocked for his old-fashioned piety.

The Yeshiva student, Sheeya Lipnishker, a prodigy and a bachelor, agrees to go to Dekshne to teach Talmud to the simple farmers. He stays with a family who is caring for a madwoman, Elke. The whole town, in fact, makes money by boarding the insane. When Elke becomes pregnant, she says that Sheeya is the father, and Sheeya decides to return to Valkenik. There he finds the Yeshiva infected with heresy, at the center of which

is Meyerke. Meyerke is still angry at Sheeya who spat in his face when Meyerke asked Sheeya to read heretical books. Meyerke therefore decides to spread the rumor that it was indeed Sheeya who impregnated Elke. Reb Shapiro tells Sheeya that he must swear his innocence before the open Torah. Sheeya does so, groveling before the community, the picture of shame and humiliation. Reb Shapiro, Mendl and even Tsemakh approach him with compassion. Ultimately, a bricklayer states that it was Meyerke who started the rumor against Sheeya.

The heresy in the Yeshiva continues. Reb Gordon beats his son Baynash for reading a book about evolution. He then goes to Tsemakh in tears, full of guilt, feeling that he has lost his only son. Reb Gordon is also angry at Tsemakh for not speaking out when Yeshiva students misbehave. Tsemakh concedes his guilt and then rails against a congregation that will not allow a student such as Sheeya to argue on his own behalf. Tsemakh, who often gravitates towards extreme and harsh solutions, says that he wants to burn the library down. Reb Gordon, however, explains that then Tsemakh would be forced to leave, and the Yeshiva would be destroyed.

Midway through Part II, the narrative shifts to a description of Shaye worshipping with the careworn factory workers, unaware of the scandal with Sheeya back at the Yeshiva. Studying with Shaye, Chaikl finds himself immersed in a world of natural beauty. Shaye continues to treat him gently, and when he feels that Chaikl needs to focus more on his Talmud studies, Shaye redirects him with compassion and humor. Finally,

the scandal with Sheeya is resolved. The townspeople of Dekshne discover that a rag collector is the father of Elke's child. Chaikl watches as they acquit Sheeya.

Shaye continues to feel ambivalent about Tsemakh, unsure whether he should protect him or not. Shaye condemns Yosef Varshever for abandoning his first fiancé, and says that most Jewish men do not try to protect women's honor. Yoel Uzder says that he is going to marry Gitl the cook's older, less popular daughter. Shaye commends him. Shaye's own marital history is then introduced. In his youth, Shaye's heart problems and his need, as a Torah scholar, to be supported by his wife, made it seem unlikely that he would find a match. When his family did find him a wife, who is nearly twice his age, Shaye does not even consider rejecting and humiliating her. Her name is Yudis. She is a gruff woman and not terribly polite to Shaye's scholarly guests. Her foul temper is fueled, in part, by her belief that Shaye married her out of pity. Still, she works hard at her textile shop in order to support her husband.

The next scandal erupts when a bricklayer burns the library of the freethinkers. There is much conjecture about who did it. Fingers are pointed at Sheeya who, this time, refuses to be humiliated by swearing before the Torah. The uneducated townsmen think that his refusal proves his guilt. A fight begins to break out between the library youths and the Yeshiva students. Tsemakh diffuses some of the tension by stepping in and confessing, falsely of course, that he is the arsonist. The library threatens not to allow the Yeshiva students from entering the Yeshiva, and the townspeople side with the library youths. Ultimately, the library youths let the Yeshiva open, but they picket outside

Hirshe Gordon's store in hopes that he will go bankrupt. A delegation is sent to Shaye in order to get his opinion. He believes that gestures like burning books only increase the extremism of the *maskilim*. He thinks that new leaders for the Yeshiva should be chosen and that the community should attempt to start all over again.

Then Tsemakh goes to visit Shaye. Their interchange highlights many of the differences between them. They argue about what it means to desecrate God's name. According to Shaye, one should behave strictly in regard to oneself but leniently towards others. Shaye says that one must be able to tolerate others' minor sins, otherwise a person will end up befriending those who commit great sins. Tsemakh feels, perhaps correctly, that Shaye is trying to reject Tsemakh's whole way of life. Tsemakh reacts by telling Shaye that Shaye too has withdrawn from the Yeshiva students and has renounced his responsibilities as a leader, preferring instead, to be glorified from afar. Shaye responds that, Tsemakh chose as well, to withdraw from his students rather than tempering his speech. Even so, his students are still attracted by Tsemakh's charisma. Shaye admits that Chaikl is still more Tsemakh's student than his own. Shaye adds a negative word about Tsemakh's pride and his willingness to defend the vulnerable only when they are far removed from his personal life. The issue of the two men's history with women then comes to the fore. Shaye says that he would never choose to abandon a fiancé as Tsemakh did. Shaye says that he can no longer continue defending Tsemakh and that it's better for the Yeshiva if Tsemakh leaves. Shortly after this interchange, when Tsemakh meets Chaikl, he tells his former student that Shaye is not the teacher for him, even though he is a good man.

As the story moves ahead, Shaye continues to struggle with his lust for Ronya but is able to overcome it. When Shaye and Chaikl are caught in a rainstorm on their way to Valkenik for penitential prayers, they seek shelter at Ronya's house. There, they overhear her confess her love for Tsemakh to her sister. She describes how Tsemakh resists the temptation to be with her and how she hates Shaye for sending Tsemakh away. Chaikl senses that Shaye's compassion for Ronya outweighs his anger at her.

Towards the end of Part II, after his confrontation with Shaye, Tsemakh heads for Amdur to search for Dvorele, his first fiancé. When he hears she is dead, he falls down in front of her house in despair. He begs her father, Namiot for forgiveness. He responds by spitting on Tsemakh and then beating him. The townspeople rush to Tsemakh's defense, telling him that broken engagements happen often and that Dvorele's father, not Tsemakh, was the source of her misery. Still, Tsemakh knows that Dvorele would have made a more pious *rebbe* than either Slava or Ronya. He lies down on Dvorele's grave. Knowing that he is a proud man, he hopes that such gestures will break his own ego.

After his trip to Amdur, Tsemakh returns home temporarily, to live with his uncle Ziml in Lomzhe. Having lost his own wife, Ziml regrets his past fantasies about becoming a reclusive scholar. He thinks that Tsemakh should return to Slava. When Tsemakh meets her, he sees that she is older but still a beauty. He tells her that he wants a divorce so that he can wander and atone for Dvorele's death. Slava tells him that a

divorce will not free him from his guilt and privately wonders why Tsemakh doesn't seem to care about *her* fate. She believes that Tsemakh has ruined her chance for happiness. Slava has three rivals for her affection- Herman Yoffe, Feivl Sokolovsky and Zevulun Halperin. Yet, she wants no one but Tsemakh, because no one challenges her as he does. She misses their days as newlyweds. As a gesture of love, she offers Tsemakh money to support him as he wanders, but he won't accept it. In the course of Tsemakh and Slava's conversation, he learns that Stasya is alive and that she and her child are living, as Tsemakh had wanted, with a Jewish family.

At the opening of Part III of the novel, Chaikl's father, Shlomo Motte, dies. In an uncharacteristic display of judgment against *maskilim*, Shaye does not attend Motte's funeral. Later, Shaye will regret this decision in which he placed zealousness for the law ahead of compassion. Shortly after Shlomo Motte's death, Vova dies, not having been able to follow through on much of Shaye's gentle and sage advice.

Chaikl continues to battle with his lusts. When he goes to Nareva for the days of awe, he falls into the company of "the Lohoyshker," Moshe Chayit, a student from Russia recruited by Tsemakh. Chayit has fallen away from religion, and Chaikl's association with him fosters much public disapproval. Chaikl and of "the Lohoyshker" watch the fervent prayers of the Nareva *Musarniks* and their fiery rabbi Simkha Feinerman. Reb Feinerman humiliates Chaikl by saying that his association with Chayit is like Abraham befriending Lot. As a *Musarnik*, Chaikl is expected to gratefully accept

public humiliation. Now living as an accepted penitent in Nareva, Tsemakh stands in the corner of the synagogue with his *tallis* over his head.

Perhaps out of guilt for abandoning him, Tsemakh speaks to Chayit, his wayward former student, perhaps out of guilt for abandoning him, and tries to convince him of the pernicious influence of the secular world. Chayit, however, can feel only jealousy and anger towards his former mentor. He berates Tsemakh for cruelly abandoning his students. He says that he learned from Tsemakh not to trust anyone's seemingly good deeds. Thus, to Chayit, Tsemakh's penitence appears false. He imagines it is motivated less by a sense of guilt than by a need for adventure. Even so, Chayit will never be free of his traditional, religious learning. While he may turn on and off lights on Yom Kippur, he will always feel guilty about it. Chayit also seems to have internalized the harsh ways of Musar. Just as Tsemakh trained him with severity, Chayit now responds to his former teacher with judgment. The conversation ends with Tsemakh's conclusion that compassion is the foundation of faith. Such a statement is highly unusual for Tsemakh.

The fighting between the Nareva students of *Musar* and the Talmud scholars continues. The *Musarniks* display their true philosophy and method during a local dance at which Tsemakh pulls open his shirt and dances wildly as a form of self-effacement, proof that he does not care what others think. The display concludes with the *Musar* students lifting Tsemakh on high and shouting out their wish that their hearts will be

purified. They believe that purity of soul will be acquired only when the secular world and its temptations are aggressively rejected.

Yank Poltaver, one of Tsemakh's students, is something of a clown. A typical *musarnik*, he studies no Talmud and condemns Melekhe's desire to do so. He has the habit of loosing his own clothing and stealing others'. Despite his odd habits, Poltaver is very successful at establishing new yeshivas. Yankl Poltaver has an extreme dislike for Zushe Sulkes, a trustee of the Free Loan Society. In particular, he disapproves of Sulkes' treatment of poor women. Sulkes, for his part, dislikes Musar sloppiness and audacity. Despite Sulkes' political and financial power and in spite of the fact that he could close down the Yeshiva, Poltaver along with Tsemakh's other students continually pester him in typical Musar, abrasive style. They pray at Sulkes' store and stand against him in synagogue. Finally, the dispirited Sulkes resigns from his position at the Free Loan Society and kicks Melechke, whom he had been supporting, out of his home. The students' behavior towards Sulkes infuriates the synagogue's wealthy and influential congregants. This incident provides a stark illustration of how Musar idealism can directly conflict with the community's need for political harmony.

Midway through Part III, more Yeshiva students are introduced, each with his own history and eccentricities. Reuven Ratner, a delicate Musarnik who cannot seem to find a wife, is Tsemakh's oldest student. Shimshl Kupishker is something of a Musar fanatic, constantly fasting and afraid. His fanaticism increases with Tsemakh's withdrawal from the Yeshiva. Tsemakh does not deny that he is the cause of some of his

students' distorted behavior. Danielle Homler, a *musarnik* from a wealthy family, remains very attached to his personal possessions. When he falls ill, the other Yeshiva students do not want to help him, because he shows no gratitude for their efforts. While in the hospital, Danielle turns to the nurses for affection and begins to lust after them. Duber Lifschitz, a strict *musarnik* from Nareva, is unable to redirect the Yeshiva students back to a strict Musar way of life. Lifschitz fears for the fate of the Yeshiva, but he himself remains with his integrity intact.

The philosophy of Musar is explained further in a debate between Chaikl and Duber Lifschitz in which Chaikl seems to have deviated substantially from his original strict Musar perspective. According to Reb Duber, the sensualist appears warmhearted and the spiritual man, severe, but it is ultimately the latter who will offer wholehearted help where the Torah demands it. Chaikl expresses his doubts that man can ever escape his own self-interest. He wonders, as well, whether *musarniks* are able to appreciate the beauty and splendor of the natural world. Chaikl finds the *musarniks* too strict, unable even to allow for pleasure in the performance of *mitzvot*. He believes that God only exists inside each person according to his belief system, and when a man dies, so dies the God in Whom he believes. It is possible to find in Chaikl's arguments elements of Shaye's philosophy and combined with Chaikl's tendency towards secular thought. Yet, Chaikl's desire to debate with students of Musar shows that he is not entirely free of the Musar perspective either.

Asher Leml appears towards the end of Part III. He is a quiet student who Tsemakh does not think offers much hope. Yet, gradually, over time, Leml becomes known as something of a saint. He shows great kindness to other students, and even visits Daniel Homler in the hospital. He then convinces Henekh Malariter, a yeshiva student and a bachelor, to take Daniel into his home. Tsemakh wonders to himself how Asher Leml could be such a *tzadik* without having undergone extensive Musar trials.

Further towards the end of Part II, the women of the Yeshiva community ask Yankl Poltaver to leave because they fear that he will cause Zushe Sulkes to resign as a trustee of the Free Loan Society. The local women who depend on charity will then be further impoverished. When Reb Feinerman returns home, he too asks Poltaver to leave until some of the dust has settled. Besides the conflicts between Poltaver and Sulkes, clashes between other characters continue. Moshe Chayit argues with the *musarniks*. Poltaver argues with Melechke, Melechke disagrees with Chayit. Finally, Tsemakh decides to expel Chayit from the Yeshiva. The confrontation with Chayit causes Tsemakh to feel he has succeeded at nothing. He sees his relationship with Chayit as symbolic of his life's failure. According to Tsemakh, his personal faults become manifest in his students. Reb Feinerman believes that Tsemakh's repentance must not be entirely genuine since it breeds such resentment and discontent.

Shaye is compelled to leave for Vilna in order to attend a meeting of the Yeshiva Council which will determine the allocation of funds to different yeshivot. Shaye, however, would much prefer to stay at home and study. While Shay is reluctant to advise

community members on political and financial matters, he does continue to give Tsemakh advice about his personal life. Shaye does not think it is right for Tsemakh to play the role of a penitent for failures toward his dead fiancé while abandoning his wife who is still alive. Part III concludes with Poltaver planning to steal away with Melechke in order to remove him from the evil clutches of Moshe Chayit.

Part IV begins with Chaikl still struggling to rid himself of his lust, this time for his new landlady, Beyla Gutgeshtalt. No one in the Yeshiva is surprised when Kupishker, the ascetic Yeshiva student, tries to hang himself. He has attempted suicide before. Asher Laml watches over Kupishker as he recovers. When he wakes up from his stupor, Kupishker shaves his beard and eats sweets excessively. Then, in order to avoid the stigma of his heretical actions, he takes off with Asher Leml for a far away Yeshiva. With both Kupishker and Chaikl, the tension between piety and sensuality is again enacted.

Melechke becomes a pawn in the battle between Chayit and other members of the Yeshiva. Taking Chayit's advice, Melechke decides to leave the Yeshiva and become a *maskil*. Yankl Poltaver, however, comes to retrieve him. Melechke's return to the Yeshiva symbolizes the Yeshiva's victory over Chayit, the heretic. Another political confrontation erupts between Zushe Sulkes and Yankl Poltaver when Yankl attempts to take a group of Yeshiva boys to Amdur. He has established a new Yeshiva there, which he hopes to run according to strict Musar principles. Sulkes, however, does not think he has the right to steal Nareva's students.

The entire town is rocked by grief when Henekh Malariter, the man who took in Daniel Homler, who dies of a heart attack, after dancing at Purim. The outpouring of emotion over Malariter's death is one of the many expressions in the novel of the people's devotion to their Yeshiva scholars. Malariter's death causes the Yeshiva students to question the suffering of the righteous and temporarily quiets the feud between Sulkes and the Yeshiva *musarniks*. The other students' dislike of Daniel Homler only increases when he decides to take Malariter's fiancé. Daniel expresses to Tsemakh that he is tired of the other students' moralizing and says that *musarniks* do not know how to ease another's pain. He hates the filth of the Yeshiva, which in the spring is mired in mud and longs for some private space. Tsemakh has no sympathy for him.

Once again, in the middle of Part IV, Slava comes looking for Tsemakh. She is enraged at how he has humiliated her. Now, abandoned by her paramours, Slava finds herself paralyzed, unable to pursue new attachments and unable to break her bond with Tsemakh. Tsemakh is also alone, alienated from his students. He speaks of his desire to start again and to be less rigid. Slava begins to flirt with Chayit and Chaikl also interacts with her. Whereas Chayit is thrilled by Slava's beauty, Chaikl is embarrassed by the attention of his teacher's wife. Soon, however, Chaikl finds himself seduced by her charm. While Chayit speaks harshly about Tsemakh, Chaikl retains a positive attitude towards his former teacher. Chayit and Chaikl go so far as to visit Slava. She loves how this humiliates and angers Tsemakh.

In an uncharacteristic moment, Chayit speaks of the sinfulness of lust and admits that the Musar philosophy will never be totally out of his system. As word of his association with Slava spreads, Chayit begins to loose work as a teacher. The other Yeshiva students become curious and distracted. Krasner and Konotoper think that Chayit should be expelled from the Yeshiva. Reb Feinerman, however, does not want to relinquish Chayit into the hands of gentiles or the Polish police. Feinerman's wife explains to him that Slava's antics are in response to her husband's abandonment. Reb Feinerman then tells Tsemakh that he must go back to Slava.

Immersed in a sense of personal failure, Tsemakh has a dream in which Henekh Malariter questions his faith. Tsemakh weeps at Shaye's disapproval of him and at his own inability to change. Tsemakh resolves to go to Shaye and ask his advice. Slava accompanies him and says that she will try to convince Chayit to leave. She feels guilty that her husband has destroyed Chayit's life. She understands, as well, that Chayit's attraction to her is driven by his hatred for her husband. Both Chayit and Chaikl do not want Tsemakh to return home with Slava. They want her to stay. Finally, Reb Feinerman pays Chayit to leave with funds he has collected from Yeshiva students.

Shaye encourages Tsemakh to return home to Lomzhe with Slava. He tells Tsemakh that *any* work he does can be imbued with the spirit of Torah and scholarship. He explains that the goal is to be in the world, but in one's heart, alone with God. Shaye believes that Slava's persistence with Tsemakh is a sign that she still loves him. Tsemakh, however, sees her behavior as merely stubborn and reports to Shaye her

flirtation with Chayit and Chaikl. Shaye responds that one should not tell another how to change unless they ask. He then concedes that Tsemakh was right, and that it probably would have been better for Chaikl to remain at the Yeshiva rather than coming out Shaye's cottage to study with him. Yudis, Shaye's wife, then appears. She is in a particularly bad mood because her store has just been robbed. Shaye, however, bears the brunt of her anger silently.

Just as Chaikl and Vova had the desire to improve their ways when in Shaye's presence, Slava too decides that she will try to behave more modestly when she is with Shaye. She is moved to tears by Shaye's description of man's search for what is already at home. Perhaps she wishes that Tsemakh would end his search and come home to her. Shaye explains that his evil inclination causes him to want to be a recluse. Tsemakh's *yester harah*, on the other hand, can cause him to do just the opposite, to interfere with other's lives and condemn them.

Towards the conclusion of Part IV, there is a pathetic description of Chayit. He realizes that he is losing Slava and tells her that she is his home. Slava responds that, as soon as Chayit stops hating Tsemakh, he will stop loving her. Chayit then lashes out at Tsemakh, telling him that he has lived a hypocritical life. Tsemakh announces that he is leaving the Yeshiva to become a simple shopkeeper, and Chayit laughs, saying that, without constant crisis around him, Tsemakh will be exposed as a fraud. Tsemakh does not respond with anger until Chayit begins to cry and say that he has accomplished nothing with his life. Then Tsemakh condemns his self-pity and says that he has no one

to blame but himself. Tsemakh accepts the blame for his own failures and resolves not to treat Slava as he had his first fiancé.

Chaikl is ashamed to visit Shaye, because he knows that Shaye has heard of his association with Chayit. Vella's mother, however, is able to convince him to go. When he arrives, Shaye is making *matzah* a task characteristic of Shaye's life of humble piety. As if to give Chaikl a sign that he need not make any confessions, Shaye reports that Tsemakh has gone home. Shaye then says he will soon be moving to Palestine and extends a formal invitation to Chaikl to join him for Passover. Chaikl can sense by his teacher's distant formality, that he can no longer consider Shaye his mentor. This makes Chaikl want to leave the Yeshiva all together, but he knows this would break his mother's heart. As if she has read Chaikl's mind, Yudis warns Shaye that his departure will cause Chaikl to go astray. Shaye, therefore, summons Vella to visit him. When she arrives, he confesses that he sees no way to bring Chaikl back to a life of Torah. He is deeply grieved that, after all the time they have spent together, he has not been more successful with Chaikl. Shaye is unable to offer Vella any comfort about her son's situation. Yudis, however, tells Vella that Chaikl is as dear to her husband as a son. Chaikl goes to speak with Shaye and they debate about religious versus secular perspectives on life. Chaikl tries to explain to Shaye that he does not come to his secular views out of laziness but rather, out of concern for the common folk. Chaikl then confesses to Vella, his flirtation with Slava.

As the novel draws to a finish, Chaikl and Chayit sit together on a hillside gazing out at the countryside. They watch local young men and women swim, unashamed to look at one another. Shaye, studying Talmud nearby, has no connection to this secular world. Chaikl and Chayit do not fit comfortably into either the religious or the secular world. Chayit wonders if he would have left the Yeshiva if he had learned from Shaye as a teacher rather than Tsemakh. Now, Chaikl feels he is trapped. He must feign piety to the parents of the students he tutors. Yet, compared to secular youths, he and Chaikl are Yeshiva boys to the core. The two catch sight of Shaye who is in his cottage preparing to make *aliyah*. Chaikl wants to avoid interacting with Shaye. Shaye bids farewell to Tsemakh in a letter, but Tsemakh chooses to visit Shaye in person. Vella feels pity for Chayit and remains a faithful believer, in spite of her son's behavior, that Torah study leads only to good things.

Tsemakh appears listless in his new life as the Lomzhe flour merchant. Chayit confronts Tsemakh with his usual bitterness, but Tsemakh does not respond with anger. Chayit feels his own anger subside when he sees how defeated Tsemakh has become. He then explains to Tsemakh that he raised up broken disciples because he taught them Torah that he, himself, couldn't believe. Tsemakh and Chayit part ways for the last time. Chayit will not accept Tsemakh's offer of money. He tells Tsemakh that he will not thank him for it.

When Tsemakh and Shaye meet, Shaye sees Tsemakh's sadness and knows that Torah has not fully touched Tsemakh's soul. He advises Tsemakh to have a child. The

tension between the two is relieved when Chaikl enters to help Yudis pack. Chaikl is saddened and surprised when he realizes that Shaye does not want to have a heart to heart talk with him before he leaves. Vella tells Chaikl that he must go to the train station to say goodbye to Shaye even though Shaye has said that he wants no one to come. Chaikl is also joined by the common Jews who cannot be convinced to stay away from their beloved teacher.

All are silent as they prepare to bid farewell to Shaye. Tsemakh and Shaye shake hands and Chaikl begins to weep. Yudis embraces Vella and then tells Chaikl to come to Palestine. Shaye can only tell Chaikl that it is hard to speak at such moments. When Shaye boards the train, Chaikl and Tsemakh are left standing on the platform alone. Now, after so many years of suffering, Tsemakh has the faith he sought. Only God, he thinks, could punish him so. Now, it is happiness that he craves. Tsemakh's eyes are dry as he prays, but Chaikl continues to cry. Together, the two standing side by side, appear as two lonely trees whose protector has gone forever.

PART II

Analysis of *The Yeshiva* in Light of the *Mishneh Torah*

Chapter I. *The relationship of Hilkhos Talmud Torah to The Yeshiva*

Hilkhos Talmud Torah of Maimonides' *Mishneh Torah* is devoted to exploring the many aspects of studying Torah and the various complexities in the lives of students and teachers. As a code of law, representing many teachers and ideas that have come before, *Mishneh Torah* acts as a summary of traditional Jewish views on a whole range of subjects. I have therefore chosen to use *Hilkhos Talmud Torah* as the primary traditional source to which I will compare the ideas about Jewish education and the teacher/student relationship that are expressed in *The Yeshiva*. Each of the five sections of analysis: *the ideal of the Yeshiva, the reality of Yeshiva life, judgment and mercy, the teacher as parent, and the student as the embodiment of the teacher's philosophy*, will include several texts from *Hilkhos Talmud Torah* relevant to that section's theme. The ideas in the novel and the ideas in *Hilkhos Talmud Torah* will be compared.

Chapter II. *The Ideal of Yeshiva Life*

Many aspects of Grade's novel lovingly idealize Yeshiva life and scholars of Torah. The common people's love of Torah scholars seems to include their admiration for religious leaders in general. When Reb Yaakov Hachohen Lev leaves Valkenik for Palestine, the community gathers around the rabbi's home and many weep openly.²⁶ Then, when Reb Mordekhai Aaron arrives to replace Reb Yaakov Hachohen Lev, the fanfare reaches almost comic proportions.

²⁶ Grade, Vol. I, p. 311

Lag B'Omer morning Valkenik awoke to the pounding of a bass drum and the blare of trumpets. The fire brigade's brass band began the day with marches in honor of the festival. The young people had been upset because the old rabbi had left during the counting of the *Omer* when no music was permitted and they couldn't see him off with the band. Now they doubled their efforts in honor of the new rabbi... Since the musicians were firemen, they wore copper helmets, blue uniforms with shoulder straps and wide leather belts, and shiny boots. The horns and tubas were twisted like snakes around their necks. The bandmaster conducted, and the musicians, using all their buttons and keys, boomed forth with their brass instruments. In honor of the new rabbi they had built in the middle of the synagogue courtyard a wooden tower on which was hung a linen sign with the letters, "This is the gate of God; the righteous shall enter it."²⁷

In addition to the respect felt by the common people for their religious leaders, a special reverence is given to Torah scholars. After meeting Shaye and agreeing to become his student, Chaikl considers the relationship of the common people to their Torah scholars.

He thought of the rabbi and how right he was that Jews love Torah. Chaikl had often seen the simple folk and even the fresh punks from Butchers Street respectfully making way for a Torah scholar; loudmouthed market women assumed a pious demeanor when they saw a Jew in a rabbinic gabardine passing by. During winter nights old men sat in the *beth medresh* over their books and talked about scholars while studying.... he listened to their talk about gaons and their miracle stories about hidden saints. The reverential awe for Torah shown by Jews with white beards, brass-rimmed spectacles, and bristly root hairs on their noses- their whispering pious gestures- blended in Chaikl's thoughts with the shadows of the hanging lamps and with the dark gold flame of the Eternal Light illuminating the pulpit at the dark gold eastern wall like a sun risen in the middle of the night.²⁸

When Henekh Malariter, the Yeshiva student, dies of a heart attack, the entire town is bereft. The loss of a pious scholar is more than they can bear.²⁹

One of the individuals who shows a profound regard for Torah scholarship is Chaikl's mother, Vella. In spite of the fact that she is a simple woman and her husband, Reb Shlomo Motte, would prefer for Chaikl to earn his own living, Vella wants Chaikl to become a student at Tsemakh's Yeshiva. She works long hours, as did Grade's own

²⁷ Grade, Vol. I, p. 314

²⁸ Grade, Vol. I p. 354

²⁹ Grade, Vol. II, p. 310

mother, at the market place in order that her dream for her son be realized. Later in the novel, Shaye thinks of the sacrifices Vella has made and can barely bring himself to tell Vella that her son has left the path of Torah.³⁰ Vella's plight may represent the guilt Grade himself felt for leaving a traditional life of Jewish scholarship in exchange for the secular world of Yiddish literature. However related the character of Vella may be to Grade's own personal story, she also represents the love and reverence of simple Jews, throughout the ages, for their wise and pious scholars.

The laws of *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* reflect this reverence and seek to enable the transmission of Jewish knowledge from teacher to student. According to the *halakhah*, the religious education of small children was no small matter, the very existence of the world depended on it.

Teachers of small children should be located in each and every land, in each and every region, and in each and every city. And city that does not contain children who study, the people of that city are ostracized until they employ teachers of small children. And if they do not employ teachers, the city should be destroyed because the world is only sustained for the sake of the breath of children who study Torah.³¹

The passage above is focused on the importance of children who learn Torah and the preciousness of their study. The high value placed upon Torah study then becomes the foundation for the great respect paid to Torah sages.

³⁰ Grade, Vol. II, p. 379

³¹ Maimonides, *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* 2:1. For Hebrew of all *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* passages, see Appendix B.

It is a great sin to disgrace Torah sages or to hate them. Jerusalem was not destroyed until (*its inhabitants*) disgraced its sages. As it is said, "They would mock the messengers of God, disgrace His word, and scoff His prophets." (II Chronicles 26:16) i.e. "They would scorn those who teach His words." Similarly, the Torah says, "If you hate My statutes." (Leviticus 26:16) i.e. "Those who teach My statutes." Whoever disgraces the sages does not have a portion in the world to come and is included in the category, "Those who scorn the word of God." (Numbers 15:31)³²

According to *Hilkhot Talmud Torah*, Torah sages are not only to be protected from scorn, but they are also to be revered, given the honor bestowed upon royalty and priests.

Similarly, he should not remove his *tefillin* in the presence of his teacher, nor should he recline in his presence. Rather, he should sit before him as one sits before a king. A person should not pray either in front of his teacher, behind his teacher, or at his teacher's side. Needless to say, one should not walk by his side. Rather, he should distance himself behind his teacher without standing directly behind him and then pray. One should not enter a bathhouse together with his teacher or sit in his teacher's place. One should not side against his teacher's opinion in his presence or contradict his statements. One should not sit in his presence until he tells him to sit. One should not stand before him until he receives permission to stand. When one departs from his teacher, one should not turn his back to him: Rather, one should walk backwards while facing him.³³

This honoring of a Torah sage does not preclude the teacher's imperfections.

Even with their flaws, the sanctity of a Torah sage remains intact.

Our Sages said that even a Torah sage who is a *mamzer* deserves precedence over a high priest who is unlearned. As it is written, "It is more precious than pearls." (Proverbs 3:15) i.e. "more precious than the high priest who enters the innermost chambers."³⁴

By admitting that certain sages may be *mamzerim*, i.e. born of forbidden sexual relations, the tradition allows for imperfection among its Torah scholars. Yet, these imperfections, both of sages and their students challenge the ideal of Torah study put forth by the tradition. Can the sanctified ideal of Torah scholarship be truly achieved if the teachers of Torah and those who learn from them are riddled with human imperfection? One of the most challenging and unique aspects of *The Yeshiva* is that, while allowing for the

³² Maimonides, 6:11

³³ Maimonides, 5:6

³⁴ Maimonides, 3:2

ideal of Yeshiva life to loom gloriously before our eyes, the novel also depicts, the reality of Torah scholarship and how life in the Yeshiva often fell short of the ideals and hopes with which it was invested.

Chapter III. *Teachers' Ideals vs. the Reality of Life with Students*

The two teachers of the novel Tsemakh Atlas and Reb Avraham Shaye Kosover come to their students with pious and lofty hopes. Yet, as they interact with those in the Yeshiva community, they encounter many difficulties. Many factors make it difficult for Tsemakh and Shaye to achieve their ideals. Each of these challenges will be explored below: *the politics of Yeshiva life, the material needs and desires of the students, sexual temptations, the commitment of students to their families, and students' personal eccentricities and weaknesses.* All of these impede the dream of Yeshiva life set forth by the teacher and society at large.

Politics: During the time about which Grade writes, Lithuania Jewry was divided into multiple factions and pulled by a vast range of social, political, cultural, and religious trends. Many of these factions and trends are represented in *The Yeshiva*. The novel's characters are, more often than not, in conflict with one another. Early in the novel, the citizens of Valkenik must decide whether or not to hire an enlightened or a traditional rabbi. "Hearing that a rabbinic position would be open, rabbis flocked to Valkenik from far and near, and every candidate appealed to a different faction in town."³⁵

Certain characters in the novel symbolize whole movements. Tsemakh Atlas, of course, represents the Musar movement and Reb Shaye, a more traditional religious view. Like Shaye, Reb Hirshe Gordon is a traditional Jew. He is also a supporter of the *agudah* movement which opposes Zionism. Eltzik Bloch, on the other hand, Hirshe Gordon's

³⁵ Grade, Vol. I, p. 193

brother-in-law, is the leader of the enlightened *maskilim* and a supporter of the *mizrachi*. Yankl Poltaver, a student at the Nareva Yeshiva, is a socialist and a *Musarnik*. He tries to convert Melechke, a vulnerable young Yeshiva student, to his way of thinking, as does Moshe Chayit Lohoysker who has abandoned religious views all together. The library supporters, who take an interest in secular books and the ideas of the Enlightenment, represent another strong force in Valkenik. Meyerke Podoval, one of the supporters of the library, is another character who tries to lure the Yeshiva students into secular life. For the Yeshiva and the synagogue to function, each of these groups must be brought into some kind of harmony. Egos must be accommodated and compromises must be made.

More often than not, however, the factions are unable to peacefully coexist. An extreme expression of their mutual intolerance occurs in Valkenik on the Shabbat of Consolation.

Everyone knew that the Sabbath of Consolation was a "Zionist Sabbath" and that Eltzik Bloch, the head of the pro-Zionist *mizrachi*, should have the honor of chanting the *haftarah*. Instead, the honor had gone to his brother-in-law (*Hirshe Gordon*), the leader of the anti-Zionist *agudah*, under the pretext that he was commemorating the *yahrzeit* of a deceased grandfather or great-grandfather... Eltzik Bloch actually jumped from his place. How could a man be so brazenly hypocritical? Reb Hirshe Gordon hated the Zionists! Reb Hirshe was weeping tears of anguish because the *mizrachi* people were dragging the prophet Isaiah into their heathenish faction. At that moment, the library supporters marched in and, standing shoulder to shoulder, approached the Holy Ark as if taking up battle positions.³⁶

Fueled by the roughneck bricklayer, Sroyleyzer and his group, an brawl breaks out between the library supporters and the traditional worshipers. Later in *Masters and Disciples*, when the library books are burned, another fight erupts. The library supporters believe that the Yeshiva students are to blame when, in fact, Reb Hirshe Gordon had paid

³⁶ Grade, Vol. II, p. 70

the Sroleyzer, the bricklayer, to do it.³⁷ Finally, in one of his only peace-making gestures in the novel, Tsemakh tells the library supporters that *he* is to blame. Tsemakh is lying, but his confession helps to ease the conflict.

Hikhot Talmud Torah acknowledges that politics and ego play a role in the lives of Torah sages and warns against using religious positions or opinions to raise oneself above others.

Our sages said, "Whoever benefits from the words of Torah forfeits his life in the world." (*Avot* 4:5) Also, they commanded and said, "Do not make them a crown to magnify oneself, or an axe to chop with." (*Avot* 4:5) Also, they commanded and said, "Love work and despise rabbinic positions." (*Avot* 1:10)³⁸

While many of the characters' political opinions are motivated by higher ideals, they often forget these ideas and quickly become embroiled in conflict with one another. In such cases, they do use Torah and religious opinions "as an axe" to promote their personal status. *Hikhot Talmud Torah* is right to warn against such behavior. Inevitably, political conflicts limit the ability of the Yeshiva to unite as a community and to unite in order to achieve its higher purpose.

Financial needs and materialism: Most of the members of the *yeshivot* described in the novel seek to separate themselves from the world of commerce and materialism and do not earn enough to support themselves. Thus, they are often dependent on others to meet their financial and material needs.. Their lack of material self-sufficiency causes the members of the Yeshiva to have a certain vulnerability. This weakness is personified

³⁷ Grade, Vol. II, Part II, Ch. 12

³⁸ Maimonides, 3:10

in the character of Melechke, a young Yeshiva student. Melechke finally confesses to Tsemakh that, although Reb Zalmen Kaletzky, the peddler, has promised to feed him on Shabbat, Kaletzky is too poor to provide him with substantial meals, and the boy goes hungry.³⁹

Melechke is not alone. All the students must turn to the townspeople for room and board. This can lead not only to physical dependency on others but a kind of moral vulnerability as well. In their close associations with townspeople, Yeshiva students become susceptible to temptation. Gitl, a local woman feeds the Yeshiva students and Chaikl soon finds himself attracted to Leitshe, her daughter.⁴⁰ Not long afterwards, he begins to flirt with Tsharne, Reb Hirshe Gordon's daughter.⁴¹ When Chaikl's father arrives in Valkenik to recover from his illness, the two move into Freyda Vorobey's home. Chaikl is then drawn into an affair with Kreyndl, Freyda's daughter. Tsemakh encounters temptations similar to those of his student. Reb Lippa Yosse provides Tsemakh with a place to stay. Tsemakh then begins to share late dinners with Lippa Yosse's beautiful daughter, Ronya. He must gather all his strength to pull himself out of the clutches of temptation. He begins to spend his nights in the Musar meditation room.

³⁹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 247

⁴⁰ Grade, Vol. I, p. 184

⁴¹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 195

In other ways as well, the material needs of the Yeshiva students, pull them away from the ideals of piety and scholarship to which they aspire. Reb Zushe Sulkes, the trustee of the Free Loan Society in Nareva, treats the local poor women in a heartless manner, harassing them when they are unable to promptly repay their loans. The *Musarniks*, who sometimes receive food from these women, hate Sulkes' callousness and confront him at his store. Melechke, however, is afraid to stand up to Sulkes since Melechke now eats at Sulke's house on Shabbat. Eventually, the confrontation between Sulkes and the Yeshiva students causes in Sulkes to resign from his position as trustee and to kick Melechke out of his home. By opposing Sulkes, Melechke loses his chance for a decent Sabbath meal.⁴² The wealthy townsmen of Nareva are furious at the Yeshiva students for causing such an uproar. Thus, by confronting Sulkes, the Yeshiva students put themselves in danger of not being supported by the local wealthy townsmen. This situation depicts how students may, at times, be tempted to make moral compromises as they seek to meet their financial and material needs. Such compromises point to the sharp contrast that can exist between the pious ideal of Yeshiva life and the more base reality of human survival.

Not only students' physical needs but their material desires threaten to undermine the goals of Yeshiva life. Azriel, Ronya's husband, travels in order to raise money for a Yeshiva. However, the money that he raises ends up lining his own pocket.⁴³ Yoel Uzder is another character who exemplifies the dissonance that may exist between the

⁴² Grade, Vol. II, Part III Ch. 9 & 10

⁴³ Grade, Vol. I, Part IV, Ch. 4

ideal of the pious, humble scholar and the reality of the students' material desires.

Having been brought up in poverty himself, Yoel is fastidious about his dress and protective of his possessions. The atmosphere of the Yeshiva does not rid him of his desire for material comforts.

Not a speck of dust or a wrinkle appeared on his clothes. He wore his hat puffed up and round, the brim turned up. Before sitting down to study, he donned a skullcap and carefully held the hat by the brim until he found a secure place where it wouldn't get dusty or crushed... He himself made the bed, carefully tucking the blanket under to make it absolutely smooth. Before lying down, he eyed the bed suspiciously, wondering if anybody had touched the cover. If he thought someone had indeed touched it, he slept poorly that night.⁴⁴

In the novel, certain characters emerge as symbols of crude, lowly materialism and greed. While these characters may not themselves be members of the Yeshiva, their presence underscores the constant temptations, even for Yeshiva scholars, of the material world. Volodya Stupel, the flour shop owner of Lomzhe, represents greed and materialism in an extreme form. He is preoccupied with his food, his plump wife, and his coins which he repeatedly tosses into the air, leaving his clerks scrambling to pick them up.⁴⁵ Slava, Tsemakh's wife, is another character whose life is focused on material acquisition.

Suddenly it occurred to her to go to town and buy a pair of shoes. It had been a long time since she had bought herself new shoes. In fact she hadn't bought a thing lately, as though she had indeed become a rusty *rebbetsin*. She'd buy a hat to match and order a new dress from the seamstress, and she'd have a jacket and a skirt made too. From her tightly packed clothes closet Slava removed a pale blue suit and quickly changed into it. She also donned a pleated blouse with a large white bow. Then she looked into the mirror. I don't even need a new jacket or a new dress, she thought and shrugged. Big black patent-leather purse in hand, she went into her husband's room. Tsemakh didn't notice her as she stood in the doorway looking at him... "I'm going into town to buy a dress, Slava said, and Tsemakh nodded apathetically."⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Grade, Vol. I, p. 187

⁴⁵ Grade, Vol. I, p. 247

⁴⁶ Grade, Vol. I, p. 83

Vova is not the only character who represents an extremely low level of human dignity. There are many others who appear crude and selfish, preoccupied with their own desires. Vova Barbitoler, for example, is a tobacco merchant and the town drunk. He makes a scene wherever he goes and lusts after his wife Confrada who has deserted him and run off to Argentina.⁴⁷ There is Hertzke, Vova's irascible son.⁴⁸ Sroleyzer the bricklayer is another. Sroleyzer attends dances with local girls, starts fights in the synagogue, and burns library books.⁴⁹ Perhaps Grade introduces them into his novel in order to show a reality experienced by the author himself, the reality of crude human need. The Yeshiva scholars, however high their ideals, had to contend with their own material needs and the temptations of the surrounding society. Even their teachers are not immune. For Tsemakh, who during his early years with Slava, dressed in fine clothes, the materialism of the surrounding society is a constant temptation.

Hilkhot Talmud Torah on the Material Needs and Desires of Torah Scholars:

Hilkhot Talmud Torah acknowledges the existence of material needs in the lives of Torah scholars and proposes a definite idea of how such needs should be accommodated.

However, the various *halakhot* seems to express conflicting elements. On one hand, the *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* states that Torah study should not be used for profit. While a student is permitted to pay his teacher, a teacher is forbidden to charge for his services.

⁴⁷ Grade, Vol. I, Part III, Ch. 1

⁴⁸ Grade, Vol. I, Part III, Ch. 2

⁴⁹ Grade, Vol. I, Part IV, Ch. 11

If it is local custom for a teacher of young children to take payment, he should be paid. (*The father*) is obligated to pay for his instruction until he can read the entire written Torah. In a place where it is customary to receive wage for teaching the written Torah, one is permitted to do so. However, it is forbidden to take a wage for teaching the Oral Law. As it is written, "Behold, I have taught you laws and statutes, as God commanded me." (Deuteronomy 4:5) "Just as I (*Moses*) learned at no cost, so too, have you been taught from me at no cost. Teach the coming generations in a like manner. Teach them at no cost as you have learned from me." If a person cannot find someone to teach him at no cost, he must pay for his studies. As it is written, "Buy truth." (Proverbs 3:23) May he charge to teach others? We learn, "but do not sell." Thus it can be derived that it is forbidden to charge to teach Torah even though one's teacher charged to instruct him.⁵⁰

Supporting the idea that Torah scholars should not be preoccupied with material acquisition, *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* states that they are exempt from certain financial obligations to the community.

Torah sages should not personally take part in any communal work projects: building, digging and the like (*to improve*) the city, in order that they not be disgraced in the eyes of the common people. Money should not be collected from them to pay for building (*the city*) wall, fixing its gates, its watchmen's wages, and the like. (*The same for*) a present to be offered to the king. They are not obligated to pay taxes neither a tax levied on a whole city or a tax levied on each individual. As it is written, "Although they will give among the nations, now I will gather them; in a little while, they will be released from the burden of the king and his officers." (Hosea 8:10)⁵¹

Since a Torah scholar is, according to the *Hilkhot Talmud Torah*, forbidden from charging money to teach and exempt from paying taxes, one might assume that he is to rely upon others to support him. Yet, *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* also states that a Torah scholar should *not* live off of charity.

Anyone who thinks that he should involve himself in Torah study without doing work and making a living from *zedakah*, desecrates God's name and dishonors the Torah, extinguishes the light of faith, brings evil upon himself and forfeits the life of the world to come, for it is forbidden to derive benefit from the words of Torah in this world. Our Sages said, "Whoever benefits from the words of Torah forfeits his life in the world." (*Avot* 4:5) Also, they commanded and said, "Do not make them a crown to magnify oneself, or an axe to chop with." (*Avot* 4:5) Also, they commanded and said, "Love work and despise rabbinic positions." (*Avot* 1:10) All Torah that is not accompanied by work will eventually be negated and lead to sin. Ultimately, such a person will steal from others.⁵²

⁵⁰ Maimonides, 1:7

⁵¹ Maimonides, 6:10

⁵² Maimonides, 3:10

Thus, according to the *halakhah* there seems to be a conflict between the prohibition against Torah scholars' charging money for teaching and the statement above that they should *not* be dependant on charity. *Hilkot Talmud Torah* resolves the conflict by stating that Torah scholars should engage in simple, lowly jobs for the minimum amount of time necessary to support themselves. Thus, they will satisfy their basic material needs without succumbing to greed or arrogance.

The words of Torah can be compared to water. As it is written, "Behold, all who are thirsty, come to the water." This teaches that, just as water does not collect on an incline, but rather flows from it and collects in a low place, similarly, the words of Torah will not be found in the arrogant or in the hearts of the haughty, but rather in the humble and lowly, who sit in the dust at the feet of the sages and remove the desires and pleasures of the times from their hearts. They do only a minimal amount of work each day (*to earn*) their living if they have nothing else to eat. The rest of their days and nights are involved with Torah study.⁵³

To further specify the kind of work most appropriate for Torah scholars, *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* adds,

The great sages of Israel included wood choppers, water drawers, and blind men. Despite these (*difficulties*), they were occupied with Torah study day and night and were included among those who transmitted the Torah's teachings from (*master*) to (*student in the chain stretching back to*) Moses, our teacher.⁵⁴

Despite the ideal that Torah sages should not survive on charity alone but should work for a living, many of the students and scholars in *The Yeshiva* rely on the financial and material support of the local townspeople. Even though Tsemakh Atlas lives a life of asceticism, he never seems to engage in any kind of manual labor. Reb Shaye, at times, is pictured engaging in simple manual tasks, but due to his heart condition, he is unable to do heavy work. Vella, Chaikl's mother, may come closest to the ideal proposed in

⁵³ Maimonides, 3:9

⁵⁴ Maimonides, 1:9

Hilkhot Talmud Torah. She works in the market place so that her son can study Torah.⁵⁵ She exhibits no greed, just an earnest desire to support Torah study through the work of her hands. Vella is not the only woman who works so that a man in her family can study. Shaye, and other Torah scholars in the novel, are supported by their wives.

The Yeshiva scholars in the novel may indeed rely on charity and may not live up to the ideal of the humble, working Torah scholar. Still, they are not businessmen. Grade draws a sharp distinction between Yeshiva students and those engaged in the world of commerce. The latter, like Volodya Stupel, are often described in the lowliest, most critical terms. Perhaps, by making this distinction, Grade expresses the idea stated in *Hilkhot Talmud Torah*, that the life of the Torah sage should remain humble, and his appetite for material gain should not be indulged. Yet, even as he portrays this ideal, Grade illustrates how difficult it was, given the temptations of the material world, to achieve.

Sensuality and Desire: For Tsemakh, as well as for many of the novel's other characters, materialism was often intertwined with sensuality and physical desire. From the very start of the novel, Tsemakh feels himself drawn to women. Even at his own engagement party, he flirts, not however, with his own fiancé.

A charming black-haired girl, the prettiest at the table, never took her shrewd, sparkling eyes and smiling glances off Tsemakh. She had heard that the groom was a raggedy Yeshiva student, but she saw a young man with a neatly trimmed beard in a pressed suit and white shirt. A dim sadness misted his deep-set eyes, and sharp lines were etched into the corners of his taut lips. The girl was surprised at his tall stature and his broad, manly shoulders... The bright-faced girl realized that

⁵⁵ Grade, Vol. I, Part III, Ch. 1

the young man was warming to her glance and began to turn her head like a bird. She patted her hair and whispered and chattered and laughed with her friends.⁵⁶

Later, when Tsemakh abandons his first fiancé and marries Slava, he succumbs entirely to both his material and sexual desires.

Now she wanted her husband to kiss her and caress her. She looked up at him, tossing her head so that her hair touched his chin, nose, and cheeks. She pressed her thin back into his chest and her buttocks into his belly and his firm legs until she felt his flaring nostrils wafting warm winds over her. Laughing triumphantly, Slava quickly jumped up from his warmed lap. Tsemakh saw the form of her small round buttocks imprinted on her dress as if with a compass, and he embraced her wildly. But she slipped out of his embrace and teased him: "And what's next?" Her lips pouted with desire and her eyes sparkled drunkenly as if she had sipped old wine and wanted to retain its bitter-sweet taste as long as possible.⁵⁷

After leaving Slava, Tsemakh becomes preoccupied with his attraction to Ronya, Reb Lippa Yosse's daughter. If Tsemakh struggles to overcome sexual temptation, it is then not surprising that his students do as well. Chaikl, in particular, is drawn to women throughout the novel, including Tsemakh's own wife, Slava. When Chaikl finally succumbs to an affair with Kreyndl, the leaders of the Yeshiva must decide whether they should throw him out of the Yeshiva. These leaders must weigh their responsibilities both to the Yeshiva, its standards of morality, and to their students who are human, vulnerable to sexual temptation. What limitations should they impose upon their students? Here Menakhem Mendl and Tsemakh argue Chaikl's fate.

"Let him go. The sooner the better. That way he won't corrupt the other boys," Reb Menakhem Mendl replied. "I'd rather see you go than have Chaikl Vilner leave the Yeshiva and be pulverized out in the world," Tsemakh shrieked and hastily left the *beth medresh*, fleeing from his own rage before it could explode into an even nastier remark to his friend.⁵⁸

Just as the piety of idealized Yeshiva life is juxtaposed with the crude materialism of the surrounding society, so too the blatant sensuality of certain characters forms a

⁵⁶ Grade, Vol. I, p. 15

⁵⁷ Grade, Vol. I, p. 60

⁵⁸ Grade, Vol. I, p. 369

sharp contrast to the Yeshiva's ideal of study unimpeded by the desires of the flesh.

Volodya is an emblem not only of materialism but of sensuality as well.

Volodya, sick and tired of the talk, looked toward the door, longing to see his snow-white, well-fleshed Hannah appear. He steamed like a piece of drenched earth in the sun after a rain; he perspired with pleasant anticipation and scratched his armpits.⁵⁹

In Valkenik, the Musar Yeshiva is surrounded by peasants and summer guests whose life of physicality is completely unrelated to the life of the Yeshiva and its focus on study and prayer (or so the Yeshiva teachers would like to think).

The daughters of Valkenik grew tall and full-bodied like ripe cucumbers under moonlight. Nubile girls with full breasts like pumpkins and faces like risen dough peered out from the curtained windows of their small houses. Like tiny flower pots holding rosebushes, these poor little cottages were too small for the Valkenik girls with their large bodies and thick beribboned braids... In the evening they went out to the bridge to meet the boys. They chewed sunflower seeds and spat the shells into the water. They heard the carters' jokes for the hundredth time and slapped their hands when they got fresh. (*But*) The young men had no intention of falling in love and getting married... With the arrival of vacationing Yeshiva students, hope stole into the girls' hearts: the scholars were so fine and gentle; they never let a vulgar word cross their lips... Torah students wouldn't even talk to a poor girl. They didn't seem to mind looking- their eyes devoured the girls' hips, their bare knees and legs; they longed to put a hand on a plump shoulder. Some scholars literally drooled.⁶⁰

There exists a strong contrast between Tsemakh and Shaye concerning matters of sensuality and the pleasures of physical life. Although he is not able to purge himself of his *yester harah*, Tsemakh longs to transcend his sexual desires and to live a life of asceticism. For this reason, Tsemakh ultimately chooses leaves his beautiful wife. Reb Shaye, on the other hand, seems to accept his role as a husband and to live with his wife, Yudis, in relative peace. Perhaps because Shaye's relationship to Yudis is not a passionate one, it poses no threat to his spiritual commitments. Yet, the difference between Tsemakh and Shaye extends beyond marital circumstance. Whereas Tsemakh is

⁵⁹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 59

⁶⁰ Grade, Vol. II, p. 61

often described sitting alone in the Musar meditation room torturing himself with thoughts of his own impurity, Shaye does not have goals of asceticism. He is most often pictured in his humble cottage surrounded by the lush and abundant woods.

Chaikl crossed the road and climbed the hill through the tall ferns. He stopped at a place full of sawed-off tree stumps. White wood chips glinted in the sun like glass splinters. There was the scent of resin and dry sawdust. Chaikl went deeper into the dense forest and saw little red dots slyly winking at him from among the green leaves. "Wild strawberries!" he cried out, and he sat down on the ground to pick and eat the red berries that reminded him of green-bearded midgets with Turkish fezzes. Then, among the trunks of a sparse young grove, he suddenly spied a man in a skullcap lying on the ground. Reb Avraham-Shaye was resting on a blanket, head propped with his left hand, while in his right hand, he held a small Talmud close to his myopic eyes.⁶¹

Shaye's sensuality is emphasized when, one summer afternoon, he decides to take Chaikl swimming. Shaye undresses with ease and comfort and delights in the sensation of the cool water. It is Chaikl who is uncomfortable and cannot bring himself to raise his eyes and see his teacher undressed. Shaye teases Chaikl about his sudden modesty.⁶²

When Shaye and Tsemakh argue about whether Torah study can rid a person of their *yeter harah*, Shaye, the one who is more comfortable with his physical desires, is the optimist.

Even if he does become a diligent *ben Torah*, I can't imagine how the Talmud and its commentaries will be able to protect him from the *yetzer ha-rah* in all its shapes and forms. Reb Avraham-Shaye, sitting opposite Tsemakh, listened, his face flaming. His skullcap had inched to the back of his head. He began in a shrill voice, pointing his finger at Tsemakh, "What? A *rosh Yeshiva* can't imagine how Torah study can save someone from the *yetzer ha-rah*? The Talmud says: If you encounter that blackguard, drag him to the *beth medresh*! When one studies Torah, one's mind fuses with that of Moses on mount Sinai."⁶³

However great his faith in the power of Torah study, Shaye does not end up succeeding with Chaikl. Despite Shaye's efforts to bring him over to the right path, the

⁶¹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 372

⁶² Grade, Vol. II, p. 19

⁶³ Grade, Vol. I, p. 384

path of holy living, Chaikl continues to move away from the Yeshiva world. By the end of the novel, Chaikl is associating with Chayit who has abandoned Yeshiva life completely. Together, they flirt with Slava. Like his first teacher, Tsemakh, Chaikl is unable to shake the temptations of his *yetzer ha-rah*. Still, Chaikl also knows that he will never be comfortable living a completely secular life, a life of sensuality, without shame.⁶⁴

Hilkhot Talmud Torah on the Sexual Desire of Torah Scholars: Chaikl, who hovers between two poles, trying to embrace both his sexual desire and his goals of Torah scholarship. The laws of *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* acknowledge the necessity of accommodating both sexual desire and Torah study. How can sexual desire be integrated with a young man's need to apply him self to Torah?

A person should always study Torah and, afterwards, marry. If he marries first, his mind will not be free to study. However, if his natural inclination overpowers him to the degree that his mind is not free, he should marry, and then study Torah.⁶⁵

The *halakhah* implies that, while the sexual inclination may interfere with Torah study, it is an inescapable aspect of life and must, to a certain extent, be accepted and integrated. In *The Yeshiva*, Grade more often than not, poses a stark contrast between the life of sensuality and life in the Yeshiva. Tsemakh embodies this contrast, either living a life of extreme sensuality or extreme asceticism. For him, a life of Torah study precludes the indulgence sexual desire. Tsemakh's students, too, embody the contrast between sensuality and asceticism. They secretly read forbidden books and lust over the local

⁶⁴ Grade, Vol. II, p.382

⁶⁵ Maimonides, 1:5

girls but then return to their holy books and deny any accusation that they have gone astray.⁶⁶ Only Shaye seems to be able to comfortably integrate his physical life with his pious aspirations as proscribed by *Hilkhot Talmud Torah*. He relishes the physical delights and natural splendor of the deep woods around his cottage. While his marriage to Yudis hardly seems to be passionate, Shaye does not live a life of seclusion or celibacy. Perhaps, because his sexual drive is less intense than that of the other characters, most notably Tsemakh, it does not pose such a threat to his religious life.

Family Commitments: In the passage cited above, *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* seems to propose Torah scholars should integrate the demands of Torah study with the need to get married and establish a family. Yet, the passage also seems to acknowledge the conflicts that might exist between a life of Torah study and a life with women and family. In Grade's novel, many students and teachers feel that, by entering the world of the Yeshiva, they are pulled away from their families. While certain characters, Hirshe Gordon and Reb Shaye, for instance, are able to integrate a life of study with their family commitments, many feel conflict between the needs of their family and the demands of Yeshiva life. Tsemakh's marriage to Slava, for example coincides with his departure from the ascetic world of Musar piety. Unable to maintain both, he exchanges one for the other. Tsemakh's uncle Ziml is another character who feels the tension between his family's needs and his desire to become a Torah scholar. His wife wishes he was more productive in the practical world, and he wishes she was more pious.

⁶⁶ Grade, Vol. II, p. 81

Reb Ziml Atlas, a tall and scrawny man, was perpetually immersed in prayerful ecstasy. Standing next to him, his squat and wide-girthed wife Tsertele looked like the foreshortened shadow that a tall, slender tree casts at noon. In Lomzhe, they were called the *lulav* and the *etrog*, the palm branch and the citron. Nevertheless, the old couple occasionally squabbled. Reb Ziml considered his wife an immodest woman... Tsertele, on the other hand, considered her husband an idler and made fun of him for always standing with her head thrown back toward the ceiling.⁶⁷

Reb Ziml thinks that true humility can only be realized by wandering and living away from his family.

When a man leads a life of wandering and sees that no one knows him and that no one thinks about him, he ceases to think about himself. That's why so many great men have left their homes to lead a life of wandering.⁶⁸

Only after his wife's death does Ziml realize that he never appreciated the beauty of family life.⁶⁹

Chaikl also feels the tension between Yeshiva and family life when he returns home from Valkenik to celebrate Passover. The family *seder* is hardly inspiring. His father must lie down because he is ill, and his mother, exhausted from all the holiday preparations, falls asleep.⁷⁰ Melechke, too, returns home to a celebration of Passover that falls far short of his religious ideals. He is appalled that his mother, Zelda, opens the family store during the holiday even though the store might contain *hametz*. Melechke's new religious verve appears fanatical to the rest of his family. His mother and sisters feel he has gone over the edge and hope he does not return to the Yeshiva to learn more of these foreign religious ideas.⁷¹ His father, Kasrielke, tells him that it is most important

⁶⁷ Grade, Vol. I, p. 20

⁶⁸ Grade, Vol. I, p. 103

⁶⁹ Grade, Vol. II, p. 37

⁷⁰ Grade, Vol. I, p. 293

⁷¹ Grade, Vol. I, p.296

simply to be a good person. Melechke is clearly unable to integrate the ideals and learning of his Yeshiva experience into the reality of his family's practice.

Menakhem-Mendl Segal, a shopkeeper from Vilna, finds it difficult to care for his family and to pursue his ideal of Torah scholarship. Tsemakh convinces Menakhem Mendl to come to the Yeshiva in Valkenik, promising that he will earn enough money there, working as a teacher, to support his family. Much to Menakhem Mendl's dismay, his meager teacher's salary is not enough to support a family, and so he must choose whether or not to return home to Vilna to care for his wife and children. Faced with this dilemma, Menakhem Mendl goes to Shaye to seek his advice. Shaye does not give him an immediate answer. Shaye believes strongly that a husband should support his wife. Shaye, himself, remains a devoted and docile husband to Yudis, despite her age and crude manner. Yet, in spite of his belief that a Jewish man should support and honor his wife and family, Shaye fears that Mendl's departure will put the Yeshiva and its students at further risk. Ultimately, Shaye advises Mendl to stay in Valkenik for the good of the Yeshiva, even if it is not in the best interest of Mendl's family.

Shaye advises Tsemakh quite differently. Shaye is troubled by Tsemakh's abandonment of Slava and thinks it is more important for Tsemakh to return to her than to spend his time punishing himself for abandoning Dvorele, his deceased fiancé. Shaye believes that Slava could change her ways and learn to be a good wife and that her refusal

to grant Tsemakh a divorce is a sign of her love for Tsemakh.⁷² Tsemakh, on the other hand, believes that Slava is simply stubborn. Since Tsemakh's love for Slava was based on lust and on a secular lifestyle which caused him to abandon his Musar ideals, he cannot imagine integrating married life with pious scholarship. Tsemakh certainly represents an extreme, but he is not alone in finding dissonance between the responsibilities and philosophy of Torah scholars and the responsibilities and lifestyle associated with family life.

Personalities and Eccentricities: The various personalities in Grade's novel are characterized by their peculiarity. None of them seems to fit any particular mold. There is Vova Barbitoler who loves the mitzvah of donating clothing to Yeshiva students but also has a penchant for raging into the synagogue in a drunken stupor.⁷³ His son, Hertzke, both laughs and cries when he is beaten.⁷⁴ Soyeh Etl, the caretaker of the graveyard of Valkenik talks to the graves as if they are her close friends.⁷⁵ Chaikl's landlady, Freyda Vorobey, has been deserted by her husband. She lives alone with her daughter and squanders the money sent by her sister from America, on candy.⁷⁶ The list, of course, goes on.

⁷² Grade, Vol. II, Part III Ch. 16, Part IV Ch. 14

⁷³ Grade, Vol. I, p. 127

⁷⁴ Grade, Vol. I, Part III, Ch. 1

⁷⁵ Grade, Vol. I, Part IV Ch. 19

⁷⁶ Grade, Vol. I, Part V Ch. 3

As Tsemakh begins to recruit students for the Valkenik Yeshiva, they are not exactly a promising collection: Chaikl is deeply conflicted, pulled in one direction by his mother who wants him to be a Torah scholar and in another by his father who wants him to earn a decent living. Melechke is the picture of innocence and youth. Hertzke is a brute and a clown who has inherited his father Vova's crudeness, and Menakhem Mendl is a shopkeeper who wonders whether he should leave his family behind. When they arrive at Valkenik, they are greeted by an equally strange collection of students. Here, two of the most admired scholars, Sheeya Lipnishker and Yoel Uzder, are described.

The first was the prodigy Sheeya Lipnishker. His crossed eyes were black and sullen, and he had loose, curly earlocks, and a sparse little beard that seemed pasted on with pitch... when a youngster approached him with a problem, Lipnishker, enraged at being disturbed, would screw his little finger into the youngster's ear so forcefully the boy's head would shake... In the kitchen, impatient to be served, Sheeya couldn't sit still. Instead of wearing a shirt with a tie, he wore a little white towel around his neck. He was infested with vermin, which was all the more visible on his snow-white neckerchief... The oldest *ben Torah* in the Yeshiva was Yoel Uzder, a thirty-five year old bachelor with a large round face, a low forehead, and eyebrows that grew together... Not a speck of dust or a wrinkle appeared on his clothes... On summer evenings, when the Torah scholars took long walks in groups, Uzder strolled along all alone, cane in hand. Head thrown back, he walked with a taut, measured stride, like a soldier on parade. Yoel Uzder was extremely careful not to have any dealings with the younger students. If he saw a group of youngsters during his walk, he stopped and waited for the group to pass by.⁷⁷

While these two scholars do have strong background of Jewish knowledge, they do not embody all of the attributes that an ideal scholar might. Their odd appearance and behavior only reflects deeper inconsistencies. Yoel's fastidiousness about his clothing and possessions stems from his years of deprivation and filth as a child in an orphanage. Sheeya's dirtiness and distraction reflects his narrow focus on his own personal scholarship rather than the larger needs of the community. Both Sheeya and Yoel's single-minded drive to study, without helping young students to learn, shows them to be

⁷⁷ Grade, Vol. I, p.185

less than ideal mentors and scholars, unable or unwilling to enact the religious ideas they claim to understand so well.

Just as the oldest, most experienced Yeshiva students express deep inconsistencies, so too the younger students of the Yeshiva are often unable to live up to the ideals they study. Most troubling are the double standards by which they live. Soyeh Etl's boarders begin to read forbidden books: *Pittigrilli the Chastity Belt and Other Stories*, *Tsilke the Wild One*, *The Descent of Man*, and *Political Economy*. Reb Menakhem Mendel then goes through their belongings and catches them red-handed. When he confronts the young students, he is bothered by their lack of shame. They claim, falsely of course, to be reading the books in order to be able to refute the heretics and seem to have no awe of their teacher.⁷⁸ Meyerke, on the other hand, who gave them the books in hopes that they would rebel against traditional life, is equally disappointed. Rather than being inspired to leave the Yeshiva and religious life, the students are content to live a double life, studying Talmud by day and heretical books, secretly, by night.

Hilkhot Talmud Torah on Who is an Acceptable Student: How does *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* address the inevitable failings and inconsistencies of students of Torah? What kinds of students can be accepted to study Torah? What parameters should be set by the teacher in selecting students?

⁷⁸ Grade, Vol. II, Part II Ch. 3

With three crowns was Israel conferred: the crown of Torah, the crown of priesthood, and the crown of royalty. Aaron merited the crown of priesthood. As it is said, "And it will be an eternal covenant of priesthood for him and for his descendants after him." (Numbers 25:13) David merited the crown of royalty. As it is said, "His seed will continue forever, and his throne will be as the sun before Me." (Psalms 89:37) The crown of Torah is set aside waiting, and ready for each Jew. As it is said, "The Torah which Moses commanded us is the inheritance of the congregation of Jacob." Whoever desires, may come and take it. Lest you say that the other crowns surpass the crown of Torah. As it states, "By Me, kings reign, princes decree justice, and nobles rule." (Proverbs 8:15-16) Thus you have learned that the crown of Torah is greater than the other two.⁷⁹

Yet, even if the Torah is the inheritance of *all* Jews, no matter what their behavior, there those who do not merit the honor of Torah study. *Hilkhot Talmud Torah*, goes on to state that not all potential students of Torah need to be accepted.

Torah should be taught only to a proper student- one whose deeds are attractive or to a person whose behavior is unknown. However, (*a potential student*) who follows a bad path should be influenced to correct his behavior and directed to follow a straight path. He should then be examined and after that, be brought into the house of study and taught. Our sages said, "Anyone who teaches an improper student is like one who throws a stone to Mercury." As it is said, "As one who winds a stone in a sling is one who gives honor to a fool." (Proverbs 26:8) There is no honor other than Torah. As it is said, "The wise will inherit honor." (Proverbs 3:35)⁸⁰

Hilkhot Talmud Torah says that it is important to try to influence a poorly behaved student so that he improves. However, *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* then states that if he does not improve, teaching him is a waste. Both Tsemakh and Shaye struggle with the question of what to do when a student's behavior does not meet their expectations. How can a student's behavior be improved? As might be expected, Tsemakh approaches poor students with harsh criticism. Shaye, on the other hand, strives to dignify wayward students and bring out in them whatever positive qualities exist. Perhaps, according to *Hilkhot Talmud Torah*, Shaye and Tsemakh are "throwing stones at Mercury," both teachers accept students who are deeply flawed and whose behavior may be so shameful as to put the reputation and functioning of the Yeshiva at risk. Only at the end of the

⁷⁹ Maimonides, 3:1

⁸⁰ Maimonides, 4:1

novel, after Shaye has invested significant time in Chaikl, does he finally relinquish hope that his wayward student can change.⁸¹ Ironically, it's Tsemakh, the more judgmental of the two teachers, remains standing beside Chaikl's side at the novel's conclusion.⁸²

When the Ideal Meets the Reality: With students who are so profoundly human and flawed, with the temptations of politics, materialism, sexual desire, and the pull towards family responsibilities, Yeshiva life often falls short of its ideal and teachers are not always able to inculcate, in their students, the ideals to which they aspire. One description of the Yeshiva in the spring stands out as an example of the less-than-perfect, dirty reality confronted by teachers and students alike.

The spring thaw melted the snows; holes appeared in the snow banks, and they began to collapse. Thin, grayish clouds hung low and dripped like laundry on the line. Patches of milk-white and bluish fog hovered among the houses. Smoke rose slowly from the chimneys. The outdoors tried to shake off the sleep of winter, but couldn't quite get rid of its spell. In the Yeshiva, the floor was wet and muddy from the snow tramped in by the students' boots. The damp, rumpled towel above the hand basin spread a sour smell, like a barrel of sauerkraut gone bad. Nostrils twitched with the sweaty odor of sweltering bodies, reminiscent of the bathhouse dressing room. The side room in the *beth medresh*, used as a library, reeked of old, unaired books. The grayish daylight blended with the cigarette smoke, and the blurry faces looked even paler than usual.⁸³

Just as the melting snow uncovers the Yeshiva's flaws, so too Grade's writing lays bare the intricacies and failings of daily Yeshiva life.

Perhaps, because of its imperfections and challenges, both Tsemakh and Shaye choose to live lives slightly removed from the Yeshiva. At his cottage in the woods outside Valkenik, Shaye studies alone and prays with the local factory workers. He

⁸¹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 390

⁸² Grade, Vol. I, p. 393

⁸³ Grade, Vol. II, p. 317

fosters a connection to these simple folk, and it is they who come to bid him farewell when his train departs for Palestine.⁸⁴ In general, Shaye prefers to live a life outside the public eye. When students from the Valkenik Yeshiva come to ask his advice, he offers it only sparingly. Hirshe Gordon criticizes Shaye for separating himself from the community.⁸⁵ He would like Shaye to mediate between the religious and enlightened Jews, but Shaye prefers to study Torah by himself, for its own sake and to live removed from the politics of the Yeshiva. As a young student, Shaye was heard praying before the open ark and referring to himself as a loner, a "stranger on earth."

"Master of the Universe, open my eyes that I may behold wondrous things from your Torah. I promise to study Torah all my life, just for the sake of study. Solely for the sake of study. Only for the sake of Torah. I am but a stranger on earth; hide not your commandments from me."⁸⁶

Tsemakh, too, in his own way, becomes a stranger to those around him, separating himself from the community. He sits alone in the Musar meditation room when, with wild fanfare, the new Valkenik rabbi is welcomed to town. Later, when his students begin to go astray, Tsemakh does not interfere, neither in the matter of students who begin to read forbidden books nor in the conflict with the library supporters.⁸⁷ At moments, Tsemakh seems to feel guilt for allowing his students stray so far from the Musar path. At other times, he lashes out at Shaye for doing the same thing. Tsemakh tells Shaye that he takes the easy way out by removing himself from the conflicts and challenges of daily Yeshiva existence and letting himself be glorified.⁸⁸ It is significant

⁸⁴ Grade, Vol. II, p.321

⁸⁵ Grade, Vol. I, p.320

⁸⁶ Grade, Vol. I, Part V, Ch. 7

⁸⁷ Grade, Vol. II, Part II, Ch. 3

⁸⁸ Grade, Vol. II, Part II, Ch. 14

that these two teachers, despite their many differences, both choose to separate themselves, to a certain extent, from Yeshiva life. Both are men of high ideals who isolate themselves when they confront the daily challenges of the Yeshiva. Perhaps they do this in order to preserve their personal integrity.

Chapter IV. *Judgment vs. Mercy as a Teaching Tool*

The General Philosophy of Tsemakh and Shaye: Tsemakh Atlas seems to represent the quality of *din*, judgment, both towards himself and in relationship to his students. Shaye, on the other hand, represents *rahamim*, mercy. Tsemakh believes that, in order to foster a life of true piety, one must be purged of his *yetzer ha-rah*. To accomplish this, Tsemakh uses harsh language and severe tactics. He shames those around him subjecting them and himself, to various trials, each designed to diminish the influence of the ego and the desires of the flesh. In this way, Tsemakh hopes to foster, in himself and in his students, a higher level of morality and greater closeness to God. He seeks constantly to uncover the truth.

...man, who is made of flesh and blood, cannot withstand the *yetzer ha-rah* unless he has Divine help. Man possesses free will only to start the struggle against the *yetzer ha-rah*, but not to win it. To win, he must have Divine help. But the question is: Where and how should man begin this battle with the evil spirit in him? The answer is that one must begin from a point of truth. No matter how high the eagle can fly, his feet have to take off from a certain point to enable him to start his flight. Similarly, man must begin from a point of truth... Only then does someone have the foundation from which to begin the war with the *yetzer ha-rah*.⁸⁹

Tsemakh believes that the *yetzer ha-rah* can hide behind acts which appear, on the surface, to be good. According to him, both rationality and extreme emotion can be used to promote the evil inclination. Thus, a person must be constantly vigilant, questioning his deepest motives and desires. Tsemakh knows that severe judgment towards the self and others may not be socially acceptable.

At first glance, the man who renounces pleasures cannot be kind and tender, because he is continually preoccupied with the most difficult task, the battle with the *yetzer ha-rah*. Therefore, the spiritual man is, by nature, severe. While the person dedicated to material things seems to be happy, generous, good-natured. Then why should the sensualist treat others badly when he treats himself so well? But, actually, the goodness of the worldly man is superficial, because on his march toward satisfaction of his lust, he'll trample everything that stands in his way... the recluse

⁸⁹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 206

who wages a bitter lifelong war with the *yetzer ha-rah* is the one who will wholeheartedly offer help where the Torah commands him to help.⁹⁰

In his thinking and methods, Tsemakh represents the Musar school of thought and the ideas of Israel Salanter himself. Salanter believed that the temptation to do evil confronts man at every turn and that each person must foster in himself fear of sin and ultimately, fear of God. "We must fear and tremble before every evil deed and transgression. And from this we shall flee from the evil trap."⁹¹ Salanter believed that students of Torah must examine their deeds with particular intensity.

We stumble in great and mighty sins, being like blind men, due to the darkness of our hearts, and we do not see their seriousness (compared with the sins of the multitude). But if we make use of binoculars (which enlarge things, which due to our weak vision seem to be small, such as the stars, which are of greater size than the earth itself, but which looks like small points, and by means of the binoculars seem somewhat larger, whereas in truth there is nothing comparable to them in size; so is this thing), that is correct thinking, according to the faithful Torah, we find them to be exceedingly more serious in their quality.⁹²

While Tsemakh, and his fellow *musarniks*, employ harsh judgment as a method of moral improvement and education, Shaye does just the opposite. Rather than focusing on the shortcomings of those around him, Shaye seeks to uncover that which is good in each individual and to honor and enhance. Rather than using shame and fear to improve his students' behavior, Shaye treats each with dignity and tenderness. He is careful not to push his students too hard.

Except for certain extraordinary instances when one must not look on and keep silent, we shouldn't tell another person anything about his character and behavior until he asks us and until we're certain that he has asked the question so as to improve his character and behavior. Even then, we shouldn't tell him anything beyond his understanding and his ability to change.⁹³

⁹⁰ Grade, Vol. II, p. 258

⁹¹ *Kitvei*, as cited by Etkes, p. 106

⁹² *Kitvei*, as cited by Etkes, p. 211

⁹³ Grade, Vol. II, p. 359

Shaye says that, "he who rails against good people because he cannot tolerate their minor sins will end up befriending people who do great wrongs."⁹⁴ He warns Tsemakh not to search too hard for others' faults and to beware of using anger to correct those faults.

"You must take the opposite course and be wary of looking for faults. And indeed, if someone has to be chastised for being unjust and untruthful, it must be done without anger. Otherwise we are left only with anger and not with justice or truth."⁹⁵

Shaye believes that the self-tormenting path of Musar is doomed. For Shaye, Torah study, not endless self-criticism, is the way to attain purity of soul.

The proper path for perfecting one's character isn't to tear the innate desires out of oneself, but to make them better and more beautiful. A rational man doesn't have to undergo torments to uproot his passion for honor... A man shouldn't shout to himself day and night that one must not love oneself. Let him love himself, yes, but in an intelligent way- through love of wisdom and Torah. Next to the ocean man feels insignificant. But next to the Torah, which is greater than the ocean, man does not feel insignificant, because he is as great as his grasp of the Torah. The Torah cleanses the sensitive man, the intellectual man, of pride and anger: it makes him modest; it inspires him to seek spiritual uplift and not vulgar physical pleasures. Attempting to uproot from oneself the baser desires solely by the strength of one's own will and by studying Musar books in the dark can only bring one to an opposite result- the baser desires become even stronger... But when the lamps of Torah and wisdom are lit in one's mind, the shadows disappear of their own accord.⁹⁶

This fundamental difference between Tsemakh and Shaye, Tsemakh exemplifying *din* and Shaye, *rahamim*, affects many other aspects of each man's character. While Tsemakh often appears to be aloof, Shaye is humble. Whereas Tsemakh puts great emotional and physical distance between himself and his students, Shaye, at times, chooses to foster great intimacy with those he teaches. While Tsemakh expresses himself by establishing rigid standards, Shaye is most often tolerant. While Tsemakh may set forth high standards for his students, is pessimistic about their ability to achieve those

⁹⁴ Grade, Vol. II, p. 150

⁹⁵ Grade, Vol. II, p. 366

⁹⁶ Grade, Vol. I, p. 351

standards. Shaye, on the other hand, is optimistic about his students and their ability to rise in holiness through the study of Torah. Whereas, Tsemakh's method of teaching with *din* mires him in complexity and conflict, Shaye's method of teaching with *rahamim* causes him to reach out to his students in openness and simplicity.

The Significance of Shame in the Novel: Shame plays an important role in the lives of many characters in *The Yeshiva*. Fearing their own humiliation, Grade's characters tend to fear judgment and to gravitate towards kindness. Reb Shlomo Motte, for example, doesn't want Chaikl to become a student at Tsemakh's Yeshiva because he will then live a life dependant on others for food.⁹⁷ Shlomo Motte seems to fear his son's potential embarrassment. Chaikl himself seeks to avoid humiliation. When Vova Barbitoler, who has donated a suit to Chaikl, asks him to publicly display his *tzitzit*, Chaikl is infuriated at this affront to his honor and raises his prayer stand as if to throw it at Vova.⁹⁸ His father then feels that Chaikl has, through this rebellious act, put his whole family to shame. Chaikl will further compromise his family's dignity later in the novel when he has an affair with Kreyndl, his landlady's daughter.⁹⁹

Interestingly, it is the characters who are themselves the most ashamed who spend the most time trying to embarrass others. Vova Barbitoler has been humiliated by his former wife, Confrada, who ran off to Argentina and married another man. Not only

⁹⁷ Grade, Vol. I, p. 147

⁹⁸ Grade, Vol. I, p. 130

⁹⁹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 361

does Vova try to publicly embarrass Chaikl, but he also exposes his new wife Mindl's bald head in the synagogue.¹⁰⁰ Despite Vova's efforts to denigrate others, he is not able to escape his own shame. Vova experiences a pinnacle of humiliation when his son, Hertzke decides to leave with his mother for Argentina.¹⁰¹ Another character subjected to extreme public humiliation is Sheeya Lipnishker. He is accused of impregnating the Elke Kogan, a lunatic from *Dekshne*. Sheeya is then forced to swear his innocence and to grovel before the open Torah.¹⁰²

More than any of the other characters, women are the most often humiliated, especially when they are abandoned by men. Tsemakh leaves his first fiancé, Dvorele and also his wife, Slava. Stasya, the Stupel's maid, becomes pregnant with Lolla Stupel's child and is sent away.¹⁰³ Freyda Korobey's first husband leaves her and runs off with a local peasant.¹⁰⁴ Kreyndl, her daughter, is then rejected by Chaikl. Leitshe, Yosef Varshever's fiancé, is deserted when he decides to marry someone else.¹⁰⁵ Also, Ronya, Reb Lippa Yosse's daughter, is more often than not, left alone by her husband Azriel who travels far and wide, supposedly to raise money for a Yeshiva.¹⁰⁶ Because of the role of shame in the novel, the use of judgment and mercy takes on particular significance. For those characters who are humiliated, Tsemakh's tactics of judgment and scorn are

¹⁰⁰ Grade, Vol. I, p. 137

¹⁰¹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 245

¹⁰² Grade, Vol. II, p. 103

¹⁰³ Grade, Vol. I, Part II, Ch. 5

¹⁰⁴ Grade, Vol. I, Part V, Ch. 3

¹⁰⁵ Grade, Vol. I, Part IV, Ch. 10

¹⁰⁶ Grade, Vol. I, Part IV, Ch. 4

painfully familiar. For those who have experienced degradation, Shaye's gentle and dignifying approach can have transforming effects.

Examples of Tsemakh and Shaye's Use of Judgment and Mercy: Tsemakh does not exclude himself from the experience of shame and humiliation. When he returns to Amdur, a wandering penitent, he finds his first fiancé's home. Upon hearing of her death, he rolls in the mud in front of her house and allows himself to be beaten by her father, Falk Namiot.¹⁰⁷ At *Simkhat Torah*, Tsemakh makes a spectacle of himself.

Weeks later people in Nareva were still talking about the scene at the *rosh Yeshiva's* house during the *Simkhat Torah* celebration. The penitent had torn open his shirt, rumpled his earlocks, thrown off his frock coat, rolled up the sleeves, then put the coat on again inside out. To evoke more laughter from the women, he had pulled the tails of his gabardine over his head and begun to swirl and spin furiously, until his long woolen ritual fringes puffed up a like a balloon. The dancers retreated to the sides of the room, and he alone remained in the middle- a whirlwind of hands and feet... Chaikl knew that in Navaredok such an antic was called "making naught of oneself." When a Musar scholar felt that the *yetzer ha-rah* had overcome him and was dragging him to sin, he purposely aroused disgust so that worldly people would laugh at him and push him away, thereby keeping their filthy material world at arm's length.¹⁰⁸

Tsemakh's harsh manner towards himself is mirrored in his harsh attitude towards others. Even if they are characters who are beaten down by the challenges of life, Tsemakh speaks to them with severe judgment. He takes Hertzke from Vova and publicly condemns Vova for his excesses.¹⁰⁹ He berates Chaikl after his affair with Kreyndl, even though Chaikl is already ashamed and has become the laughingstock of the town.

"You're crying!" Reb Tsemakh said triumphantly. "Who's crying? Me?" Chaikl shrieked, in a rage at not being able to contain his tears, and he bit his lips to keep from bursting out in sobs like a little boy. But instead of becoming more tender, the *rosh Yeshiva* stoked up his wrath and spoke with bitter disdain, as though delighted that he could still bring an insolent student to tears. "A sensualist cries out of self-pity. A sensualist is a good sort by nature; and if he gets what his heart longs for, he begrudges no one else any pleasures. But if he doesn't get what he wants, the good-

¹⁰⁷ Grade, Vol. II, p. 159

¹⁰⁸ Grade, Vol. II, p. 220

¹⁰⁹ Grade, Vol. I, Part III Ch 5 & 7

natured sensualist turns ruthless. He becomes blind- deaf and blind to the entire world... Since he didn't lean Musar and made no attempt to break his own will. He doesn't know that one can deny oneself, he hasn't got the slightest conception that it can be done." Tsemakh was shouting now.¹¹⁰

Similarly, when Chayit, at the end of the novel confesses his brokenness to Tsemakh and begins to weep, Tsemakh responds to him with anger.¹¹¹ Chayit then returns Tsemakh's anger with his own bitterness. He will accept no help from his old teacher, not even money.¹¹²

Shaye has contact with many of Tsemakh's students, most notably, Chaikl.

Chaikl comes to Shaye, demoralized and ashamed after his affair with Kreyndl. Rather than broaching the topic of Chaikl's inadequacy, Reb Shaye simply says,

"It is my wish that we study together." Chaikl always remembered imagining that the entire world had stood still at that moment, completely transfixed. Reb Avraham Shaye Kosover's words entered his heart and remained there always, like a lake that forever mirrors the surrounding shores. A deep blue sky, astonished at its own primordial blueness, stretched over Chaikl's head. The green meadow, surrounded by tall pines aglow with the dark red fire of sunset, reminded him of Friday night in the Cold Shul, when all the hanging lamps were lit.¹¹³

Throughout the rest of the novel, Shaye continues to guide Chaikl with gentleness. When Shaye feels that Chaikl is not attending closely enough to his studies, he gently directs him back. Chaikl thinks, " 'The rabbi is upset because I am addling more than studying.' But instead of castigating him, the rabbi punned and made jokes with him."¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Grade, Vol. I, p. 366

¹¹¹ Grade, Vol. II, Part IV, Ch.15

¹¹² Grade, Vol. II, p. 388

¹¹³ Grade, Vol. I, p. 372

¹¹⁴ Grade, Vol. II, p. 117

Not only does Shaye avoid displays of anger, he often directs others away from confrontation and conflict. When Vova takes on an oath to have Tsemakh driven out of town, Shaye tells Vova that he, personally, will take on the oath and the burden of its being broken. He reminds Vova of the consequences to the Yeshiva if Vova starts a fight and tells him that "Jewish children who study Torah should not be made to suffer."¹¹⁵ At times, Shaye's desire to avoid confrontation causes him to be confused. For example, Shaye wants to reach out to Tsemakh but fears being put in a position where he will have to rebuke Tsemakh.

At one point in the novel, Shaye does express harsh judgment. He chooses not to come to Chaikl's father's funeral, because Shlomo Motte was a *maskil*, an enlightened Jew. Afterwards, however, Shaye regrets his decision and weeps openly. "He hunched over as if afraid of the pupil who had reproached him for forgetting compassion on account of his zealousness for the law."¹¹⁶ Shaye thinks that the way of Torah is to be strict with oneself and lenient with others.¹¹⁷ Tsemakh, on the other hand, believes that a harsh attitude benefits all.

The Success or Failure of Each Method: Except for one or two moments when Tsemakh reaches out to his students with tenderness, his relationship to them is

¹¹⁵ Grade, Vol. II, p. 53

¹¹⁶ Grade, Vol. II, p. 186

¹¹⁷ Grade, Vol. II, p. 141

characterized by severe judgment. For many students, the strict doctrine of Musar provides little comfort. Here, Daniel Homler condemns the judgment he felt from his fellow Yeshiva students and praises the tenderness he receives from the hospital nurses.

"In the Yeshiva," Homler went on, "they concocted a tale that I was gripped by an unhealthy lust to have women see me naked, and everyone laughed at me for not being ashamed of my scrawny body in front of the nurses. Everything they said about me was a lie. But I admit that I preferred hired women attendants who treated me like any other patient to the *musarniks* who told me to think of a higher life when I was writhing in pain."¹¹⁸

Daniel Homler gravitates towards those who employ *rahamim* rather than those who rely on *din*. He is not alone. For many in the novel, the use of mercy when teaching seems to have greater success than the use of strict judgment. Hirshe Gordon, for instance, comes to Tsemakh in tears. He has just beaten his son, Baynish, for reading *A History of the World*. Hirshe Gordon fears that he has, perhaps, lost him forever.¹¹⁹ In another example, Vova arrives at Shaye's cottage in a hot rage against Tsemakh, but Shaye soon calms him down. Rather than countering Vova's accusations against Tsemakh, Reb Shaye simply asks,

"Have you eaten supper? It's a long walk here from the village, and you're probably hungry." Vova was thrown off balance and subdued by the rabbi's simplicity and gentleness. When not ranting, however, he didn't know how to behave or speak. "I'm not hungry," he mumbled. "But you won't refuse a cup of tea," the rabbi said. "I won't refuse a cup of tea." Vova smoothed down his disheveled beard with his fingers. Reb Avraham Shaye's addressing him as if he were an honored guest had awakened in him the desire to be respectable.¹²⁰

Tsemakh, on the other hand, grabs Vova in public and shakes him by the lapels, calling him a Haman.¹²¹ This only awakens rage in Vova. Tsemakh wants to save Hertzke from

¹¹⁸ Grade, Vol. II, p. 321

¹¹⁹ Grade, Vol. II, p. 110

¹²⁰ Grade, Vol. II, p. 48

¹²¹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 137

his father's cruelty. While his intentions concerning Vova's son Hertzke may be noble, Tsemakh took Hertzke from his father in a way that left Vova feeling judged and humiliated.¹²² Thus, Vova's extreme and audacious behavior continues.

As with Vova, Tsemakh's coldness towards Slava, causes her to become more rebellious and stubborn. Tsemakh judges Slava and himself, severely, believing that life with her would only pull him in to the clutches of his *yetzer ha-rah*. Slava responds by refusing to grant Tsemakh a divorce and by flirting with Chayit and Chaikl. His behavior wreaks havoc on the Yeshiva and its reputation.¹²³ Slava's flirtation with Chayit ignites a fire in him, but Slava knows that his "love" for her is motivated solely by his hatred of Tsemakh. Chayit, who was recruited by Tsemakh as a young boy, has only disdain for his teacher. Chayit cannot believe anything Tsemakh tells him or feel any compassion for his former teacher.¹²⁴ In this way, Tsemakh's harsh judgment of Chayit and Slava undermines the very ideals of pious Yeshiva life to which Tsemakh claims to have dedicated his life.

While Slava rebels in response to her husband, her attitude toward Shaye is quite different. She is uplifted by Shaye's interpretation of her behavior.

...when he told her about his talk with Reb Avraham Shaye, she sat stunned for a long time. "Is that what he said? And he doesn't think it's just stubbornness on my part? He said that I am doing this because I am deeply committed? Is that what he really said? In that case he's a better man than you, and smarted too." "Then will you wear a kerchief when he comes?" Tsemakh asked. "Yes, out of respect for him, not you. And I'll wear my long-sleeved black silk blouse and

¹²² Grade, Vol. I, p. 169

¹²³ Grade, Vol. II, Part IV, Ch. 9-14

¹²⁴ Grade, Vol. II, Part IV, Ch. 15

brooch with the golden tassels," Slava replied. (*Later, at their meeting, Slava finds herself moved by Shaye's words.*) Slava's eyes became moist and her lips dry. A minute later, she wanted to laugh at the way she was sitting with the pious expression of a young *rebbetsin* the first Friday night after her wedding.¹²⁵

As with Vova, Shaye's respectful treatment of Slava awakens in her the desire to earn his respect and to, in fact, *be* better. Chayit, like Slava, lives a secular life, but he wonders if he would have rejected the Yeshiva world, had Shaye been his teacher.¹²⁶

Shaye appears to be a more successful teacher than Tsemakh. Still, it would be simplistic to claim that Shaye's model of teaching is infallible. After all, Chaikl, in spite of all his time with Shaye as a mentor, chooses to reject a life of Torah scholarship. Vova too, despite Shaye's temporary good influence, is unable to substantially change his ways. He dies still considered an outrageous drunk. Slava, while she does respond to Shaye at their meeting, does not become a pious *rebbetsin*. Still, even if Shaye cannot completely alter the course of individuals' lives, his method of teaching others, with compassion, appears to be far more effective than Tsemakh's use of judgment. In a highly uncharacteristic moment, Tsemakh tells Chaikl,

I've come to the conclusion that compassion is the foundation of belief. For a person who isn't compassionate- even his belief in God is a kind of idol worship... Go and get some rest, Vilner. Tomorrow will be a hard day of prayer and fasting. One must not be cruel toward oneself either.¹²⁷

Hilkhot Talmud Torah on the Use of Din and Rahamim: The tradition, as expressed in the *Mishneh Torah*, affirms the use of compassion and tolerance when

¹²⁵ Grade, Vol. II, p. 363

¹²⁶ Grade, Vol. II, p. 382

¹²⁷ Grade, Vol. II, p. 214

teaching. However, the passage below clearly indicates that what the early rabbis believed to be compassionate teaching might be considered severe by modern day readers. Consider the attitude of the rabbi's towards corporal punishment.

...A teacher may hit them (*his students*) to cast fear on them. However, he may not hit them cruelly, as he would an enemy. Therefore, he should not hit them with a rod or a staff, but rather with a small strap. He should sit and teach them the entire day and for a portion of the night, in order to train them to study during the day and night. They should not be idle at all except on the eve of Sabbaths and festivals, late in the day and on the festivals themselves. But on the Sabbath, they should not begin new material. Rather, they should review what was learned already. Children should not be interrupted (*from their studies*), even for the building of the Temple.¹²⁸

As the last phrase indicates, the importance of children's study to the rabbis, cannot be underestimated. Thus, according to the *halakhah*, corporal punishment should only be motivated by the desire to advance students' learning. To promote the idea of patience and compassion when teaching, *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* explains that fear and shame can inhibit a students' ability to learn.

A teacher that teaches and his students do not understand should not become angry at them and show agitation. Rather, he should teach the matter again, even many times, until they understand the depth of the *halakhah*. Similarly, a student should not say, "I understood." When he did not understand. Rather, he should ask again, even many times. And if his teacher gets angry at him and shows agitation, he should say, "My teacher, this is Torah. I must study, and my understanding is limited."¹²⁹

In the next passage as well, *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* promotes a vision of the teacher/student relationship in which the teacher, rather casting fear and judgment on the students, demonstrates respect and tolerance for those who learn.

A student should not be embarrassed because his fellow students understood (*a concept*) the first or second time and he did not understand it until it was repeated a number of times. If he is embarrassed because of such a thing, he will find himself going in and out of the house of study

¹²⁸ Maimonides, 2:2

¹²⁹ Maimonides, 4:4

without learning anything. Accordingly, the early sages stated, "A bashful person cannot learn or the short-tempered teach."¹³⁰

Yet, the passage does not end here. It goes on to explain that, before responding to his student, a teacher must consider the motivation for the student's behavior. If the student has not succeeded due to his lack of ability, a tolerant and compassionate response is appropriate. If, however, the student is simply being lazy and not applying himself, then the teacher is *obligated* to respond with severity and judgment and even to shame the student.

To what does this apply? When the students did not understand a matter because of its depth or because of their limited powers of understanding. However, if a teacher determines that they are not applying themselves to the words of Torah and are lax about them and therefore do not understand, he is obligated to show agitation towards them and to shame them with his words in order to improve their focus. Concerning this matter, our sages said, "Cast fear into students." Therefore, it is not appropriate for a teacher to act frivolously in the presence of his students. He should not amuse himself in their presence or eat or drink with them so that they fear him and learn from him at a fast pace.¹³¹

Thus, according to *Hilkhot Talmud Torah*, severity is to be used in *certain* circumstances for *certain* students. Perhaps Tsemakh's failure as a teacher comes from his rigid use of *din* and his inability to acknowledge distinctions among his students. It is interesting to note that while Shaye does not *seek* to inspire fear in his students, they often approach him with a certain degree of awe. Tsemakh, on the other hand, whose teaching is based on fear, is not able to inspire such reverence.

In general, the emphasis of *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* seems to be upon the use of *rahamim* when teaching. The teacher's kindness towards his students is, at its root, based

¹³⁰ Maimonides, 4:5

¹³¹ Maimonides, 4:5

upon the his love of and desire for learning. In teaching his students with honor, the teacher enhances his own ability to learn and grow through them.

Just as students are obligated to honor their teacher, a teacher is obligated to honor his students and encourage them. Our Sages said, "The honor of your students should be as dear to you as your own." A teacher should take care of his students and love them, because they are like sons who give him pleasure in this world and in the world to come. Students increase their teacher's wisdom and broaden his horizons. Our Sages said, "I learned much wisdom from my teachers and even more from my colleagues. However, from my students (*I learned*) most of all." Just as a small branch is used to light a large bough, so a small student sharpens his teacher's (*thinking*), until, through his questions, he brings forth brilliant wisdom.¹³²

¹³² Maimonides, 5: 12 & 13

Chapter V. *The Teacher as Replacing the Parent*

The last quoted passage, from *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* 5:12, included the statement, "A teacher should take care of his students and love them, because they are like sons who give him pleasure in this world and in the world to come." In many ways, *The Yeshiva* illustrates how teachers of Torah take on the role of parent for their students. When the novel begins, we are told about Tsemakh Atlas who, "went through the towns and villages of the Ukraine and white Russia establishing new yeshivas."¹³³ While he is not a teacher of small children in a *heder*, Tsemakh takes children from their homes when they are young and impressionable. The yeshiva becomes these students' new home, and Tsemakh, with his firmly established ideas about how to live a moral life, becomes their new parent. Tsemakh says that his true students are only those who he has raised since they were small children. Thus, since Yosef has not been his student for very long, Tsemakh does not feel obligated to attend his wedding.¹³⁴ Here, Tsemakh describes the precious bond he feels towards his students who depend on the Yeshiva's survival.

"The rabbi from Misagoleh just cursed me because I didn't stand up for his honor. His curse doesn't frighten me. No matter where he goes, he'll be a rabbi. But if the Yeshiva falls apart, many of the students won't go anywhere else to study. That's why the students are more precious to me than the rabbi from Misagoleh and his rabbinic post."¹³⁵

Melechke is a student for whom Tsemakh feels a particularly tender and parental bond.

Perhaps Tsemakh's feelings spring from Melechke's youthful innocence.

Tsemakh watched the little lad praying behind the prayer stand with the large Talmud. He went up to the boy and asked him, "How old are you? Where are you studying? Who are your parents? Do you have brothers and friends?" Melechke answered the questions sedately and in order... "And what do you intend to do when you grow up?" the head of the Yeshiva asked. "I am going to be a rabbi, a *gaon*, and a saint," Melechke replied, his face glowing and his eyes triumphantly

¹³³ Grade, Vol. I, p. 149

¹³⁴ Grade, Vol. I, p. 275

¹³⁵ Grade, Vol. I, p. 267

agileam... he expected the tall man to pinch his cheek, listen to him recite a chapter of the Talmud, wax ecstatic over his knowledge, embrace him and say, "You're some little boy, you're some little scholar!" In stead, however, the tall man shouted at him, "If you're going to stay in Vilna and roam around Butchers Street, you're going to grow up to become a fresh punk, not a scholar!" Only when Melechke's dark blue eyes misted over with tears did Reb Tsemakh stroke his face and tell him a story... So go tell your parents that the Valkenik *rosh Yeshiva* wants you to come with him."¹³⁶

On several occasions in the novel, there is a standoff between Tsemakh and a Melechke's father. Each seems to feel he has a claim on the young boy's fate. Here, Reb Shlomo Motte, Chaikl's father, expresses anger that his child might grow up to be a traditional Yeshiva scholar.

"You're not going!" his father yelled. "I will go!" Chaikl ran to the door, ready to flee, but his father's warning cry, "But if you go against my will, don't bother saying *kaddish* for me when I am gone," caught him and riveted him to his place. "If your son doesn't become a *ben Torah*, he won't say *kaddish* for you anyway," Reb Tsemakh said... "I don't want my son to become a religious functionary, a mindless pietist, and an ignorant boor in secular matters... At home that evening, Reb Shlomo Motte realized that he would not have his way. "Why do you begrudge me a son who is a Torah scholar?" Vella asked her husband... Reb Shlomo Motte waved his hand as if to say, "Do what you want with your darling..." Just before they went to sleep, when Reb Shlomo Motte was out for a moment and Vella was preparing his bed, she quickly whispered to her son, "You little silly, you think your father doesn't want you to go study? He loves you and doesn't want to be alone in his old age."¹³⁷

Ultimately, Chaikl must make a choice about who will be his guide. He chooses Tsemakh. Later in the novel, however, he will be reunited with Shlomo Motte in Valkenik when his father comes to live there in order to recover from an illness. Similar to the conflict with Shlomo Motte, Vova is also angry when Tsemakh decides to take Hertzke out of the cruel hands of his father.

Tsemakh didn't let Chaikl daydream for long. "Vilner, wake up! It's time to do God's work. Go find Hertzke Barbitoler and tell him that I agree to his leaving without his father's knowledge. Today is Tuesday. I want him to pack his clothes into his schoolbag no later than tomorrow night, and, instead of going to the Yavneh Cheder on Thursday morning, he is to come see me at the inn... "What's going to happen when his father finds out?" Chaikl asked. "He'll probably come

¹³⁶ Grade, Vol. I, p.150

¹³⁷ Grade, Vol. I, p. 146

to Valkenik to take him back, but we won't let Vova have him," the *rosh Yeshiva* answered and accompanied Chaikl to the door. "Go and good luck." ¹³⁸

When Chaikl and Hertzke leave for Valkenik with Tsemakh, their fathers turn to each other for comfort.

Vova fell back on a chair, buried his face in his hands, and began whimpering, "My son, my son." Silence reigned in the tavern. The patrons scratched their necks, sorry that they had interfered. Reb Shlomo Motte, downcast and exhausted, bent over the tobacco merchant and patted his back, attempting to bring him back to reality. "Hertzke's not going to Argentina," he consoled him. "He's only going to Valkenik, a small town near Vilna." Vova lifted his tear-stained face. "Not to Argentina, you say, not to her?" Reb Shlomo Motte's milk-white beard trembled. "Not to her, not to her," he repeated, and he too wept out of pity for the tobacco merchant. Without the hope of revenge, the teacher mused, Vova was weaker than a child. ¹³⁹

Perhaps Shlomo Motte reaches out to Vova, not only out of pity, but because Shlomo Motte can relate to the feelings of a father whose son has left him in order to learn with Tsemakh. Not only the fathers but the sons, as well, feel the pain of separating from their parents.

Chaikl wasn't in the mood to chatter with the other youngsters and didn't even talk with the principals. He looked out the window and watched as telegraph poles, barren fields, bare trees, a roadside well, and a peasant in a cart all rushed by. But before his eyes he saw his father in the sunglasses he had put on to hide his tears, and the edges of his mother's black Sabbath shawl still fluttering in the air like a big tired bird flying over the ocean with no place at all to rest. ¹⁴⁰

As might be expected, life away from their families causes students to change in ways their families might not have expected. This change is particularly pronounced in Melechke who left home as an innocent child and who returned home for *pesach*, a pious Yeshiva student. Melechke is horrified by his family's lax standards and imposes his beliefs and standards of observance onto all of them. They, in turn, feel that the Yeshiva

¹³⁸ Grade, Vol. I, p. 157

¹³⁹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 169

¹⁴⁰ Grade, Vol. I, p. 177

has stolen their son from them and do not want Melechke to return.¹⁴¹ Indeed, it does seem that the teacher, and the Yeshiva as a whole, takes on the role of parent for these young students. Even for those who are no longer children, the unswerving loyalty demanded by a teacher and by the Yeshiva's philosophy engenders dependence and submission to the will of a teacher similar to the dependence and loyalty that a child might feel for a parent.

Despite Tsemakh's harsh manner, there are many moments in the novel when he demonstrates a parental protectiveness and a need to care for his students. Here, Tsemakh finds Melechke asleep in the *beth medresh*.

Through the dark anteroom of the *beth medresh* Tsemakh entered the side room and watched the sleeping boy. He touched his shoulder lightly. One cheek pressed against the open Talmud, Melechke breathed quietly and didn't awake. Tsemakh carefully lifted him, wrapped him in his broad rabbinic coat, held him with both hands and went outside... He was carrying a living Torah scroll in his hands...¹⁴²

Tsemakh, who sees himself as Melechke's caretaker, feels very guilty when he learns that Melechke is not being fed properly on the Sabbath.¹⁴³ Tsemakh also feels that he is obligated to be present as a mentor for his students and to provide them with guidance and support as a parent would. Reb Hirshe Gordon accuses Tsemakh of abandoning his students.

And it's all your fault. You, the Yeshiva principal, sat behind locked doors, like the people of Jericho, while the plague of reading secular books infected your students. And you didn't even come out of your hiding place when the finest student in your Yeshiva was falsely accused... you

¹⁴¹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 296

¹⁴² Grade, Vol. I, p. 210

¹⁴³ Grade, Vol. I, p. 247

were the one who let him (*Meyerke*) bring such destruction on your Yeshiva." "You're right; it's my fault and mine alone."¹⁴⁴

While Tsemakh may believe that it is his duty to protect and guide his student, he is unable to foster the kind of intimacy with his students that would enable him to truly parent them. Shaye also pulls away from the students of the Yeshiva, living in his cottage, far removed from daily Yeshiva life. Yet, for certain students who seek him out, Shaye does become a nurturing and wise presence. For instance, Shaye fosters an intimate relationship with Chaikl and invites Chaikl into his home and his life. Even as he rejects traditional Jewish life, Chaikl begins to rely on his bond with Shaye. When Shaye leaves for Palestine and seems to no longer take a personal interest in Chaikl, his student, feels lost.¹⁴⁵

Hilkhot Talmud Torah and the Teacher as Parent: The Jewish tradition has long made a very clear connection between parenting and teaching. In ancient times, "a school was often a very closely knit unit, the pupils regarding the teacher as their father. This relationship had ancient antecedents in both Egypt and Babylonia."¹⁴⁶ *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* states that just as a father is obligated to learn, so he is to teach his young son.

Women, slaves, and minors are free from the obligation of Torah study. However, a father is obligated to teach his son Torah while he is a minor. As it states, "Teach them to your children and speak about them." (Deuteronomy 11:19) A woman is not obligated to teach her son, for only those who are obligated to learn are obligated to teach.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ Grade, Vol. II, p. 111

¹⁴⁵ Grade, Vol. II, Part IV, Ch. 18

¹⁴⁶ Durrs, as cited by Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (Philadelphia, 1992) p. 422

¹⁴⁷ Maimonides, 1:1

Hilkhot Talmud Torah then expands the notion of who can be considered a "son." By citing a verse from II Kings. In this way, students and sons are linked.

Just as a person is obligated to teach his son, so too is he obligated to teach his grandson. As it is stated, "You shall teach them to your sons and your grandsons." (Deuteronomy 4:9) And not his children and grandchildren alone. Rather, it is a mitzvah for every wise man to teach students even though they are not his children. As it is stated, "And you shall teach them to your sons." (Deuteronomy 6:7) The oral traditions teaches, "your sons" they are your students because students are called sons. As it states, "The sons of the prophets went out." (II Kings 2:3) If so, why are we commanded (*explicitly*) about one's son and grandson? To grant precedence to one's son over one's grandson and one's grandson over the son of a colleague.¹⁴⁸

Although *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* likens a father to a teacher, significant it also draws distinctions between them. For example, *Hilkhot Talmud Torah* states that the reverence and loyalty due to a teacher is *greater* than that due to a parent. Ultimately, the awe shown by a student for his teacher symbolizes the student's reverence for God.

Just as a person is commanded to honor his father and to hold him in awe, so, too, is he obligated to honor his teacher and to hold him in awe. The awe due to him (*his teacher*) is more than (*the honor due*) to his father. His father brings him into the life of this world, but his teacher, who teaches him wisdom, brings him into the life of the world to come. If he saw a lost object belonging to his father and one belonging to his teacher, the lost object belonging to his teacher takes precedence. If his father and teacher are both carrying loads, he should relieve his teacher's load and then his father's. If his father and his teacher are held as captives, he should redeem his teacher and afterwards, redeem his father. And if his father is a Torah sage, he should redeem his father first. Similarly, if his father is a Torah sage, even though he is not equivalent to his teacher, he should return his lost article and then that belonging to his teacher. There is no greater honor than that due a teacher. Our sages declared, "Your fear of your teacher should be equal to your fear of heaven." Therefore they said, "Whoever disputes the authority of his teacher is considered as if he revolts against the Divine Presence." As it is stated, "...who lead a revolt against God." (Numbers 26:9)¹⁴⁹

The Yeshiva portrays, in depth, the relationships of Shaye and Tsemakh to their students. These relationships often have an intensity similar to that which exists between parent and child, father and son. Many of their students seem to be lost souls, in need of

¹⁴⁸ Maimonides, 1:2

¹⁴⁹ Maimonides, 5:1

parental models, in need of guidance and caring. *Rahamim* and *din* play a role in parenting. While the concept of parent brings with it the notion of tender and protective care, *rahamim*, fear and judgment, *din*, also play a role in a child's relationship to their parent. According to the laws of Torah, children should hold their parents in awe at the same time that they expect to receive kindness and gentleness from them.¹⁵⁰ Yet, the use of judgment should not foster too much distance between a parent and his child or between a teacher and his student. Both Tsemakh and Shaye succeed the most as teachers when they are able to become emotionally close to their students and to engage in their students' lives as a parents do with their own children.

¹⁵⁰ Exodus 20:12

Chapter VI. *The Student as the Embodiment of the Teachers Philosophy and Consciousness*

Martin Buber, in his book, *Between Man and Man*, writes that, in order to truly affect the character of his students, a teacher must engage in the act of teaching with his whole self. Buber posits that students look to the very self of the teacher in order to learn.

Only in his whole being, in all his spontaneity can the educator truly affect the whole being of his pupil. For educating characters you do not need a moral genius, but you do need a man who is wholly alive and able to communicate himself directly to his fellow beings. His aliveness streams out to them and affects them most strongly and purely when he has no thought of affecting them.¹⁵¹

Similarly, *Hikhot Talmud Torah* states that a teacher must model, for students, the principles he teaches. If he does not do this, he is not a true teacher.

...one should not learn from a teacher who does not follow the proper path, even though he is a very wise man and his (*instruction*) is required by the entire nation, until he returns to a good path. As it is stated, "For the priests lips shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek Torah from his mouth, because he is a messenger from the Lord of hosts." (Malachi 2:7) Our Sages said, "If a teacher resembles, 'a messenger of the Lord of hosts,' seek Torah from his mouth. If he does not, do not seek Torah from his mouth."¹⁵²

The Yeshiva illustrates the importance of a teacher's behavior because the students described in the novel very often mimic the choices and even the consciousness of their teacher. Shaye is a teacher who is both "wise" and able to follow a "good path." He is able to model for his students the ideas he teaches. When the student, Yoel Uzder, decides to marry the older of a widow's two daughters, despite her age and lack of wealth, Shaye commends him, with pride and joy, for his integrity.¹⁵³ Shaye has earned

¹⁵¹ Buber, *Between man and Man*, p. 105

¹⁵² Maimonides, 4:1

¹⁵³ Grade, Vol. II, p.123

the right to set such standards, for he himself married a gruff woman, twice his age.¹⁵⁴ In general, Shaye's students look to him as a mentor and attempt to live up to the standards he sets, both in word and deed.

In contrast to Shaye, Tsemakh's internal struggles impede his ability to be a model for his students. Tsemakh is unable to act upon the ideas which he claims to believe. Thus, his students' faith in him is steadily eroded. Not only his students, but others in the community, begin to mistrust Tsemakh. Vova, for instance, tells Tsemakh,

"I want you to know that even though I thought you were insensitive and not too clever, at least you were honest and just. You took up the cause of a humiliated woman, and you were ready to sacrifice yourself for children who study Torah. That's why I gave in each time you attacked me. But when I found out how you- who demands things from others- treats your own wife, and that lately you don't even care about your students, then you are going to pay for everything. I've never forgiven my runaway wife the torments and shame she's caused me, so do you expect me to forgive you, a perfect stranger?"¹⁵⁵

When Tsemakh confronts Yosef Varshever about abandoning his fiancé, Tsemakh has no ground on which to stand.

"Do I have to account to everyone?" Yosef stepped back as though fearing a slap. "Even if I did consider becoming engaged to the cook at first, I could have changed my mind when I found out that she had no dowry, no house, no money for wedding expenses, and no trousseau for herself. And especially since we never talked about marriage and never publicly signed a marriage contract." Yosef drew closer to the principal, his pale face angry and contorted, he spoke in a low, secretive voice, "I know of a Navaredker Musarnik who was engaged to a girl in Amdur. But this girl, who was an orphan too, had a dowry and her own house, and her father promised the groom free board. The engagement contract was signed. Nevertheless, the fiancé broke the engagement with the Amdur girl and married a girl in Lomzhe because she was prettier and richer." Yosef Varshever left the room.¹⁵⁶

In another example, Chaikl feels guilty about wearing good clothes, but then considers Tsemakh's behavior and decides that his guilt is unfounded.

¹⁵⁴ Grade, Vol. II, p. 363

¹⁵⁵ Grade, Vol. II, p. 43

¹⁵⁶ Grade, Vol. I, p. 232

Chaikl went back and sat down at the table to mend his jacket. Since meeting the *rosh Yeshiva's* wife he had begun paying attention to his clothes, and he was vexed with Reb Tsemakh Atlas who totally disparaged the material world but himself wore beautiful clothes and had a lovely wife.¹⁵⁷

Tsemakh's students follow their teacher's example, rather than what he *tells* him to do. Of all the Yeshiva students, Chayit is the most angry about his teacher's inconsistencies. He tells Tsemakh, "...you have to change your role and your mask continually, because at bottom you're empty, like the rotten trunk of a tree."¹⁵⁸ Tsemakh, himself, understands his students' faults to be extensions of his own shortcomings. Perhaps this is why a student like Chayit elicits such anger from Tsemakh.

He seized the beaten youth by the front of his coat and with all his might, pushed him out the door. Tsemakh Atlas stood still and gazed down at the threshold as if it were a tombstone over a grave. At that moment, he summed up his entire life: he had succeeded at nothing. He was one of those whose repentance would be rejected by a heavenly voice. He wouldn't have been surprised if someone had now thrown him out of the *beth medresh*, with people hooting after him: Everything lurking inside you has now broken out like boils on your students.¹⁵⁹

Tsemakh seems to have several main demons "lurking inside" him. He struggles with his sexual desire, with issues of faith, and with his inability to foster close relationships. As will be discussed below, his students begin to internalize each of these qualities and to enact them in their own lives.

No matter how hard he tries, Tsemakh is unable to purge himself of his sensuality and to live a completely pious existence. This conflict within Tsemakh paralyzes his relationship with his wife, Slava.

¹⁵⁷ Grade, Vol. I, p. 282

¹⁵⁸ Grade, Vol. II, p. 369

¹⁵⁹ Grade, Vol. II, p. 278

She waited a moment, then immediately retreated. "You don't even want to kiss me?" "I do. Why shouldn't I?" But the petulant expression of a misunderstood deaf-mute flashed on his face. "There are laws..." (Tsemakh) looked at her transparent ears, visible beneath her well-combed hair. Her long white neck, finely chiseled nose, and round firm jaw had not changed. Her cheeks, made lean as if by an inner fire, and her wan smile added to her sage look. Tsemakh gazed at her as if incredulous that she was his wife, that she had come to see him. At that moment he couldn't understand how he could have abandoned such a woman to go and suffer torments away from home. His sensual lips jutted out from under his thick mustache; his nostrils pinched. Slava saw that his eyes weren't pious any longer. A wild desire was coming over him, just as in old times. She had always known that he was an ascetic by nature and despised himself for his passions. He couldn't love a woman and didn't feel the joy of loving. She saw now that he hadn't changed. His face quivered with passion and rage. He was furious with himself for wanting her.¹⁶⁰

Chaikl, Tsemakh's student is also drawn to women. First Leitshe, Gitl the cook's daughter, then Tsharne, Reb Hirshe Gordon's daughter, and finally Kreyndl, Freyda Vorobey's daughter, with whom he begins to have an affair. As with Tsemakh, whose lustful impulses undermine his pious ideals, Chaikl's focus on his studies begins to wane as his passion for Kreyndl grows.¹⁶¹ Just as Tsemakh is alternately attracted to and repelled by Slava, so too Chaikl, after embracing Kreyndl, finds himself disgusted by her.

The longer Chaikl looked at the *shul*, the farther away he felt from the girl at his side. When he wasn't kissing her hotly and feverishly, she disgusted him. What did she want of him? Her straight-combed hair was greasy and smelled of kerosene. He couldn't believe that in this day and age a girl would still wash her hair with kerosene. He upper lip felt like a prickly hairbrush. Her skin was rough; she was hard and lean as a board. "Why are you moving away from me?" she whispered, and, frightened, he inched closer to her as if he were already her captive.¹⁶²

When Tsemakh berates Chaikl for his affair with Kreyndl, it seems that Tsemakh is not only yelling at Chaikl, his student, but also at himself.

Reb Tsemakh had again begun to ponder his meetings with Ronya in the dark dining room. He always thought about them with longing, anxiety, and chagrin, as if he regretted withstanding temptation during those nights. Hence, he didn't want to moralize to his pupil about a sin of which he was not innocent himself. But the Vilner had seemingly pursued him into his hiding place- and Tsemakh felt in his heart a flame of yearning to wage war on his pupil and himself... (Tsemakh then accuses Chaikl of having an affair) "You're crying!" Reb Tsemakh said

¹⁶⁰ Grade, Vol. I, p. 252

¹⁶¹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 195 & p. 213

¹⁶² Grade, Vol. I, p. 357

triumphantly. "Whose crying? Me?" Chaikl shrieked, in a rage at not being able to contain his tears, and he bit his lips to keep from bursting out in sobs like a little boy. But instead of becoming more tender, the *rosh Yeshiva* stoked up his wrath and spoke with bitter disdain, as though delighted that he could still cause a youngster to break down, could still bring an insolent student to tears... (*Chaikl then asks*) "And why should I resist temptation, if you didn't?" "What didn't I resist? What do you mean?" "I mean what I mean." Chaikl hesitated for a moment over whether to say it or not. "I mean your wife."¹⁶³

Not only does Tsemakh's student, Chaikl, enact his teacher's struggle with sexual desire, Chaikl also uses Tsemakh's behavior in this area to validate his own behavior.

Another characteristic which defines Tsemakh, is his inability to maintain close connections with others, be they students, colleagues, or family members. Instead, Tsemakh's relationships are characterized by anger and distance. He almost never shows compassion and tenderness to those who are closest to him. There are moments when he cares tenderly for Melechke, when he feels guilty for not guiding his students more successfully, but for the most part, it seems that Tsemakh is only able to care for others from a distance. For instance, Tsemakh seems more concerned about Stasya, the maid of the Stupel family, than about his own wife, Slava. She tells him,

"It seems you can only be kind and gentle to downtrodden people like a pregnant maid." "Was Stasya found?" Tsemakh asked was no longer paying attention to his wife's complaints. With anxiety in his voice, he asked quickly, "Where is she? Has she had her baby?" "I don't know," Slava said indifferently.¹⁶⁴

Just as Tsemakh feels alienated from those closest to him, he seems to foster alienation between others as well. When Tsemakh takes Hertzke away from his father, Vova feels angry and humiliated. Vova tells Tsemakh,

"He'd be better off under my care, but I have no choice. You butted into my life and talked him into running away, so now he shouts it out loud that he hates me."... Hertzke came in carrying a

¹⁶³ Grade, Vol. I, p. 365

¹⁶⁴ Grade, Vol. I, p. 253

square, metal-banded wicker basket with a lock. Mind held a linen bag packed with sweets taken from the cabinets. "Vova turned his back and spoke to the wall. "Go! You don't say goodbye to a father you hate." ¹⁶⁵

Eventually, the anger and rebelliousness which Tsemakh engendered in Hertzke towards his father turns back on Tsemakh himself. Not long after coming to Valkenik, Hertzke rejects Tsemakh, leaves the Yeshiva, and runs off with his mother to Argentina.¹⁶⁶ Shaye believes that Tsemakh's bringing Hertzke into the Yeshiva against his father's will ultimately did more harm than good.¹⁶⁷ The situation with Hertzke is another example of how Tsemakh's own characteristics, in this case, anger and emotional distance, begin to characterize his students.

Finally, there is the issue of faith. Much of the time, Tsemakh, a man of cold reason, longs for faith.

Tsemakh reflected, all the rabbinic authorities were right when they wrote that belief in the existence of God was totally dependent on heartfelt faith. "Where does one get this heartfelt faith, which even sinful Adam possessed and by virtue of which he became a penitent?" Tsemakh shrieked bitterly behind closed lips, afraid that if he opened his mouth and let the sounds fly out, the recluse who slept in the women's gallery would realize that the visitor in the dark *beth medresh* was wrestling with the problem of the existence of God." ¹⁶⁸

Yet, even as he desires piety and unquestioning faith, Tsemakh cannot relinquish his attachment to rational thought. The struggle within leaves him "burned and blackened."

Even when Tsemakh stood in the *beth medresh* among his pupils, praying with his *tallis* over his head, he was still haunted by his passion for probing into himself, by his mania for constantly rebuking himself. He had left the worldly hedonists because they had no Torah. But the Torah was considered the highest and most profound form of wisdom only by those who believed that it was given at mount Sinai. Those who didn't believe in Divine Revelation considered man's rational faculty more Divine than the Torah laws, the reason for which no one knew. Tsemakh

¹⁶⁵ Grade, Vol. I, p. 173

¹⁶⁶ Grade, Vol. I, Part IV, Ch. 13

¹⁶⁷ Grade, Vol. II, p. 35

¹⁶⁸ Grade, Vol. I, p. 141

looked out the *beth medresh* window and imagined a black fire coming from the blinding rising sun that ignited his beard and earlocks and the *tallis* on his head, leaving him standing naked, a burned, blackened trunk. A thought roared in his mind, then crumbled like thunder: He hungered and thirsted for a world of virtue, not a world of starry-eyed piety.”¹⁶⁹

Shaye wonders why Tsemakh continues to remain a *rosh Yeshiva* given his doubts about religion.

“If he doesn’t believe in God and in His Torah, why should a person like him disguise himself as a pious Jew with beard and earlocks and run a Yeshiva? Nevertheless, it’s possible for even an honest man to stick to something he no longer believes in because he has sacrificed so much for his belief and has nowhere else to go.”¹⁷⁰

Shaye is not the only one who takes note of Tsemakh’s inconsistencies. Reb Simkha Feinerman attributes the sorrowful mood of the Yeshiva to Tsemakh. Feinerman believes that Tsemakh’s repentance must not be a lofty one since Tsemakh’s actions continue to lead himself, and others, towards vice.¹⁷¹ Tsemakh’s struggle with faith has a direct impact on his students. Chaikl eventually abandons much of his traditional religious practice, has an affair with his landlady’s daughter and spending time with Chayit. Towards the novel’s conclusion, Chayit, a former student of Tsemakh who has abandoned Yeshiva life, speaks to Tsemakh. Chayit attributes his own brokenness to his teacher’s confusion and pain.

“You know, Reb Tsemakh, no matter what oath in life you chose, it left you dissatisfied. That’s the greatest injustice you committed against your pupils, and especially against me. You taught us a Torah for which you indeed did sacrifice yourself, but which you yourself weren’t happy with. That’s why your students grew up full of contradictions too, and became broken people. I don’t hate you any more. I see what’s become of you. But I have no respect for you. Don’t give me any more money- in my heart I don’t thank you for it. And I know not to expect help from anyone, perhaps I’ll succeed in doing something on my own.” Moshe Chayit Lohoyser left, and Reb Tsemakh understood that his former pupil would not see him again.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ Grade, Vol. I, p. 308

¹⁷⁰ Grade, Vol. I, p. 344

¹⁷¹ Grade, Vol. II, p. 295

¹⁷² Grade, Vol. II, p. 388

PART III.

Who Succeeds as a Teacher?

While *The Yeshiva* examines many aspects of the teacher/student relationship, it focuses specifically on the different teaching styles of Tsemakh Atlas and Reb Shaye. In many ways, these two teachers are portrayed as absolute opposites of one another. Whereas Tsemakh represents severe judgment, asceticism, emotional distance, and turmoil, Shaye represents compassion, emotional intimacy, humility, peace, and to a certain degree, sensuality. As was mentioned in the introduction, it seems that Grade had contact with both kinds of mentors. He was a student of the Hazon Ish, and he was influenced as well by the philosophy of Musar. Thus, as Chaikl vacillates between Tsemakh and Shaye, Grade's personal assessment of these two kinds of teachers is enacted.

Chaikl is not the only student in *The Yeshiva* who struggles to find a mentor. His friend, Chayit, searches as well. Like Chaikl, Chayit is recruited by Tsemakh as a young boy. When Tsemakh and Chayit part ways at the novel's conclusion, there is great bitterness between them.¹⁷³ Indeed, Chayit's alienation from Tsemakh mirrors the distance experienced by many of Tsemakh's students. Like Chayit, other students as well, choose to leave both Tsemakh and his Yeshiva. One might conclude that Tsemakh has failed as a teacher. Chayit says that, perhaps, if he had been mentored by Shaye, rather than Tsemakh, he would have remained in the Yeshiva world.

¹⁷³ Grade, Vol. II, Part IV, Ch. 18

"From what you've told me about Reb Avraham Shaye, I see that he's worlds removed from Tsemakh Atlas. If I'd had a teacher like that, perhaps I wouldn't have left the Yeshiva," Moshe Chayit said, breaking twigs off a dry branch with his nervous fingers. "You've said that before." Chaikl turned to him, looking as if he wanted to push him off the hill. "You must feel pretty awful if you left the Yeshiva just to spite Tsemakh Atlas."¹⁷⁴

Chayit's emotional distance from Tsemakh poses a sharp contrast to Chaikl's feelings towards Shaye. While Chaikl, like Chayit, has chosen to leave the traditional Yeshiva world, he retains a deep emotional bond with Shaye. At the end of the novel, when Shaye is about to leave for Palestine, Chaikl realizes that Shaye has given up on him. Chaikl seems surprised.

"Do you know I am planning to go and settle in the land of Israel?" Reb Avraham Shaye said it so softly and matter-of-factly that Chaikl thought he hadn't heard well or had misunderstood. He walked on carrying the bucket and listening to what the rabbi was saying... Reb Avraham Shaye stopped at the doorway of his house and called his *rebbe'sin* out to take the bucket of water. "He invited me in for refreshments, as if I were some distant relative. He no longer considers me his pupil, so he has no regrets about departing and leaving me behind." Chaikl thought on his way down Zaretshe Hill. He knew perfectly well that if it hadn't been for the rabbi, he would have left Torah studies sooner. Now that the rabbi had severed his links with him and would no longer be close by, the way to the world was open to him...¹⁷⁵

Still, Chaikl's freedom is bittersweet. Even as Chaikl rejects Shaye's way of life, he craves the guidance of his old teacher and longs for the expression of Shaye's care. Chaikl tells Vella, his mother, that he does not want to go to the train station to say goodbye to Shaye because Shaye doesn't want to talk to him.¹⁷⁶ Even so, Vella convinces Chaikl that he must go. Upon seeing his old teacher off, Chaikl is overcome with emotion.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Grade, Vol. II, p. 382

¹⁷⁵ Grade, Vol. II, p. 374

¹⁷⁶ Grade, Vol. II, p. 391

¹⁷⁷ Grade, Vol. II, p. 366

Still, in spite of Chaikl's emotional attachment to Shaye, it is not altogether clear whether Shaye has succeeded as his teacher. Shaye, acknowledges his failure to keep Chaikl from straying into secular life and wonders if Chaikl would have fared better had he remained at the Yeshiva. Here Shaye speaks to Tsemakh.

"Chaikl has a great imagination, and every impossible thing can become real for him. I have to admit that in our dispute about Chaikl in Valkenik you were right, not I. He should have studied in a Yeshiva. That's why I persuaded him to go to Nareva, but I realized my mistake too late." ¹⁷⁸

Shaye goes so far as to say that, despite all the time that he has spent with Chaikl, Tsemakh's influence on Chaikl remains pronounced. He tells Tsemakh, "I often hear you talking through Chaikl; he is still more your pupil than mine." ¹⁷⁹ Chayit too feels the effects of Tsemakh's teaching. However much Chaikl may try to enter into the secular world, he doesn't think he will ever be free of the influence of Musar philosophy and his teacher Tsemakh. Chayit tells Slava,

"I still haven't left. I have wasted too much of my youth on the Musar books to be able to forget them. I burrow into them more than ever... That's why I am telling you how the Musar books poison the ones who read them, and that whoever is a *Musarnik* once is a *Musarnik* forever." ¹⁸⁰

Later Chayit and Chaikl gaze out upon a summer vista watching the secular youths bathe and frolic without shame. Chaikl then tells Chayit that he, himself, will someday be like those bathers, able to live a secular life without guilt, but that Chayit will remain a Yeshiva student always. Yet, no sooner has Chaikl uttered those words, than he seems to disprove them.

He stood up, brushed the dust from himself, and pointed to the white stone building. "Here in the *Zaretche beth medresh* Reb Salanter, the founder of Musar and the teacher of all Musarniks from Kelm, Slobodke, and even our own Navaredok, had his first Yeshiva. While we're sitting here, I

¹⁷⁸ Grade, Vol. II, p. 361

¹⁷⁹ Grade, Vol. II, p. 144

¹⁸⁰ Grade, Vol. II, p. 341

can't escape the thought that Reb Israel Salanter's *beth medresh* is right behind us." "You see?" Lohoysker crowed gaily. "I told you before that we'll never be able to get the Yeshiva out of our systems. But you're drawn to his place because when you look down into that Garden of Eden of the worldly oriented people, you see Reb Salanter's *beth medresh* mirrored in the back of your head."¹⁸¹

While Chaikl attempts to reject Tsemakh and Shaye, both his teachers seem to remain with him. In a sense, Chaikl seems suspended between each one, simultaneously drawn to each teacher's philosophy and yet unable to live according to the ideals of either Tsemakh or Shaye. Chaikl's ambivalence gains deeper significance when it is understood as the struggle of the author himself. Like Chaikl, Grade is deeply moved by the compassion and piety of Reb Avraham Shaye Kosover, the fictionalized Hazon Ish. Like Chaikl, Grade longs for the protection and guidance of his teacher. Chaikl's emotional connection to Reb Shaye is depicted most poignantly in the novel's final scene.

"Train to Warsaw now leaving!" From all sides passengers rushed to the platform. Chaikl was dragging along with the crowd. His eyes suddenly grew misty; his ears rang. He saw shadows moving back and forth, up and down the steps of the cars- the men of the Poplaver Shul carrying the rabbi's baggage to the train and returning to the platform. Reb Avraham Shaye Kosover shook hands with everyone and thanked them with a nod. The crowd still wasn't noisy but whispered, as if in the silent devotion, "May you arrive in the Land of Israel in peace and good health." Through his tears Chaikl saw the rabbi and Reb Tsemakh Atlas bidding each other farewell. They shook hands but did not kiss or say a word. Yudis was already on the train, and Reb Avraham Shaye finally climbed up the steps. "Go to your teacher," Chaikl's mother whispered, pushing him ahead of her... A heavy-hearted silence enfolded Reb Avraham Shaye. He shook hands with Chaikl, hesitated for a moment over whether to say something, then sighed softly. "At a time like this, it's hard to talk..." The conductor shouted, "All aboard!" and at once closed doors and windows began whirling by. The wheels rumbled through Chaikl's temples. The metallic screech of the siren resounded in his ears with a weird silent cry from the abyss... Chaikl's eyes streamed hot tears; they burned his face and rolled down his neck.¹⁸²

Still, whatever Chaikl's emotional connection to Shaye, he does not go with this teacher. Chaikl is unable to embrace a life of piety. Grade too, left the traditional world of his teacher. This pained him greatly.

¹⁸¹ Grade, Vol. II, p. 383

¹⁸² Grade, Vol. II, p. 366

Grade later related... that had he gone to Israel, he would have to meet with the Hazon Ish, but such a meeting would have been too difficult an experience. Either the Hazon Ish would have been greatly pained by seeing his former student transformed into a secular Jewish writer. The Hazon Ish of course knew about his student's break with traditional Judaism and his subsequent literary career, but knowing is not the same as seeing- or Grade would have been impelled, out of respect or loyalty to his former teacher, to return to Judaism. Neither alternative, Grade concluded, was acceptable to him.¹⁸³

What then of Chaikl's other teacher, Tsemakh? In so many ways, *The Yeshiva* seems to condemn Tsemakh and his way of life. However, while Chaikl seems to be aware of the limitations of strict Musar doctrine, Tsemakh's teachings leave an indelible imprint on Chaikl's soul. Perhaps, although Shaye represented the philosophy Grade most admired, most longed for, Tsemakh, with his inner turmoil and evil urges, with his need to judge himself and others harshly, is the teacher with whom Chaikl, and Grade himself, most closely identifies. As Chaikl stands on the platform of the train station weeping, it is not Shaye but Tsemakh who stands beside him.

¹⁸³ Kaplan, p.146

PART IV.
Several Talmudic Passages that relate to the Novel's Themes

On the Need for Patience and Compassion When Teaching:

From here R. Eliezer inferred: It is man's duty to teach his pupil (*his lesson*) four hundred times. This is arrived at from the concept of *kal v'chomer*. Aaron who learned from Moses who had it from the Almighty had to learn his lesson four times. How much more so an ordinary pupil who must learn from an ordinary teacher...

...Rabbi Pereda had a pupil whom he taught a lesson four hundred times before the latter could master it. On a certain day, having been requested to attend to a religious matter, he taught him as usual, but the pupil could not master the subject. "What," the Master asked, "is the matter today?" "From the moment," the other replied, "the Master was told there was a religious matter to attend to, I could not concentrate my thoughts, for at every moment, I imagined, 'Now the Master will get up,' or 'Now the Master will get up.' "Give me your attention," the Master said, "and I will teach you again," and so he taught him another four hundred times. A *bat kol* issued forth asking him, "Do you prefer that four hundred years should be added to your life or that you and your generation shall be privileged to have a share in the World to Come?" "That," he replied, "I and my generation will be privileged to have a share in the World to Come." "Give him both," said the Holy One Blessed Be He. *Eruvin 54b*

This passage clearly states the need for a teacher to be patient with his student and to have faith that the student will eventually understand, provided that the material is repeated a sufficient number of times. The passage also shows the extent to which a student is aware of the teacher's state of mind. Rabbi Pereda's student is unable to learn because he fears that, at any moment, his teacher will loose patience and will be pulled to his other duties. This example demonstrates the trust and closeness that must exist between a teacher and a student for the student to learn properly. Rabbi Pereda's compassion and wisdom is displayed once again when he chooses for himself and his generation to receive a share in the world to come rather than simply having years added to his own life. The passage could even be interpreted to mean that one who teaches his student well, earns eternal life (a portion in the World to Come), since his lessons, as carried on by the student, endure after the teacher's death.

On Who is an Acceptable Student:

For Rabban Gamliel had issued a proclamation saying, "No disciple whose character does not correspond to his exterior may enter the *bet midrash*." On that day, many stools were added. Rabbi Johanan said, "There is a difference of opinion on this matter between Abba Joseph ben Doseithai and the Rabbis. One says that four hundred stools were added, and the other says seven hundred. Rabban Gamliel became alarmed and said, "Perhaps, God forbid, I withheld Torah from Israel!" He was shown in his dream white casks full of ashes. (*Signifying that he kept out those who were not genuine.*) This, however, really meant nothing. (*They were, in fact, genuine.*) He was only shown this to appease him. *Berachot 28a*

This passage shows the necessity of not judging students too severely or too quickly. Although Rabban Gamliel has very high standards, even for who should be allowed to enter the *bet midrash*, the passage emphasizes the need to open wide the doors of the study house. Many stools are added in order to accommodate the hundreds of students who come. Ultimately the passage concludes that Rabban Gamliel misjudged many students and turned them away, thus "withholding Torah from Israel." In order that Gamliel not be overcome by guilt, he is provided with a comforting dream. Still, the overall message seems to be that teachers should be humble and open-minded when it comes to their students. Rather than judging them harshly and turning students away, teachers should exercise compassion and realize that students may not immediately fit the standards and ideals in the teacher's mind.

On the Conflict between Torah Scholarship vs. the Needs of the Scholar's Family:

"His locks are curled" (Song of Songs 5:11) This, said Rabbi Hisda in the name of Mar Ukba, teaches that it is possible to pile up mounds of expositions on every single stroke (*of letters in the Torah*) "and black as a raven." (Song of Songs 5:11) With whom do you find these? With him who, for their sake, rises early (to go to the schoolhouse) and remains late in the evening (*before returning from*) the schoolhouse. Rabbah explained, "(you find these only) with him who, for their sake, blackens his face like a raven." (*This is a play on the Hebrew for "black," sh'horot and early, shaharit and on the Hebrew for "raven," orav and "evening" aravit.*) Raba explained, "With him who can bring himself to be cruel to his children and household like a raven. (See Ket. 49b and Bava Batra 8a, on the raven's neglect of his brood.) This is the case with Rabbi Adda ben Mattenah. He was about to go away to a schoolhouse when his wife said to him, "What shall I do with your children?" "Are there," he retorted, "no more herbs in the marsh?" Eruvin 22a

This passage sends a strong message that a Torah scholar should not worry about his family but should instead devote himself wholeheartedly to the study of Torah. It is ironic that the proof text used to support a Torah scholar's necessary distance from his family is *Shir HaShirim*, poetry of love between a man and a woman. According to the writers of this text, a scholar will be pulled from Torah should he begin to worry about his family and to respond to their needs with compassion.

On the Use of Rahamim vs. Din:

Rebbi says, "In the beginning (*Moses*) described the punishment for (*not observing the Torah*.) As it is written, "Moses brought back." (*Which alludes to*) matters that repel a person's mind. And in the end, (*Moses*) described the giving of reward for (*observing the Torah*). As it is written, "Moses related." (*Which alludes to*) matters that attract a person's heart like *aggadah*. (*A third approach*): And there are those who say, "In the beginning (*Moses*) described the giving of reward for (*observing the Torah*.)" As it is written, "Moses brought back." (*Which alludes to*) matters that restore a person's mind. And in the end, he described the punishment for (*not observing the Torah*). As it is written, "Moses related." (*Which alludes to*) matters that are as harsh to a person as *giddin* (*a type of bitter herb*. See *Jeremiah 9:14* and *Rashi to Deuteronomy 29:17*). *Shabbat 87a*

This passage addresses the between using fear or compassion, judgment or mercy when seeking to teach others and to direct them along the proper path. One side of the argument gives primacy to the use of fear and judgment. The other side puts compassion first. It is interesting, however, that all the rabbis seem to agree that use of *both* methods is essential in order for Moses to instruct the people and motivate them to follow the laws of Torah. Perhaps by including both Tsemakh and Shaye in his novel, Grade acknowledges the necessity of both methods of teaching.

Appendix A.- Israel Salanter from *Ituray HaTorah*

וייראו ה' את ה' ויאמינו בה'... התנאי הראשון של השלימות היא היראה. ולא ייתכן קיום המצוות שבין אדם לחברו אם הן מבוססות על עקרונות אנושיים בלבד. ואינן קשורות באמונה באלוקים וביראת ה' שהורה. כל הנימוקים השכליים וההגיוניים-אנושיים מתבטלים ברגע שהם נתקלים בנסיגות הכציאות. ומתנפצים מול צור הסלע הקשה של היצרים והתאוות. יראת אלוהים לבדה היא הגורם שבכוחו לעצור את האדם ולרסן את יצריו ותאוותיו. ולא עוד, אלא אף לעצם האמונה משמשת היראה גורם עיקרי. אין יציבות ותוקף לאמונה מבלי היראה, ולכן כתוב: „וייראו העם את ה' ויאמינו בה'". היראה קודמת לאמונה. בלי היראה עלולה האמונה להשתבש ולהסתלף לפי נסיות רוחו ורצונותיו ולקבל צורות שונות. רק יראת אלוהים משמשת מצפן לכוון את האמונה לאפיקיה הסהורים.

ר' ישראל מסלאנט

א נשים ועבדים וקטנים פטורים מתלמוד תורה.
אבל קטן, אביו חייב ללמדו תורה, שנאמר: "ולמדתם את בניכם לדבר בם".

ואין האשה חייבת ללמד את בנה; שכל החייב ללמד, חייב ללמד.

ב כשם שחייב אדם ללמד את בנו, כך הוא חייב ללמד את בן-בנו.
שנאמר: "והודעתם לבניך ולבני בן-בן".

ולא בנו ובן-בנו בלבד, אלא מצוה על כל חכם וחכם מ ישראל ללמד את התלמידים, אף-על-פי שאינן בניו, שנאמר: "ושננתם לבניך" —
מפי השמועה למדו: 'בניך' אלו תלמידים, שהתלמידים קרויין בנים,
שנאמר: "ויצאו בני הנביאים".

אם-כן, למה נצטוו על בנו ועל בן-בנו?

להקדים בנו לבן-בנו, ובן-בנו לבן חבירו.

ה לעולם ילמד אדם תורה ואחר-כך ישא אשה, שאם נשא אשה תחלה,
אין דעתו פנויה ללמד.

ואם היה יצרו מתגבר עליו, עד שנמצא שאין לבו פנוי — ישא ואחר-כך
ילמד תורה.

ו הנה מנהג המדינה לקח מלמד התינוקות שכר, נותן לו שכרו.

וחייב ללמדו בשכר, עד שיקרא תורה שבכתב בלה.

מקום שנהגו ללמד תורה שבכתב בשכר, מתר ללמד בשכר;

אבל תורה שבפעל-פה, אסור ללמדה בשכר, שנאמר: "ראה למדתי אתכם

חקים ומשפטים באשר צוני ה' וגו'" —

מה אני בחנם למדתי, אף אתם למדתם בחנם ממני;

וכן כשתלמדו לדורות, למדו בחנם, כמו שלמדתם ממני.

לא מצא מי שילמדו בחנם, ילמד בשכר, שנאמר: "אמת קנה";

יכול ללמד לאחרים בשכר? תלמוד לומר: "ואל תמכר";

הא למדת, שאסור לו ללמד בשכר, אף-על-פי שלמדו רבו בשכר.

ט גדולי חכמי ישראל, היו מהן חוטבי עצים, ומהן שואבי מים, ומהן סומים, ואף-על-פי-כן היו עוסקין בתלמוד תורה ביום ובלילה, והם מקלל מעתיקי השמועה איש מפי איש משה רבנו.

פֶּרֶק שְׁנִי

א מושיבין מלמדי תינוקות בכל מדינה ומדינה, ובכל פלג ופלג, ובכל עיר ועיר.

ובכל עיר שאין בה תינוקות של בית רבן, מחרימין את אנשי העיר, עד שמושיבין מלמדי תינוקות;

ואם לא הושיבו — מחרימין את העיר;
שאין העולם מתקנים, אלא בהכל פיהם של תינוקות של בית רבן.

ב מכניסין את התינוקות להתלמד, כֶּכֶן שש כֶּכֶן שבע, לפי כח הכֶּכֶן ובגן גופו.

ופחות מכן שש, אין מכניסין אותו.
ומכה אותן המלמד, להטיל עליהם אימה; ואינו מכה אותם מכת אויב, מכת אכזרי.

לפיקדו לא יכה אותם בשוטים ולא במקלות, אלא ברצועה קטנה.
ויושב ומלמדן כל היום פלו ומקצת מן הלילה, כדי לחנכן ללמד ביום ובלילה.

ולא יבטלו התינוקות כלל, חוץ מערבי שבתות וימים טובים בסוף הימים, ובמים טובים.

אבל בשבת, אין קורין בתחלה, אבל שונין בראשון.
ואין מבטלין התינוקות, ואפלו לבגין בית-המקדש.

פֶּרֶק שְׁלִישִׁי

א בשלשה כתרים נכתרו ישראל:

כתר תורה,

וכתר כהונה,

וכתר מלכות.

כתר כהונה — זכה בו אהרן, שנאמר: "והיתה לו ולזרעו אחריו ברית כהנת עולם".

פתר מלכות — וְכֵה בּוֹ דָּוִד. שְׁנָאֹמֶר: "נִרְעוּ לְעוֹלָם יְהִיָּה וְכִסְאוֹ כְּשֹׁמֶשׁ נִגְדִי".

פתר תורה — הָרִי מִנַּח וְעוֹמֵד וּמוֹכֵן לְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל. שְׁנָאֹמֶר: "תּוֹרָה צִוָּה לָנוּ מֹשֶׁה, מוֹרֶשֶׁה קֹהֵלֶת יַעֲקֹב" — כָּל מִי שִׁירְצָה, יָבוֹא וַיִּטֹּל.

שְׁמָא חֲאֹמֶר, שְׁאוּתָם הַכְּתָרִים גְּדוּלִים מִכְּתֵר תּוֹרָה — הָרִי הוּא אֹמֶר: "בֵּי מַלְכִּים יִמְלְכוּ וְרוֹזְנִים יַחֲקִקוּ צָדֵק, בֵּי שָׂרִים יִשְׁרוּ"; הָא לְמִדָּת, שְׁכֵתֵר תּוֹרָה גְּדוּל מִשְׁנֵיהֶם.

ב אֲמָרוּ חֲכָמִים: מִמּוֹר תַּלְמִיד־חֲכָם קוֹדֵם לְכַהֵן גְּדוּל עַם־הָאָרֶץ, שְׁנָאֹמֶר: "יִקְרָה הִיא מִפְּנִינִים" — מִכַּהֵן גְּדוּל שְׁנִכְנָס לִפְנֵי וְלִפְנִים.

ג דְּבִרֵּי־תּוֹרָה נִמְשְׁלוּ כְּמִים, שְׁנָאֹמֶר: "הוּי כָּל צְמָא לְכוּ לַמִּים", לֹאמֵר לָךְ: מַה מִּים אֵינָם מִתְּכַנְּסִין בְּמִקּוֹם מְדֻרָּן, אֲלֵא נִזְחָלִין מִעֲלֵיו וּמִתְּקַבְּצִים בְּמִקּוֹם אֲשֶׁבֶרֶן; כֵּן דְּבִרֵּי־תּוֹרָה אֵינָם נִמְצְאִים בְּגִסֵּי־הַרוּחַ, וְלֹא בְּלֵב כָּל גְּבַה־לֵב, אֲלֵא בְּדָבָא וּשְׁפַל־רוּחַ, שְׁמִתְאַבֵּק בְּעַפְרֵי רַגְלֵי הַחֲכָמִים, וּמִסִּיר הַתְּאוּרוֹת וְתַעֲנוּגֵי הַזְּמַן מִלְּבוֹ, וְעוֹשֶׂה מְלָאכָה בְּכָל יוֹם מְעַט כְּדֵי חַיֵּיו, אִם לֹא הִיָּה לוֹ מַה יֵּאכַל, וּשְׁאָר יוֹמוֹ וְלֵילוֹ עוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה.

ד כָּל הַמְּשִׁים עַל לְבוֹ שִׁיעֶסֶק בַּתּוֹרָה, וְלֹא יַעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה, וְיִתְּפָרְגֵם מִן הַצְּדָקָה — הָרִי זֶה חָלַל אֶת הַשֵּׁם, וַיִּבְנֶה אֶת הַתּוֹרָה, וַיִּכְבֶּה מְאוֹר הַדָּת, וַיִּגְרַם רָעָה לְעַצְמוֹ, וְנִטַּל חַיֵּיו מִן הָעוֹלָם הַבָּא, לִפִּי שְׁאִסּוֹר לַהֲנוּת מִדְּבִרֵּי־תּוֹרָה בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

אֲמָרוּ חֲכָמִים: "כָּל הַנִּהְנֶה מִדְּבִרֵּי־תּוֹרָה, נִטַּל חַיֵּיו מִן הָעוֹלָם". וְעוֹד צִוּוּ וְאָמְרוּ: "אַל תַּעֲשֶׂם עֲטָרָה לְהַתְגַּדֵּל בָּהֶן וְלֹא קָרִידִם לַחֲפֹר בָּהֶן".

פֶּרֶק רְבִיעִי

א אֵין מְלַמְדִין תּוֹרָה, אֲלֵא לְתַלְמִיד הַגּוֹן, נָאָה בְּמַעֲשָׂיו, אוֹ לְחַם אֲכָל אִם הִיָּה הוֹלֵךְ בְּדֶרֶךְ לֹא טוֹבָה, מִתְּזִירִין אוֹתוֹ לְמוּטָב, וּמִנְהִיגִין אוֹתוֹ בְּדֶרֶךְ יִשְׁרָה, וּבּוֹדְקִין אוֹתוֹ, וְאַחֲרֵי־כֵן מְכַנְּסִין אוֹתוֹ לְבֵית־הַמִּדְרָשׁ וּמְלַמְדִין אוֹתוֹ.

אֲמָרוּ חֲכָמִים: כָּל הַשּׁוֹנֶה לְתַלְמִיד שְׁאִינוֹ הַגּוֹן, כְּאֵלֵּי זֶרֶק אָבֹן לְמַרְקוּלִים, שְׁנָאֹמֶר: "בְּצֻרוֹר אָבֹן בְּמִדְּגָמָה, בֶּן נֹתֵן לְכִסִּיל בְּבוֹד" — אֵין בְּבוֹד אֲלֵא תּוֹרָה, שְׁנָאֹמֶר: "בְּבוֹד חֲכָמִים יִנְחָלוּ".

וכן הרב שאינו הולך בדרך טובה — אף-על-פי שתקם גדול הוא וכל העם צריכין לו, אין מתלמדין ממנו, עד שובו למוטב, שנאמר: "כי שפתי כהן יקשרו דעת ותורה יבקשו מפיהו, כי מלאך ה' צבאות הוא" — אמרו חכמים: אם הרב דומה למלאך ה' צבאות, תורה יבקשו מפיהו; אם לאו, אל יבקשו תורה מפיהו.

ד הרב שלמד ולא הבינו התלמידים — לא יקעס עליהם ויגזו, אלא חוזר ושונה הדבר אפילו כמה פעמים, עד שיבינו עמק ההלכה. וכן לא יאמר התלמיד: הכנתי! והוא לא הבין, אלא חוזר ושואל אפילו כמה פעמים.

ואם קעס עליו רבו ורגז, יאמר לו: רבי, תורה היא, וללמד אני צריך, ודעתי קצרה!

ה לא יתנה התלמיד בוש מחבריו, שלמדו מפעם ראשונה או שנייה, והוא לא למד אלא אחר כמה פעמים:

שאם נתבולש מדבר זה, נמצא נכנס ויוצא לבית-המדרש והוא אינו למד כלום.

לפיכך אמרו חכמים הראשונים: "אין הדישן למד, ולא הקפדן מלמד". כמה דברים אמורים? בזמן שלא הבינו התלמידים הדבר מפני עמקו, או מפני דעתן שהיא קצרה:

אבל אם נפר לרב, שהם מתרשלין בדברי-תורה ומתרפין עליהן, ולפיכך לא הבינו — חייב לרגז עליהן ולהקלימן בדברים כדי לחזקם. ובענין זה אמרו חכמים: זרק מרה בתלמידים.

לפיכך אין ראוי לרב לנהוג קלות-ראש לפני התלמידים, ולא לשחק בפניהם, ולא לאכל ולשתות עמם, כדי שתהא אימתו עליהן וילמדו ממנו במהרה.

פרק חמישי

א קשם שאדם מצוה בכבוד אביו ויוראחו, כך הוא חייב בכבוד רבו ויוראחו יחד מאביו;
שאביו מביאו לחיי העולם הזה, ורבו, שלמדו חכמה, מביאו לחיי העולם הבא.

יב קשם שהתלמידים חזקין בכבוד הרב, כך הרב צריך לכבד את תלמידיו ולקרבו.

כך אמרו חכמים: "יהי כבוד תלמידך חביב עליך כשלד". וצריך אדם להזהר בתלמידיו ולא להקדם, שהם הבנים לעולם הזה ולעולם הבא.

יג התלמידים מוסיפין חכמת הרב ומרחיבין לבו. אמרו חכמים: הרבה חכמה למדתי מרבותי, ויותר — מחברי, ומתלמידי — יותר מכלם.

יכשם שעץ קטן מדליק את הגדול, כך תלמיד קטן מחזיר הרב, עד שיצא ממנו בשאלותיו חכמה מפארה.

ו-וכן לא יחלץ תפליו לפני רבו, ולא יסב, אלא יושב כיושב לפני המלך. ולא יתפלל, לא לפני רבו ולא לאחר רבו ולא בצד רבו; ואין צריך לומר, שאסור לו להלך בצדו; אלא יתרחק לאחר רבו, ולא יהא מבין כנגד אחריו, ואחר-כך יתפלל. ולא יבנס עם רבו במרחץ, ולא ישב במקום רבו, ולא יכריע ויכריז בפניו, ולא יסתיר את דבריו. ולא ישב לפניו, עד שיאמר לו: שב, ולא יעמד מלפניו, עד שיאמר לו: עמד, או עד שיטל רשות לעמד. וכשיפטר מרבו, לא יחזר לו לאחוריו, אלא נרתע לאחוריו, ופניו כנגד פניו.

פרק ו

י תלמידי חכמים אינם יוצאין בעצמן לעשות עם כל הקהל בבגזן וחפירה של מדינה וכיוצא בהן, כדי שלא יתבזו בפני עמי-הארץ. ואין גובין מהן לבגזן החומה ותקון השערים ושכר השומרים וכיוצא בהן, ולא לתשורת המלך.

ואין מתיבים אותן לתן המס — בין מס שהוא קצוב על בני העיר, בין מס שהוא קצוב על כל איש ואיש, שנאמר: "גם כי יתנו בגזים עתה אקבצם, ויחלו מעט ממשא מלך ושרים".

וכן אם היתה סחורה לתלמיד-חכם, מניחים אותו למכר תחלה, ואין מניחים אחד מבני השוק למכר עד שימכר הוא.

וכן אם היה לו דין, והיה עומד בכלל בעלי-דינים הרבה — מקדימין אותו ומושיבין אותו.

יא עון גדול הוא לבזות את החכמים או לשנאתן.
 לא תרבה ירושלים, עד שבזו בה תלמידי חכמים, שנאמר: "ויקרו
 מלעבים במלאכי האלהים ובזזים דבריו ומתעצתעים בנבאיו",
 כלומר: בזזים מלמדי דבריו;
 וכן זה שאמרה תורה: "אם בחקתי תמאסו" — מלמדי חקתי תמאסו.
 וכל המבזה את החכמים, אין לו חלק לעולם הבא, ודברי הוא בכלל "פי
 דבר ה' בזה".

Appendix C.- Talmudic Passages

Eruvin 54b

מכאן אמר רבי אליעזר: חייב
אדם לשנות לתלמידו ארבעה פעמים. וקל וחומר, ומה אהלן שלמד מפי משה,
ומשה מפי הגבורה - כך, הדיוט מפי הדיוט - על אחת כמה וכמה.

רבי פרידא הוה ליה ההוא תלמידא
דהוה תני ליה ארבע מאה זימני וגמר. יומא חד
בעיה למלתא דמצוה, תנא ליה ולא גמר. אמר
ליה: האי דנא מאי שנא? אמר ליה: מדהיא שעתא
דאמרו ליה למר איכא מילתא דמצוה - אסחאי
לדעתאי, וכל שעתא אמינא, השתא קאי מר, השתא
קאי מר. אמר ליה: הב דעתיד ואתני ליד. הדר תנא
ליה ארבע מאה זימני [אחרני] נפקא בת קלא
ואמרה ליה: ניחא ליד דליספו לך ארבע מאה שני.
או דתיזכו את ודרך לעלמא דאתי אמר: דניזכו אנא ודריי לעלמא דאתי.
אמר להו הקדוש ברוך הוא: תנו לו זו חו.

Berachot 28a

תנא; אותו היום סלקוהו לשומר הפתח ונתנה
להם רשות לתלמידים ליכנס. שהיה רבן גמליאל
מכריז ואומר: כל תלמיד שאין תוכו כברו - לא יכנס
לבית המדרש. והוא יומא אתוספו כמה ספסלי. אמר
רבי יוחנן: פליגי בה אבא יוסף בן דוסתאי ורבנן, חד אמר: אתוספו ארבע מאה
ספסלי; וחד אמר: שבע מאה ספסלי. הוה קא חלשא דעתיה דרבן גמליאל,
אמר: דלמא חס ושלום מנעתי תורה מישראל. אחזו ליה בחלמיה חצבי חיוורי
דמלין קטמא. ולא היא, ההיא ליחובי דעתיה הוא דאחזו ליה.

"שחרות כעורב", - במי אתה
 "שמשכים ומעריב עליהן לבית המדרש. רבה אמר:
 יבמי שמשחיר פניו עליהן כעורב. רבא אמר: יבמי
 שמשים עצמו אכזרי על בניו ועל בני ביתו כעורב.
 כי הא דרב אדא בר מתנא הוה קאזיל לבי רב,
 אמרה ליה דביתהו: ינוקי דידך מאי אעביד לה?
 אמר לה: מי שלימו קורמי באגמא?

רבי אומר: בתחילה
 פירש עונשה, דכתיב "וישב משה" - דברים שמשכבין
 דעתו של אדם, ולבסוף פירש מתן שכרה - דכתיב
 "ויגד משה" - דברים שמושכין לבו של אדם כאגדה.
 ואיכא דאמרי: בתחילה פירש מתן שכרה, דכתיב
 "וישב משה" - דברים שמשכבין דעתו של אדם,
 ולבסוף פירש עונשה - דכתיב "ויגד משה" - דברים
 שקשין לאדם בגדין.

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Note: Much of the background information about Chaim Grade, Israel Salanter, the Hazon Ish, and the Musar movement was taken from miscellaneous articles in Encyclopedia Judaica.

**BEYOND POPULAR RELIGIOSITY:
THE TRANSFORMATIVE EFFECTS OF
GROUP PROCESS AMONG FILIPINO-AMERICAN FAMILIES**

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Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for Doctor of Ministry Degree

Hebrew Union College- Jewish Institute of Religion

Graduate Studies Program

New York, New York

March 2001

Advisors: Dr. Eugene Borowitz, Ms. Jean Aniebona, M.S.W.

To all caregivers

For the pastoral counselor there may remain the recognition that, in helping, one has been helped; that in the fusion of horizons with another, one's own horizon has been stretched.

For the pastoral counselor there is also a sense of gratitude to the Spiritual Presence by whose power whatever change that was accomplished was made possible.

Sustained by that grateful awareness, the pastoral counselor may turn to the next help-seekers with renewed hope and expectation.

THE LIVING HUMAN DOCUMENT

Charles V. Gerkin

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank my God for you every time I think of you; and every time I pray for you all, I pray with joy. (Phil.1: 3-4) My sincere gratitude goes to those Filipino-American members of the Block Rosary who have been my companions on this journey. We staid the course and we have arrived, to move on to yet another stage in our journey of faith. Thank you Lola, Melissa, Katie, Sarah, Perry, Conching, Vangie, Ernie and Ruth.

I will also wish to extend my thanks to my project advisors, Jean Aniebona, C.S.W., (Postgraduate Center for Mental Health, New York), and Dr. Eugene Borowitz (Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, New York) -- for their guidance and support throughout the Demonstration Project. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of a number of other individuals who have helped me make this project a reality. They are: the Directors of the of the Doctorate in Pastoral Counseling—Dr. Gary Ahlskog (Postgraduate Center for Mental Health) and Dr. Carol Ochs (Hebrew Union College); my professors at the Postgraduate Center—Jean Aniebona, C.S.W., Vivienne Joyce, S.C. C.S.W., Dr. Gary Ahlskog, Dr. Richard Mallory, Dr. James Ellis, Alida Margolin, C.S.W., Ann Akers, M.Div., Regina Friedrickson, C.S.W., Dr. Jack Herkovits, Psy.D., Doug Nissing, M.Div. and my professors at Hebrew Union College: Dr. Mark Banschick, Dr. Neil Gillman, Dr. JoAnne Tucker, Dr. Carol Ochs, Dr. Eugene Borowitz, Dr. Bennett Miller.

My sincere thanks also goes to my dear friends who have supported me through their care, advice and encouragement: Dr. Russ Macaranas, Dr. Johnny Macaranas, Dr. Butch Maynigo-Arenas, Dr. Victor Sison, Esq., Karen Cash, Nancy Cooper, Dorien Donders and my spiritual director, Maureen Fullam. Your valuable insights helped me discover that there is more to my demonstration project than the theoretical: At its core it is about life.

There were many, too--my classmates at Postgraduate Center For Mental Health and Hebrew Union College and to my patients and staff at Cabrini Hospice--whose encouragement, trust and presence during the course of my doctoral studies were important support and to whom I am indebted. I thank you.

Finally, I am grateful to my family for their unwavering support. Their patience and understanding during my two years of study have been a constant solace. To my mom Francisca and her husband, Rogelio, I offer my gratitude. Thanks too, my ever-supportive brothers Russ, Johnny and Nonong and my sisters Madeleine and Leah. To my nephew, Jesse and my niece, Mary another thank you for the delight you have brought me.

Maraming Salamat Sa Inyong Lahat! (Thanks very much to all of You!)

ABSTRACT

The term "popular religiosity" often carries with it the pejorative sense of a religious practice in which the purity of faith is obscured by the encrustations of culture. Nowhere, however, in this study do I subscribe to the bias; rather, I take the position that specific devotions and practices can be profound expressions of faith, once the deeply human dimension in which they are embedded is encountered and understood and linked to faith. The overall purpose of the project, then, is to help Filipino immigrant families discover the value of the religious traditions they bring with them in the context of the wider society in which they now live.

In this study I guide nine Filipino-Americans on an eight-week journey through group process toward greater personal and liturgical integration of the values inherent in their religious devotions and practices. Through an interface of religious and clinical principles, I help link the sharing of self experienced in group process not only to a renewed sense of Christian community but to the Eucharist itself. My method utilizes Yalom's theory of group psychotherapy, family systems theory, object relations theory, as well as Jung's theory of individuation and mandala. The religious principles which guide me are grounded in a "theology from below", as is my image of God as a "caregiver."

During the course of the eight weeks there are challenges to be met that arise from a mature need for autonomy and authenticity and their engagement with the authoritative claims of Church and culture which often overlap, or, as is the case in the Philippines, are almost synonymous. I call this phenomenon "imposed religion" and distinguish it from "transmitted religion." I trace the historical development of this trend back to its roots in Spanish colonization and explicate the psychological problems it creates. The group dynamics also demonstrate the intergenerational conflicts that develop between immigrant parents, who have grown up with "imposed religion" as a legacy, and their American-born children, who spurn the legacy. I further show how the dynamic of open sharing in group process has the power to bridge even this wide cultural divide.

The intertwining of religion and culture also produce what I call "split-level" Christianity, in which what one professes in Church is disconnected from one's behavior in the secular sphere.

There are five chapters and 192 pages all in all in the study. The script of the demonstration project and the feedback are placed in the appendices A and B. There are also couple's counseling verbatim and case discussion and a one on one counseling included as appendices C, D, and E respectively.

Also of interest is the description of the retreat day which was planned as a way to integrate the awareness gained in the course of eight weeks. Toward this end, I ask each member to make a drawing which symbolized his or her experience of the process, as

well as choose a symbol (the gift of self) to bring to the altar during the offertory. Jungian interpretation and the mandala experience make the artwork and offertory symbols significant to the theme of the transformative effects of group process within the Filipino-American families as they journeyed beyond their own popular religiosity.

What I found most valuable in this study was the insight into the potential for personal and spiritual transformation inherent in the immigrant experience. As such, my study is a wake-up call – perhaps a prophetic call – to the clergy of mainstream religious tradition to recognize the need of immigrant group for leaders to guide them throughout the process of acculturation and lead them to the “Promised Land”. In fact, the call is an urgent one, as I point out, to counter the lure of cult-like group.

Given my background in hospital/hospice pastoral care and my own immigrant experience, I believe that I am uniquely positioned to understand the losses, as well as the temptation, “Exodus” people face.

My study offers a model for helping ethnic peoples grieve their losses and move on to new life, in which their core religious identity remains in tact, but is vastly expanded and claimed through a deepened awareness of self and others.

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CHAPTER I

BEYOND POPULAR RELIGIOSITY: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A. The background and History

The majority of Filipino Americans currently living in the United States are Filipino immigrants and first-generation Americans. These Filipino Americans have been dealing with the necessity of acculturation and its accompanying difficulty of claiming their own religious identity. Evelyn Lee in her book, Working with Asian Americans: A Guide for Clinicians, noted that the problem arises because the "same Filipino cultural traits that may be helpful in the face of adversity may also create spiritual, psychological and emotional difficulties during the process of acculturation." (1997, p. 107) In addition, their extreme family and group orientation often make it more difficult for them to find ways to be involved in the new culture. Their strong sense of shame, their religion, and colonial mentality, along with the loss of familiar support networks, status, and so forth, can add to their vulnerable state. Their issues of loss are signified not only by their own personal losses, but also by the loss of their native country.

Filipino Americans' biggest source of support is the faith and religion they have brought from the Philippines, called popular religiosity. This unique brand of faith centers on devotion to the Blessed Mother expressed on First Saturdays by praying the

rosary, novenas and by attending Mass. Popular religiosity or "folk religiosity" may be described as the peculiar manner in which Filipinos, in general, have integrated their Catholic beliefs and practices with their native ways of thinking and acting and their particular ways of believing and worshipping. Block Rosary is popular religiosity in this sense the relevance of which I will describe later. Block Rosary is the recitation of the rosary by the members of different families together. In front of the image and statue of the Blessed Mother, each family will host the celebration on a monthly basis where the statue will be at the house for a month. It is called block rosary because the movement of the transfer of the statue and the recitation of the rosary happen from block to block. In this particular case, transfers happen within the boroughs of New York or from one borough to another. Popular religiosity needs to be assessed less on external practices and more on the deeper meaning of faith and its impacts on daily life. According to Filipino theologian Jose de Mesa in his book Doing Theology, the clergy has "to evaluate popular religiosity in terms of its life-giving and death-dealing elements." (1913, p. 33)

I have been in the United States for the past ten years and I gave myself the designation of Filipino American when I took my oath as an American citizen in 1996. Being an immigrant myself, I have witnessed the struggles new Filipino immigrants experience in adjusting to American culture. Children who are first generation Filipino Americans encounter the same issues as their parents. They live together in one Filipino immigrant family. I observed that most Filipino immigrant parents are comfortable with their religious traditions and find change difficult. The cultural-religious baggage they bring to this country is huge. As a result, personal conflicts arise around identity and

claiming that identity. The problem is exacerbated by the fact that Filipino culture is intimately related to religion. Eighty-six percent of all Filipinos are Catholics and high percentages of those who emigrate are Catholic.

In my demonstration project, I will focus on seven Filipinos who have emigrated to this country during the last twenty years and on two who were born in the US. The mix includes two couples, one single woman, and a grandmother and her three granddaughters. In the past I have observed problems in Filipino families regarding issues of acculturation, identity, spirituality, religiosity, family dynamics, and relationships, especially those between persons born in the Philippines and those born here. I also saw the need for a deepening of relationships amongst members of the Block Rosary as they practice their popular religiosity.

As a starting point, I have the benefit of having observed members of the group over the past seven years as they celebrated the Eucharist every First Saturday of the month as part of the Block Rosary. The First Saturday of the month is the day in Catholic tradition, which is devoted to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to the Sto. Nino (Little Infant Jesus of Prague), and to the Lord of Pardon (Suffering Christ). This is called popular religiosity because there is an integration of Marian devotions and dogmatic teachings of the Church. Block Rosary is a Filipino devotional practice which consists of praying the rosary and novenas and celebrating the mass on nine consecutive Saturdays. It is believed that fulfillment of this devotion will bring the member closer to God and

secure for him or her a special place in heaven through the powerful intercession of Mary.

Block Rosary is the Filipinos version of expressing their own popular religiosity and is unique to Filipino Catholic Christians. The Catholic Church approves of these practices, but it never included them in its teaching. This eventually became a norm for Filipino practice as it permeated through the Filipino family. In the book The Secret of the Rosary, written by St. Louis De Montfort, Fr. Peyton wrote as a poscript: "If families recite the Family Rosary, I assure them that their homes will become, by God's grace, peaceful, prayerful places--little heavens, which God the author of home life has intended they should be" (p. 126). This message was so taken to heart by the Filipino families that it became a powerful obligation for them to meet regularly with the whole family to recite the rosary. "The family that prays together stays together." The celebration of the Eucharist was eventually incorporated with the recitation of the rosary. Victor Maynigo in his SThD Dissertation, Evangelization and the Philippine Culture in the Light of the Second Vatican Council observed that the practice of popular religiosity is manifested in "their overt acceptance of normative official Catholic doctrine and ritual while at the same time, in their practice, in their concrete behavior, their activities are heavily oriented toward the observances of popular beliefs sanctioned by the community but not necessarily by the official Church hierarchy." (1978, p. 22)

These religious practices have primary importance for Catholic families throughout the Philippines and inspire strict observance. These same practices help

ground Filipino families in the US. I have noticed that for Filipino devotees, the more prayers and devotions, the better their own sense of religiosity.

One of the thrusts in this demonstration project will be to provide a meaningful environment for group members to share their faith experiences as they relate to one another, thereby deepening their sense of the spirituality that attends their practice. Will they become aware of the maturation of their faith as they examine their own processes of acculturation? Will they cope better through the ritual of prayers as they undergo a deepening of their interpersonal connectedness? What will happen when they get together outside the Block Rosary Group and start talking about their experiences? What will happen when they share their faith and personal lives? Will they impact one another as they share what is really happening in their own lives? I hope to be sensitive, not only to their ego-strengths, but also to their weaknesses and struggles as they grapple with their lives here in the US.

I have known the Block Rosary group since I was a parochial vicar, first at St. Frances Cabrini Church, Brooklyn (1990-1992), and later, at the Church of Our Lady of Victory, Manhattan (1992-1994). When I became chaplain at Cabrini Medical Center, I continued to celebrate the Eucharist with them on a monthly basis. I believe that the Eucharist has been an important experience they share in common. It is my goal to facilitate an experience of the Eucharist as a communal and meaningful encounter with God, enriched by their experience of one another in the group.

Furthermore, I will try to present the issues of intergenerationality between the immigrants and their Filipino-American children. There will be an exploration of the family systems theory. Will imposition of authority bring forth an effective integration of faith? Will diversity of beliefs and culture enhance the unity of the Filipino family and the ability of its members to care for one another?

I have ministered to the Block Rosary Group for the past seven years. I received feedback from the group that they needed guidance regarding the movement of their faith in the context of the devotions. Hence, the statement of the problem is the need of each member to discover his or her own spirituality through the practice of popular religiosity. In connection to this, I intend to explore the question of religious identity as members experience it through their culture and family systems. Lastly, I intend to explore the conflicts this quest for identity may create within the Filipino family.

B. The Specific Needs

The purpose of the Project is to help Filipino immigrant families discover the value of popular religiosity as they practice it in their new homeland. The framework of using object relations theory, family systems theory, and the individuation process as guides to this journey will be significant towards their potential insights and discoveries. In this short-term focused **group process**, I hope to help members deepen their own spirituality as it expresses itself in their practice of popular religiosity.

First, I will facilitate a group experience in which they share the influence and effects of the role of popular religiosity in their family relationships. Since the Block Rosary meets once a month, the members have a limited encounter of each other. I would like to forge a deeper inter-relational bond to these rites by immersing the members in a group process in which they experience one another as a family.

Secondly, I would like them to explore the strengths and weaknesses of their devotions and beliefs as they are expressed in their lives. Wherever they go, they bring with them their own cultural and religious identities. How are they coping in their process of acculturation and, at the same time, the process of inculturation through living their faith? Furthermore, I will delve into their processes of maturation of faith in their newfound homeland. I am curious about the ritual of attending First Saturday devotions and whether the practice is just a way to satisfy a cultural obligation or whether it has a deeper personal meaning. Some come to the Block Rosary because the Filipino community obliges them to attend. If the motivation is one of cultural obligation, it becomes a possible hindrance to their search for self in religion. I am not sure whether the strict observance stems from a belief that to do so is a way to solve problems in the family or whether it is a way to enhance an already existing spirituality.

Thirdly, I would like to engage the group in an examination of the relationship of popular religiosity to the issue of loss in their lives (e.g. migration, deaths, separations, etc.). Like the people of Israel in their flight from Egypt to the Promised Land, they will be journeying through the areas of transition and adjustment. Loss will be looked upon

both in the context of being Filipino and in being immigrants wanting to find a place in US culture. What is the value of their religion when they experience loss? Does it help them cope and work through their grief, or do they have recourse only to themselves and their own families?

Hence, this project will not only help Catholic Filipino clergy but also all other members of the clergy, pastoral counselors, and caregivers in their ministry with Filipino immigrants, as well as with other immigrants in the US.

The following are the specific needs to which I plan to minister during the project:

1. I sense the need for Filipino immigrant parents and their children to discover the meaning of their faith and to understand how it is expressed through their life experiences. I will assist their integration of the meaning of their faith into their lives as expressed through group activity, artwork, symbols and liturgy.
2. I intend to help parents understand that there are different ways to express the same faith. I will also be open to pastoral counseling, using Marriage and Family systems theory, as couples or individuals need it during the process.
3. There is a need for individuals to look at their piety through the group process and reading of the scriptures and see whether or not it is not implemented in their daily lives. In the same vein, they need to overcome the disconnectedness that exists between their religious and secular lives.
4. I need to understand how religion and popular religiosity may be used to avoid examining and dealing with family problems (instead of resolving them).

5. It is important to help Filipino-American children understand the context of religiosity in the lives of their parents and elders. I will give both the opportunity to listen to each other through the group process.

The important need is to explore how popular devotion affects relationships within both the Filipino community and the family structure. It is my observation, that rituals and devotions have been a source of bonding, both on the social and spiritual level. At this juncture, I sense that there is a need to clarify the meaning of popular religiosity to Filipino immigrants by inviting them to share their personal expressions of faith.

Due to my full-time work in hospital ministry, I was only available to the Block Rosary on a sacramental level. That has been the extent of my service through the years. While going through the Doctor of Ministry Program in Pastoral Counseling and Care, I was challenged to evaluate how I integrate liturgical worship with group dynamics in order to uncover the personal meaning of faith. I was further challenged to see how I might use the tools of group process and pastoral counseling and care in this endeavor. Toward this end I will make reference to Yalom's Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy (1995). The goal of my project is not an attempt to downplay what these faithful people have brought to the traditional celebration of their rituals, but to introduce through the group process a way to deepen their awareness of what they believe.

I will offer them the opportunity to help reinvent their identity as members of the Filipino Block Rosary Group. I have been the third Filipino priest in their group. The first priest died in 1989. The second priest, whom I replaced, retired and went on to

another ministry. I am the only priest who has celebrated the mass with them during the past seven years. My normal practice was to use the Sunday readings and prayers in conformity with the universal Catholic liturgical norms and practices. I was not able to be available to them pastorally in regards to the interdynamics, psychodynamics, and effects of the value of the Eucharist. At times, I felt that they viewed the Eucharist as magic because there was no further psychological exploration of its meaning in their own lives.

The blessings of articles and objects like rosaries, bible, crosses, religious objects, and other popular, yet secular, images were important for them. How valuable are these objects in their lives? What is the effect of popular religiosity within the psychological framework of their lives? What are the meanings of these symbols in their lives? Is the Eucharist looked upon as the Filipino "anting-anting" (shaman or protection) to protect them from danger?

I felt that the Block Rosary Group's relationship to me was one of respect to my religious status. I felt that they put me on a pedestal as their priest. Furthermore, they came to me because of my ordained status in the hierarchical Church. Although most of the members of the group are much older than I, they still called me Father out of respect to tradition. I represent authority for them. I believe this is their transference towards me and how the participants will relate to me during the eight weeks I plan to be their group leader. Whether the assumption proves to be true will become clear during the process.

They have empowered me to be their spiritual guide and leader. Moreover, I will be their pastoral counselor and hope to be like a good shepherd.

I observed that the focus of the Black Rosary was oriented toward ritual rather than the meaning of the ritual, and on implementing religiosity, rather than spirituality. Often, after a monthly Black Rosary, some would enjoy themselves after mass with drinking and gambling, which I felt had a higher priority for some than the communal liturgical celebration. I observed a split-level Christianity coming to this fore, revealing a disconnection between what they celebrate and how they live their faith in their daily lives. Being their spiritual leader, I feel that I can provide an awareness of the need to choose what is in tune with their life and faith.

The relationship between Filipino-born parents and their American-born children needs improvement. Filipino immigrants appear to lack understanding in this area. At times, they force their children to pray and recite the rosaries and celebrate the mass against their will. To appear good and religiously acceptable to the community appears to be a function of frequent attendance of the ritual and the devotion. I observed that there was a tremendous pressure amongst them to appear to be good. *Shame and Honor* are predominant in Filipino-American behavior. According to Mary Hollnagel, this may be translated as "a sense of social propriety". As a preventive, it makes for conformity to community norms (as cited in Flores & Flores, 1994, p. 3). When one violates such a norm, he or she certainly feels a deep sense of shame, a realization of having failed to live up to the standards of society. To fail to do what is expected of one,

is to suffer "honor", a loss of self-esteem (p. 34). To continue to believe in a matter disapproved of by the community is to be without "honor", and this label automatically results in withdrawal of acceptance within one's group, if not the entire community (p.34). Furthermore, a Filipino who loses group support from his people is a social outcast, a very unhappy person. *To call a Filipino outside of his or her homeland is to reveal him or her weakness. This also applies to keeping their religiosity intact as advocated by the Church and the culture. Community members are pressured to remain inside the circle of faith and religion by fulfilling these rituals. Being raised with a religious education makes them at times scrupulous in their observance of faith. These activities are looked upon as a gauge for "becoming religious and spiritual".*

I observed that the parents do not appreciate the question of autonomy because they themselves did not to a certain degree experience it. On the religious level, they themselves practiced these devotions because their parents in the Philippines told them to do so. It became a religious-cultural tradition. The Philippine Catholic Church placed its stamp on it by its promulgations and implementations of Church teachings in the context of acculturation. The parents' hope is that they can transmit such a "culturally imposed religion" to their children here in New York. I sense that the American-born children are under a great deal of pressure. I plan to explore the conflict of autonomy and authority (cultural and religious) breeding in this Filipino community.

The need to have a common understanding of faith through the religious texts and the gospels was not so much explored as dictated by the design of the Catholic ritual.

The homily became the center of the ritual in which the gospel was explained and applied to day-to-day life. As I sensed, listening intently to the homily means the successful fulfillment of their attendance. During the group process, I intend for them not to just to listen to me, but to encourage them to come forth and share. In the course of my role in the project, I will be the one listening to them and they will be the ones sharing their own homilies with one another. At the end of the project I will celebrate the mass, and there will be a shared homily of what the members of the group experienced during the project. I have a sense that this will be a way of integrating their experience of the eight weeks. The group members are not isolated from the Catholic Church as an institution. They are the Church. The Eucharist comes to them as their own if they partake fully in the celebration.

C. The Relevance of the Project to Ministry in a Wider Context.

I hope to achieve a certain sense of conversion between children and their parents. What does the cultural value of respect for elders mean for the younger generation? How can the clergy person or pastoral counselor be a spiritual guide in the conflict between parents and children? The use of family systems theory could enhance further understanding of the Filipino family, or any family, for that matter.

Ministry to an ethnic group is challenging. I believe that every ethnic group has its own background and theology. Understanding Filipino families as they are and as they relate to one another is my concern. Religious texts are important to understanding

one's group. For example Luke 1:26-38 (New American Bible), which speaks about the Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel to Mary as the Mother of God, is the basis of the Marian devotion in Filipino practice. How will they experience Mary in their lives? How do they experience Mary as mother in their lives? How does their praying the rosary as a ritual enrich their devotion and relationship with Mary and with each other?

I hope that my project will help clergy and pastoral counselors to understand that the readings of the scriptural texts are a significant influence in the lives and systems of "traditional-religious" Filipino families. I further hope that my contributions to pastoral counseling will have applications to other immigrant groups, for example, Asian Americans and other ethnic groups who also have their own unique expressions of faith.

This project will provide ministers with a sense of understanding of other immigrant faith groups and cultures as they practice their religion outside their native country. I will provide pastoral care guidelines to members of the clergy as they journey with immigrant groups in their community. If one serves in the parish community, I hope that this project will guide the pastor, Rabbi or parish priest in reaching out to "religious" exclusive groups.

I hope that ministers, especially Roman Catholic clergy, will be inspired to include these groups into the wider church community. If this does not happen, I fear that there might be a problem with the formation of cults based on extreme ethnic exclusivity apart from the Catholic Church, as happened with the heretical movement

BNP (Banal Na Pag-aaral: Holy Study). This group deviated from the institution and started to name their own gods and spirits while using some Catholic doctrines to enhance their cultic beliefs. It was deceptive in nature for they were using the name of the Catholic Church for seemingly religious reasons with financial intent. I felt the need of welcome, care, guidance and enlightenment to this particular BNP group. If immigrant families come to a parish, how well can they expect to be integrated into the community and still preserve their own identity and find help with the issues that need to be dealt with within their own families?

Scope and focus:

I will narrow my project to specific Filipino immigrant issues: For example how do imposed cultural and religious transmissions impact their faith experience? My scope will be four families from New York and their children who attend the monthly Block Rosary. The group will also meet on the scheduled Block Rosary dates in October, November and December, 2000. The 16th of December will feature a day-long retreat with activities and artwork and will culminate in the celebration of the Eucharist.

My demonstration project will primarily help clergy and pastoral counselors understand the importance of cultural influences in immigrant family dynamics and origin issues. It will help them to be sensitive to the Asian value of respect for elders and how cultural influences impact their openness to pastoral counseling. It is my hope that the project will help clergy and pastoral counselors understand the difference between

"imposed" and "transmitted" religion and the conflict which imposed religion generates. Transmitted religion for me connotes the attitude that since the faithful were taught traditionally, they need only to take it in without due discernment, prayer and process. Furthermore, I hope the project sheds light on the ways in which the use of religious texts can provide experiential insights into family problems. I will cite Luke's 1: 26-38 (Annunciation) Luke 22:14-23 (The Lord's Supper); and Exodus 14:21-30 (Crossing the Red Sea). Finally, this project will make clergy aware of the danger of extreme occultism and sectarianism to ethnic groups if their cultural values are not properly addressed within the guidance of the Church and other mainstream religions.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS AND CLINICAL PRINCIPLES

A. Religious principles

I believe that, as a facilitator of this group process, the first religious principle is my own religious principle as an ordained member of the Catholic clergy. My theology will be significant to the whole process. Therefore, it is appropriate to start with a description of my own theology and later on share my image of God as each member of the group experienced it through my interaction. Ana-Maria Rizzuto's The Birth of the Living God: A Psychoanalytic Study and James Fowler's Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning will be my guides. God is a very live person and to understand people I must accept that belief is reality to them (Rizzuto, 1979, p. 4).

Theology From Below to the Theology From Above

My theology is a theology from below and not from above. Theology from below means that a person starts with one's own theology from one's own anthropological experience and then makes a correlation with the theology of the faith and doctrine of the Church to which he or she is affiliated into. In this case, Roman Catholic theology will be the backdrop of my experiential journey. Since the group's participation in the Block

Rosary is already fixed by culture and religion, I want our journey together to be one of discovery--specifically to discover God through life experiences and sharing. I believe that the rituals can be taught. But my approach is to respect where the group members come from through these rituals and whatever else they bring to the process that has the potential to reconnect them to their own faith. God is not a God of imposition. For me, God is experienced in every encounter of love that we have with each other. In group process and pastoral counseling and care, there is a pastoral conversation in which God is the Unseen Guest.

We have to think of Christian existence that can guide pastoral care and counseling, but unless this is seen in relation to God, its truly Christian character will not appear. The Church is bound up with belief in divine reality, and so is the role of the pastor. But in our secular age the sense of divinity has become obscure. The ideas of God brought by counselees are more likely to be part of their problem than a contribution to health and growth, and pastoral counselors are often too insecure in their own sense of the divine to bring it into effective and realistic relation to the counseling process. (John Cobb, Jr, p.43)

I believe that each person is an image of God that they bring to the process. I am not God, but for them I function as a representative of God. How I relate to them is reflective of how they view God in their lives. I assume that group members participate in their Catholic faith filled with rich traditions. Will they experience God through these traditions, as they start talking about it through the group process and in pastoral counseling? My presence with them is already pastoral care, as the one who listens to them and their problems. God for me is the one who cares and shows compassion treating each one as a reflection of God's image and likeness. We are all children of one Creator. We are all creatures, yearning to live a meaningful faith through religion.

God through all eternity has loved us, as witnessed through the people of Israel who were liberated from their slavery and darkness. Through the centuries, the law and the covenant with the people of Israel were manifestations of God's love for the community. God became the center of the community's life and faith. The prophets were leaders and guides to the observance of the law and the covenant of love.

God loved us so much that God incarnated through the person of Christ and became like us in all things except sin. My belief is grounded, too, in the Catechism of the Catholic Church in America. Christ became the light for the community of faith. Christ's teachings echoed the commitment to the love shared in the covenant. Jesus Christ entered the paschal mystery of suffering, crucifixion and resurrection so that he might accompany us as we undergo this same process of struggle from darkness into life. For Christians, Christ opened the gift of eternal life and the hope of a transformed community. Thus the paschal mystery serves as a moment of grappling and struggle to find a renewed identity in community with others not only in this life but also in heaven.

Church as a Christian Community

The new communities of love as lived by the early Christians were housed in institutions in which religion found its meaning and expression. They renewed their rituals according to their own culture and tradition. New laws were formed which the new members were invited to observe. These were not meant to be imposed but to serve as a guide for the community on how to live the spirit of love. The early Christians

grouped together to share this newfound faith with and in each other. They grew as a community through their lived faith experiences which were later encapsulated by the Church. Thus, the Church was founded on this initial love of God as expressed through the community's care for all its members. They had learned to listen to each other. They elected leaders to be their spiritual guides and facilitators of the flow of God's love into and through their groups and communities. Faith spread from Jerusalem to all the ends of the earth. The challenge of the modern Christian is to retrieve the spiritual essence of the early community and sense of Church, not as a hierarchy but as a vibrant community of faith. Hence the Church is a Christian community.

It is worth noting that the mystery of the incarnation happened through an ethnic community of Jews. Christ continues to be experienced in a special way in all ethnic religious groups. Yet, what was noteworthy about the Christian groups that evolved was the mix of ethnicities bound together in faith: one God, one creed, and one faith. We must make all feel welcome, as Paul stresses in his teachings on dietary laws and customs that might separate us. All have to be accommodated. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in their midst." (Matthew 18:20)(Gospel of Matthew, NAB)

Mariology

Jesus was a Jew and lived as a Jew. Christ was born to Mary, who cared for him in Bethlehem, Egypt, Jerusalem and Nazareth. Christ was the stepson of a carpenter,

Joseph. He grew up in a family. The dynamics of the holy family influenced him in his future ministry and life. His closeness to his Mother Mary began in the womb and continued even after his ascension into heaven. Through this privileged dynamic she surrendered into faith: into life and death. Mary's Fiat (Yes) was amazing. When she responded, "Yes, be it done unto me according to your word" it was only the first of many "yes-es" to follow.

Mary has a special place in the history of salvation. She is not to be adored, since she is not God, and adoration and worship is reserved for God alone; otherwise, idolatry happens. She has a venerable place as the Mother of God, and the correct stance toward her is veneration. So the devotions, novenas, and the rosary are expressions of this admiration to her example of humility, simplicity, courage, and commitment to live God's will. She is the closest person in the life of her son, Jesus. Praying the rosary entails a cycle of meditations intended to penetrate the joyful, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries represented by specific events in the life of Jesus.

The Block Rosary is meant to remind us of the role of Mary, through whose example and intercession we become closer to her son Jesus. Her son entrusted his own mother to us as we hear in Jesus' words to John at the foot of the cross: "Son, behold your mother." He then turned to Mary, saying, "Woman, behold your son." This means that, John as one of the twelve apostles, became the representative of the new Christian community called the Church. Since the Son of God entrusted Mary to the Church, Mary in turn became the Mother of the Church. In this context, small Christian communities

such as the Block Rosary are meant to venerate the Mother of the Church who in turn leads the group closer to God.

God was born into a community. It was a moment of rejoicing, for the love of God has visited God's people. God's expression of love comes through an ethnic group who grapples with its sense of identity as the image and likeness of God. My project is not theoretical; it is a re-living of the Incarnation of God through the Filipino-American community in the context of family. It is through the family, the basic unit of the community, that God is born and dwells among them. It is in the process of God's re-birth that the group process is conceived. It is through the sharing of life experiences—both familial and societal—that renewed faith surfaces.

Below are my assumptions and religious principles which will figure into the transference dynamics of the group process:

Image of God

I believe that these religious principles become clearer through a description of who God is for me. This will be my transference to the group as I work with them in the future. Through much reflection and struggle in my personal and spiritual life, I became aware of the image of who God is for me at the present moment. I believe that sharing this image, as the background to who I am in my relationship to the group, is essential to my care for them.

My personal image of God is that of a caregiver. This image is the result of a series of previous transformations: from king to father to good shepherd. I entered the seminary when I was eleven. I have been a priest for the past 13 years. I noticed how the image changed throughout my ministerial life. It was a constant spiritual struggle. However, what remains consistent is the underlying concept of a loving and merciful God.

God for me is care and compassion. God becomes alive in my loving encounter with my patients and parishioners. If there is love in the encounter, God is there. A caregiver is one who provides care to those in need, no matter who they are or what situation they are in. A caregiver's love is not exclusive but inclusive. God chooses no structure or institution in which God can be encapsulated in one's own idea or ideology. We discover our way of relating to God as a community. It was in this way that established religion came into being. I have developed my own expression with God through the aid of my faith tradition and the ministry to which I am called. It is being true to the essence of God and a breakthrough into the heart of dogmatic teachings. An image of God has to be real and true to my own search of self and life experiences. The search for my own personal metaphor for God has led me to shift from being religious to being spiritual. There are other varied images that one can come up with for relationship with God. These images point to the essence of God, also.

God has become alive in me as I minister to my patients, clients and parishioners. I believe that this image of God has a free-flow effect because God's presence is felt more in my prayer life. I commune regularly with the God of compassion. My regular spiritual direction enhances this spirituality as I live the image of a Caregiver God in me.

This image does not preclude my image of God as King, Father and Good Shepherd. I do not fear the abandonment of the Catholic tradition, but rather view it as an incorporation of what has been integrated in a new way. God has always been there and God is always there behind those images. In fact, the Caregiver God encompasses a just King, a nurturing Father, and a caring Good Shepherd. God's nature will always be the same. It is the expression of the image of God that changes. For me God's love is eternal. The God of the scriptures enhances all the more my personal relationship with God the Caregiver. God is the third person in every pastoral encounter in my ministry.

I encounter God through my care, counseling and compassion expressed in the loving encounter. I pray to the God who cares. Hence, this Caregiver God loves with an unconditional compassion, forgiving and all-encompassing. God for me never makes conditions. "I have loved you with an everlasting love"(Jeremiah). God is the Good Shepherd who never leaves his flock untended.

The closest person to this image is Jesus who in my tradition is the Son of God who became one with us, caring for the sick, dying, oppressed, marginalized and sinners. Jesus had a big heart, inclusive and compassionate to everyone. He also was the good

shepherd. In my relationship with an incarnate God, Jesus' love needs to be incarnated, too, in my ministry with others.

An embracing Caregiver God is more inclusive than exclusive because there is no exclusion because of ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender or other differences. I love the caregiver image because I find it liberating to be an instrument of a caring God while working with the sick and dying in the hospice and the hospital. A caregiver metaphor brings to the journey of life a peaceful transition at its end. I believe that God, the caregiver, will be present to protect and guide those who encounter God along the way.

It has been a long journey to own this image of God in my life. Being raised in a traditional religious institution like the Catholic Church with all its dogmas and teachings, I eased into other images that were imposed on me through years of theology. I have moved beyond these. My images of God will continue changing; but an image of God as a caregiver, nevertheless, will clearly be present in all those teachings and patriarchal images (I also need to be sensitive to my own feminine image and language for God). I have grown to love God in my prayers. I need to be connected to this caregiver image. I desire to be nourished more as a model of the Caregiver. I need to mirror back this image of God in my life so that I will be more caring to all people, irrespective of religion and background. I believe that to be a caregiver is to be deeply spiritual: to be in the likeness of God; that is, to be dependent on the God that transcends

us to fill us with God's self. I am truly called to be an image and likeness of God. I am a child of God when I care unconditionally. Where love and compassion abound, God is.

Trinity, Christology and The Eucharist

In my Catholic tradition, I believe that there is only one God (GodHead), but different images of God as perceived in relationship. What theologian Karl Rahner believed is that the concept of "immanent" Trinity in my tradition is not comprehensible; it is only because of the "economic" Trinity that we are able to name or even experience the image of the incomprehensible God. There are many ways to be in relationship with God. For me, the Caregiver image encompasses the Trinity, too, not in the immanent Trinity but through the economic Trinity. This makes me more open to images of God held by other religious traditions.

The theology of the Trinity has its origins in an understanding of the sacramental economy. Sacraments are powers that come forth from the Body of Christ, which is ever living and life giving. They are actions of the Holy Spirit at work in His Body, the Church. Furthermore, they are the masterworks of God in the new and everlasting covenant.

In my tradition, there are seven sacraments. First are the initiation sacraments as conferred at Baptism and Confirmation. Then come the supporting sacraments through the Eucharist and Penance. As the Catholic makes choices, the sacraments of Marriage

and Holy Orders are offered. At the end of life, Anointing of the Sick is given to prepare the faithful for the reception of the Beatific Vision in the Triune God. Eucharist is the summit towards which all our actions are focused and from which they draw their strength. The Eucharist occupies a unique place as the "Sacrament of sacraments": all the other sacraments are ordered to it as to their end." (St. Thomas Aquinas Sth III, 65,3 as quoted by Catechism, p.311)

Jesus is the fulfillment of the love of the father to the Church. In my Catholic tradition the New Testament is the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Messiah. Christmas celebrates the incarnation of God the Father's love to humanity: The enfleshed God in Christ who became the savior of the world. In Him, through him, and with Him (doxology in the Eucharist) the Catholic Christians are saved. "Seated at the right hand of the Father" and pouring out the Holy Spirit on his Body which is the Church, Christ now acts through the sacraments he instituted to communicate his grace. (Catechism, p282) The sacraments are perceptible signs (words and actions accessible to our human nature). By the action of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit they make present efficaciously that which they signify.

Coming from a traditional notion of God as King and Father, my assumption is that the Filipinos have high respect for this King who at the end of time will separate the goats from the sheep. At judgment time, the God-King will punish the sinners and reward the good. I believe that the four hundred years of Spanish Catholic influence and colonialism are deeply seated in the consciousness of Filipinos.

The pre-dominance of pre-Vatican II theology and the rightist stand of the Catechism of the Catholic Church for the United States of America and the Code of Canon Law (1983) only reinforced these tendencies. Later I will also refer to the Daily Roman Missal, pointing out the patriarchal language about God as King. Elizabeth Johnson's She Who Is (1998) will be helpful in understanding the inclusive language of the liturgy and the exploration of the mystery of God in the feminist theological discourse. The Trinity is the focus of feminist theologian Elizabeth Johnson's theology. Her point is that the Church in its patriarchal approach and language about the Trinity, has failed to include women's experience in the liturgy. I admit that the Church has a long way to go regarding the patriarchal language it has upheld for centuries which the Church has upheld through the centuries. Understanding this background in the liturgical celebrations on a case to case basis I officiate, could be a plus in an enlightened presentation of the Trinity. With this background, though not inclusive, I present the following notes: Elizabeth Johnson said that in such a situation the burden of proof lies with the position that holds that exclusive and literal language about God as father, king and so forth does in fact help to realize women's flourishing. (Johnson, p.40) Pragmatically, the proof is not forthcoming. (p.40)

Scriptural Foundation

I believe that using the scriptures in this group process will evoke a mystical apprehension of God as alive to the community. "To quote scripture is to declare the

silence of God" (Carse, 1985, p. 23). Integrating the scriptural texts into my project means becoming aware of God's presence. God has always been with us; we just need to grasp God's moment as God works through the group. Vivienne Joyce (2000), in her article "Religion and Dynamics" in the book Guide to Pastoral Counseling and Care describes this dynamic:

When someone listens to you with genuine openness, you find a voice to say what you would never have been able to say before and did not know you could have said. God's silence does not mean that God is absent, but rather present in a way that provokes us to find our own voice. Scripture, like a good listener, repeatedly brings us as interpreters of the text to the possibility of speaking from our hearts. The impossibility of arriving at a definitive interpretation for all time is part of what constitutes Scripture as Scripture. (p.59)

It is in this context that I plan to use three texts from the Bible as my guide to the group process. I believe that sharing the texts will incarnate what is meaningful in each person as they encounter God in the other. Turning to God includes and expresses turning to the other, our neighbor. "Authentic religious identity includes openness to learning about yourself and your own religious beliefs from others" (Joyce, p.52).

1. The Annunciation (Lk1: 26-38): Mariology

Reflecting on the Annunciation (Lk1: 26-38) sheds light upon God's Incarnation and points to an ontological God versus the God of Hellenistic philosophy. Mary has a strong role in the Catholic tradition of making the history of salvation happen. It is interesting to note that the Annunciation accounts while they appear to be readings about Mary, are even more readings about the mystery of the Incarnation. Mary seemingly is the center of this gospel periscope, but it is really Jesus for whom the reading paves the

way. Mary's example of receding into the background later on in Jesus' life is a great expression of the fact that the Catholic devotion to Mary does not stop in Mary but leads to Jesus.

In fact, the gospels are all about Jesus. Mary is visibly present in the Infancy narratives, public ministry of Jesus, crucifixion, resurrection and Pentecost (the founding of the Church when the Holy Spirit was poured forth upon the early Christians). Her presence was a powerful symbol of her constant inspiration and support, not only to her son, but also to the early Church.

2. The Lord's Supper (Lk.22:14-23) : Christology

Since the Eucharist is the center of every Catholic life, the reading of the Lord's Supper will help expound its value as both a meal and a sacrifice celebrated by Jesus and the first community of disciples. The incarnated God in Jesus was the one who cared for his disciples up to the very end. The Lord's Supper is the moment in which Jesus chose to perpetuate God's love as a meal through the celebration of the Eucharist. The symbol of mealtime implies sharing. It is around the table of the Lord that faith is shared, nourished and developed. It is through the sharing that each one brings the symbol of himself or herself. It is not only the bread and wine that are being offered, but also those who bring the offerings. The compassionate heart of Jesus was, is and always will be present for God's people.

The word Eucharist comes from *E charis toi*, which is the Greek eucharistoi: to give thanks or I thank you. Therefore, the first Saturday after November 27, 2000, (Thanksgiving Day) will be devoted to the group's experience of the Eucharist as the center of their Catholic life and action. Our Reflective Reading will be the Lord's Supper (Lk22: 14-23). The Eucharist is a meal and a remembrance celebrated as a community. Every Sunday is always a Church day for them. First Saturday would not be complete without the Eucharist. The whole community prepares for it through singing and adoration. After the mass a meal follows (I observed that after the "misa" (Eucharistic liturgy) comes the "mesa" (table for eating and the partying). Again, before the novena and the mass, I will invite them to share their insights about the Eucharist as experienced in the Last Supper two thousand years ago and as they have experienced it in Saturday masses: How, for example, does this tradition help you personally? How does it help you discover your inner self as parent or as child? There are two important parts of the mass: the liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. What is the most important part of the mass for you as you experienced it? You start and end the mass with the sign of the cross: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. There is one God in three Divine persons. How does this doctrine affect your interaction with one another in your family relationships? How is intimacy and communication expressed in your family?

The rule of Eucharistic fasting means that no food should be eaten an hour before the reception of the Eucharist. I saw this rule broken many times. I sensed that some were strict about it while others did not really care. I observed that, at times, this was the

result of a misunderstanding between the parents and the children, who do not understand why we have to fast before reception of the sacrament of the Eucharist.

What has been the possible effect of such policy in the Catholic Church to Christian communities? I understand that it has created a deep sense of fear of God, who will punish those who do not purify themselves before receiving communion. Eucharistic fasting requires that God in the Eucharist has priority over anything else that will be received.

3. Crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14: 21-30): Community

I find this text helpful in identifying the faith of immigrant people. Moses led the Israelites to the Promised Land, but not without difficulty and challenges from the Egyptians. I believe that crossing the Red Sea was a crucial point in their development as a people. They were freed from the slavery of the enemies but also from impoverished lives. The enemies became themselves. If there is a liberation from there must also be a liberation to. The question was where was this liberation leading them? This was the problem they had to grapple with both as a people and as individuals. The anxieties of the new land made the Israelites discover their identity as a people.

As an immigrant community, the Israelites struggled through hunger, cultural adjustments, and even death. They may have found their cultural identity, but they had not yet found their religious identity. They were ready to move on only when they

answered the question of who God was for them in their new lives. Once they had answered this question, they were ready to move on. The Sinai experience would put a stamp on their identity, as the covenant was unfolded through the observance of the Decalogue. The Ten Commandments had become the basis of being in relationship with God. This loving relationship was so essential for them that their newfound religion became intimately connected with their self-identification as the chosen people of God.

The memories of their former land reminded the chosen people also of loss. There were trials and pains in the desert and some of them wanted to go back, to hold on to what they were accustomed to, despite their newfound freedom. When they experienced difficulties of adjustment in the desert, they complained to Moses, their leader, about why God had brought them out of the Land of Egypt. In their discontent their recourse was to worship false gods in order to forget or even deny their loneliness away from their former land. They forgot the protection of the God who had saved them. Moses was chosen to be the leader of this people. He became the instrument of God's communication, reminding them that God had delivered them out of the Land of Egypt. Moses became the facilitator of a community that wanted to discover its own spiritual identity. There were conflicts at first, but in the end they were able to settle their disputes. Then it was time once again to move on to another phase of life. Though Moses did not enter the Promised Land, he led them through the necessary process that brought them there.

In my demonstration project, I will be leading my group to discover their own unique faith in God, in themselves, and in each other. Though they have left their native Philippines, they either long to go home or to forget completely where they came from. The process of integration at this juncture is of the essence. It does not matter if I, as their spiritual leader and facilitator, see the transformation. At least I will be present during the process. I will begin with popular religiosity as a starting point and move towards a sense of an empowered spirituality that is truly their own. I will not attempt to abolish popular religiosity, but I will invite them to re-invent their approach to popular religiosity.

These theological and scriptural principles will be looked upon as they dynamically relate to the individuals and families of the Filipino immigrants with whom I will be working.

A. Clinical Principles

I will treat the group as a living human document of learning and growth. I believe that the group has a life of its own. We will go where the spirit leads us. During the process, I will use clinical principles that help the group grow and will view my ministry in a psychological light. I believe this type of ministry is reinvented in a new and relevant approach of service to members of the group. There will be an interface of religion and psychology as I move on with the demonstration project. I will use Irvin Yalom's book The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy.

Family Systems theory as advanced by Bowen (1990) emphasizes the family as an emotional unit or network of interlocking relationships best understood from an historical or transgenerational perspective. Hence, each member of the family, in this case families, in the group will experience differentiation. I will look at the group as one family. Mary Bowen (1990), a pioneer in the field of family therapy, saw differentiation as the capacity to define one's goals, ideas, and values in relation to the surrounding environment. According to Douglas Clark (2000) in his article: "Working with Groups, Families, and Couples: Clergy as Systems Analysts" in the book Guide to Pastoral Counseling and Care, "one measure of the health of the system, be it congregation, family, or a marriage, is the degree to which the differentiation of its members is fostered" (p.256).

I will be guided by the family systems theory in my concern for understanding the relationship of the whole to its interacting parts and the interaction of both with the larger environment. Family systems theory is concerned with how systems regulate themselves so that homeostasis is preserved. Homeostasis is the automatic tendency of a system to maintain balance or equilibrium. I will use systems theory and its insistence on understanding people in the context of the environment in which they live, rather than solely on personal terms. Families are living, ongoing entities, organized wholes with members in a continuous, interactive, patterned relationship with one another extending over time and space. A change in any one component inevitably is associated with changes in other components to which it is in relation. It is in this most primary sense

that a family is a system. A family represents one system, in which the member components are organized into a group, forming a whole that transcends the sum of its separate parts.

Two types of systems exist. Closed systems are ones that are isolated from their environment. Once the system is created, there is no inflow of material from the outside, nor is there any outflow of the matter from the inside. Open systems are fundamentally different from closed ones because they welcome and support an active exchange with the environment. While all open systems begin with a finite set of the parts, their potential for development extends beyond those original parts because new information can be integrated from the outside and unneeded matter can be eliminated from the inside (Clark, 2000, p. 250). This allows open systems to evolve to higher levels of functioning beyond their religious identity.

For the purpose of my demonstration project, I chose the open system so that members can freely share whatever influences flow from inside out and from outside in, thereby facilitating a freeflow exchange of growth pertinent to Filipino-Americans adjusting to and living in the US. I can see two aspects of systems behavior hard at work in my group process. First, there is the homeostatic instinct, which is seeking on behalf of the system to keep the new discoveries, struggles of adjustment, and difficulties with popular religiosity in balance. Second is the importance of the intergenerational aspect of the Block Rosary Group's life, in which the struggle of living an inherited culture and religion (popular religiosity) affect how they live in the present and inhibit progress.

Furthermore, I will explore the intergenerational dimensions of the systems as brought to me by families and individuals.

I will also use the psychodynamic principles but will focus more on object relations theory as it relates to systems theory. Moreover, I will be sensitive to the personal dynamics working within members of the group and separate out their ego strengths from their cultural influences. The powerful influence of the superego in the Filipino culture and religion is worth noting. Guide to Pastoral Counseling and Care, edited by Gary Ahlskog, will be a valuable tool in viewing the group through the psychodynamic lens. I believe that what may be personal may not necessarily be cultural and vice versa. I will use psychodynamic principles with areas that appear to be culturally entwined. I will encourage my Filipino-American group members to identify their strengths and their weaknesses--of the individual, the family, the community and the culture.

Another clinical principle I will use in the demonstration project is **object relations theory**. Object relations theory suggests that the basic human motive is the search for satisfying object relationships, and that parent-child patterns, especially if frustrating or unfulfilling, are internalized as introjects and imposed on current family relationships. This continues the psychological development and contributes its own instrument to explore the inner world. Inside Out and Outside In: Psychodynamic Clinical Theory and Practice in Contemporary Multicultural Contexts, edited by Flanagan

et al, described the theory according to the focus. The focus of object reactions theory is not on the forces of libido and aggression or on the adaptive functions of the ego (Flanagan, 1996, 127). Rather it is on the complex relationship of self to other. Melanie Klein (1952) summarized the core tenet of this theory: "There is no instinctual urge, no anxiety situation, no mental process which does not involve objects, external or internal; in other words, object relations are at the center of emotional life." (as cited in Flanagan, p.53)

The first and most basic tenet of object relations theory is that of the primary, absolute need of human beings for attachment. The second central concept is that the child's inner world is shaped by internal representations of others. The third important concept is that human beings need to be both alone and with others, and that the struggle to balance and meet these seemingly contradictory needs lasts throughout the life cycle. Fourth, object relations theory looks at why we need others, how we take them in, and how we relate to them internally. It looks at the influences of loss on the development of selfhood. It looks at the influences of relationships of the internal world. Being very much a theory about psychological processes, object relations theory pays particular attention to the earliest experiences and defenses--those that have to do with trying to distinguish between the self and the other, between what is inside and what is outside, and eventually with accepting and integrating both the good and the bad parts of the self and others (Flanagan, pp. 168-169).

These principles will also guide the dynamics of the counseling and interactions I have with the members of the group. It will be the basis of how I treat the community and how they relate to one another. The separation-individuation concept that Mahler espoused will be taken into consideration with regard to the conflicts and struggles that parents have with their American-born children. As a whole, the Freudian drive theory will be considered as a part of the dynamics to integration and growth. It will be taken into consideration, but the emphasis will be on object relations theory. Furthermore, I will use The Psychiatric Interview by MacKinnon and Michels for my pastoral counseling stance with the group members who avail themselves of it. I will use my Clinical Pastoral Education skills as we go through the group dynamics based on Gerald Niklas' The Making of the Pastoral Person (1996). Furthermore, Louis Ormont's Group Therapy Experience (1992) alongside Irvin Yalom's Theory and Practice of Psychotherapy will be a big help in conducting the group dynamics among parents and their children. I will also use Oster and Gold's Using Drawings in Assessment and Therapy: A Guide for Mental Health Professionals (1987).

I will also use the clinical principle theory of individuation, espoused by the Swiss psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung. Individuation refers to the integration of the unconscious into the conscious self. This principle is actually inclusive in all of the above clinical principles and psychodynamic dimensions of my project. Between the two stages of the Self, as the source, its beginning and its ultimate destination, there is the process which Jung called individuation. Individuation is the development and extension of the sphere of consciousness by becoming conscious of and harmonizing conscious and unconscious

contents of the psyche. Carl Jung in his book, Psychology and Western Religion, said: "The mystery of the Eucharist transforms the soul of the empirical man, who is only a part of himself, into his totality, symbolically expressed by Christ. In this sense, we can speak of the Mass as the rite of the individuation process." (Jung, 1984, p.169)

This transformation of personality is an interaction between ego and the unconscious (for initially we take ego to be the Self), out of which a new unified being emerges. We have to be open for the unconscious to become conscious. This new being is not entirely new, because it was always there, only now it is conscious: consciousness will be expanded, diminishing the sovereign powers of the unconscious. "An inner voice tells you that there is much more to your life and yourself than you are capable of experiencing at the present time." (Susan Thesenga, The Undefended Self, p.1)

The mandala, the mystic circle, is a significant symbol in Tibetan Buddhism. Carl Jung associated the mandala with the Self. In the book, Jung's Psychology and Tibetan Buddhism: Western and Eastern Paths to the Heart, by Radmila Moacanin (1986), Jung suggested that the mandala is an archetype of psychic integration and wholeness and appears as a natural attempt of self-healing. Mandala will be the operative process as we consistently meet in a circle. The process of integration will hopefully happen at the end of the project. I hope that, through the process, there will be a movement of the group to a sacred circle, a sacred moment and a sacred space.

I anticipate that the group process will begin with the unconscious sharing of ego strengths and weaknesses. As group members share themselves, they will bring out the unconscious longing to belong and relate to each other. The moment they are challenged, they will regress to their old coping mechanisms and bring out their defenses. As this happens, they will bring their true selves to consciousness. This process will also happen, not only to the individual ego but also to the ego consciousness of the whole group.

The analysis, evaluation and assessment in Chapter Four will look at the applications of these principles as the different members of the group relate to each other and myself.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

A. The Approach and Procedure

I will approach this demonstration project by asking for nine volunteers from the Filipino Block Rosary Group which is comprised of 14 families in the tri-state area. I will be as diverse as possible regarding the voluntary representation of the group. I will meet them for eight weeks. Overall, there will be eight consecutive group processes. We will meet every Saturday at 5PM at Cabrini Medical Center. Time duration for every encounter will be an hour-and-a-half. I will be supervised by my mentor/group therapist, Jean Aniebona CSW, CEAP from Postgraduate Center For Mental Health, during the week after the group experience. Regular consultation with my HUC-JIR Mentor, Dr. Eugene Borowitz, will be held regarding the development of my theology and spirituality.

The first two Saturdays will deal with the first goal: the role of popular religiosity and its effects on members of the families. The third and fourth Saturdays will be devoted to the second goal: the strengths and weaknesses of popular religiosity and how they affect work life and lifestyle in America. The fifth and sixth Saturdays will deal with the influence of popular religiosity in coping with losses. The seventh Saturday will summarize the insights of the group process regarding their spirituality in the light of

object relations, family systems and individuation theories. The eighth and last Saturday will be Retreat Day, December 16, 2000. I will prepare specific questions for each meeting regarding the three themes to be presented.

I will meet the support group for two months every Saturday from 5:00-6:30PM at Cabrini Medical Center. I will continue to meet with them on a pastoral-care level at the Block Rosary on the First Saturday of the months of November and December. These two meetings will not be included as part of the group process. For the past seven years, I was only asked to celebrate the mass and left after the devotional prayers and rosaries. I will continue to facilitate this but with a deeper insight into the religious meaning of what they do. Over the past seven years, I never had a chance to process their experience of the Eucharist with them. The experiential Eucharistic celebration planned for the retreat day will be the first time they have the opportunity to be co-homilists. It will be done in the context of what they have experienced in the group process.

I will devote eight Saturdays (October 17, October 28, November 4, November 11, November 18, December 2, December 9 and December 16) as their facilitator and spiritual leader. The last meeting will be the whole day retreat at the Filipino Pastoral Center in the archdiocese of New York. Through these eight Saturdays, I will facilitate sharing and process on the subject of popular religiosity and the thematic readings. I will invite them to reflect on the reading of the Annunciation (Lk. 1: 26-38) on the first Saturday of October (October 7, 2000). I will invite them to share their own experiences of the Marian devotion and Incarnation. How does the popular religiosity of Block

Rosary help them cope as immigrants in this country? What have they gotten from this devotion and the praying of the rosary? Who is the Blessed Mother to them and their family? Does this devotion strengthen their love and family relationship? How do they as individuals feel about this devotion? If given a choice and, without influence from the elders, would they come to pray the rosary and the devotion of their own will?

B. Methods for Assessing Outcomes

I will use the process focus found in Irvin Yalom's book: The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy. This will be my constant guide throughout the eight sessions. According to Yalom (1995), process focus is the power cell of the group. Group process focus is the one truly unique feature of the experiential group; after all, there are many socially sanctioned activities in which one can express emotions, help others, give and receive advice, confess and discover similarities between oneself and others (p.141). I will strive for the effective use of the here-and-now focus which requires two steps: experience in the here-and-now and the process of illumination. First the group must be plunged into the here and now experience. Second, the group must be helped to understand the process of the here-and-now experience: that is, what the interaction conveys about the nature of the members' relationships to one another. (p.142-143)

I will be with the group in a circle at all times. The circle promotes a sense of place where all are equal in sharing insights and experiences about themselves and their religiosity. The members of the group will become more vocal in their group

participation, sharing more experiences about their own struggles and outlook, insights into the readings, as well as religious experiences as encountered in their families and the Block Rosary group.

I will be sensitive to what is happening in their lives as they speak about their identity and relationships with one another. I believe that they bring their experiences from outside in and inside out. This bringing in is significant in their own cultural and spiritual development. The three themes of popular religiosity as experienced in the different aspects of their lives will be well noted. First is the sharing of the influences of popular religiosity in their relationships among the members of their own families. Second is the exploration of the strengths and weaknesses of their beliefs as they impact their work and social lives. Third will be how the group members deal with their beliefs as they cope with the issue of loss in their lives.

The eight group processes will be evaluated in the end by means of feedback from the group through sharing, activity, artwork and a shared homily based on symbols in the liturgy. I would welcome written feedback of the members if they are willing to do so.

Furthermore, my method of assessing the outcome will be in the form of a whole day retreat on the 16th of December. This retreat will serve as the highlight of the project. It will be a day of processing what has transpired in the eight Saturdays and how that experience might have transformed their lives. The retreat will begin with the last group

process. This will serve as our initial recapitulation of issues that were not resolved throughout the pilot project. What have they learned from the group dynamics?

In the afternoon, we will have an activity called "Commonalities". Members will sit in circle and observe similarities or common objects other members are wearing. Those who have similarities will stand up and look for the empty chair to sit in. The one left behind will stay at the center and then announce another similarity. The object of the game is for them to discover more about themselves regarding their differences and similarities with one another. This will go on for 15 minutes. Then I will ask them to talk about how they have improved their relationships with one another. I will ask them how they individually dealt with their religious and personal concerns first and then how they were affected by the similar or different influences in group.

Following the game I will ask them to share their feedback and concerns about what transpired during the eight Saturdays with the whole group. What will they change and re-invent regarding devotion and relationships as Filipino families living in New York? The shift of concern will be to resolving their own conflicts and misunderstandings, first within their own families and then in their outreach to the bigger community. Their sharing will be incorporated during the celebration of the Eucharist later in the evening.

Next will come the artwork activity. With this project I will ask them to draw what symbolizes their experience of the last two months after I first explain the project to

them: Beyond Popular Religiosity among Filipino American Families through Group Process in Pastoral Counseling and Care. I will give them a chance to share what they have learned. I expect that the encounters, challenges, struggles, laughter and sadness that they experienced will have made an impact on who they are. I believe that there will be movement or even non-movement of the spirit in them. I will determine from their work what they have brought forth and who they are by their sharing. In the analysis of their drawings I will use the Jungian individuation theory through the mandala and other clinical principles I described in Chapter Two. A careful analysis of their drawings will be significant to the assessment that I do at the end of the project. Their drawings will serve as transitional objects in their awareness of themselves. The object of this particular activity is to bring out the inner self that has been transformed through the process.

Next will be the Eucharistic celebration in which we will offer our symbols to the Lord and share their meanings during the homily. These will be the symbols that they have chosen in the morning session and which represent each as an individual. I will invite them to go inside and look at who they are as persons and images and likenesses of God. I believe that, through this activity, we will become aware of who we are through our own symbols and the symbols of others. Our opening to listen and become a part of the sharing of the meanings of symbols will be transformative for each one of us.

As the evening draws to a close, the Eucharistic Celebration will follow. This will be the highlight of the Day as they are sent forth to a renewed outlook of their personal and devotional participation in the Block Rosary Family.

Pastoral care will always be available to them, not only on this day, but also throughout the two-month period. For some this has been true of the whole seven years of my affiliation with the Block Rosary. But my main concern will be my awareness of their concerns and how to give these expression through their popular religiosity. Hence, group dynamics will be essential throughout these meetings.

Throughout the eight Saturdays, I will monitor the relationships of each family as to how they deal with their children's approach to popular religiosity. I will be open and available to whomever comes for pastoral counseling. I will make assessments based on the pastoral counseling sessions conducted. If need be, I will present a clinical case study in order to make an assessment of my pastoral counseling skills. I believe that through the use of a verbatim and evaluations, I will be able to determine how I performed, not only in the group process, but also in the one-on-one or couple's pastoral counseling. I will use the knowledge I have gained, especially from the family systems theory. If there are issues that members would like to bring to me, I will make the necessary appointments for counseling. In the family systems theory, I will be sensitive to family-of-origin issues that the members bring up regarding their children. My approach to them will be enhanced by object relations and individuation theories for further insight and group dynamics.

I will continue to monitor personal and family dynamics over the two-month period by making myself available as requested. The basic unit of the community is the family. Hence, the family unit has value, not only in this group process, but also in individual and couple's counseling. Observance of the interpersonal dynamics is underlined in the analysis.

CHAPTER IV

TRANSFORMATIVE RESULTS

description of Outcomes assessed according to the methods specified in Chapter III,
n B.

Yalom (1995) suggested that a group should meet at least once a week, and
real time allotted should be between one-and-two hours. He also suggested that
group number was seven or eight, with a flexible range of between five and ten

For purposes of this project, I originally invited ten volunteers, comprised of
married couples, a single woman, a grandmother and two grandchildren.

On the first day, one married couple backed out for scheduling reasons. They
apologized for not being able to make it. The group was down to eight. The first two
sessions took place at Cabrini Medical Center. The grandmother and two grandchildren
were unable to make the first two sessions. I proceeded with the group process without
them. They joined us on the third Saturday, this time bringing along another grandchild.
The group welcomed the new family with ambivalent feelings that they might
disrupt the movement of the group process. We were ten members now, including
the following is a brief description of each participant:

Ernie is 54-years-old, born in the Philippines. He came to the US in 1972 and currently works as an automation engineer. When first coming to this country, he worked as a street vendor. In the Philippines, he had an even tougher life, landing in and out of jail several times. He found his strength in the experience of emigrating from his native country and making it here in the US. He married Vangie and had two children, Elaine and Ernest. Both were born in the US. Elaine recently married and has a son. There was a long gap between the first-born and the second-born, with the death of a two-week-old child, Edwin, in between. Ernie's wife Vangie, shared this grief.

Vangie is a 52-year-old woman and is married to Ernie. Born in the Philippines, she came to the US in 1973 and works as a bookkeeper. She has been the mover of the group. She helped me prepare the initial list and gather information that would guarantee the diversity of the group. She had experienced a deep loss when her son died. The baby died because doctors did not discover his illness until it was too late. She was angry at the hospital, but she did not sue. The Block Rosary group was a solace for her and her family. She was active in leadership and prayer. I sensed an unresolved grief.

Perry is 59-year-old engineer, born and raised in the Philippines. He has a Chinese father and a Filipina mother. He immigrated to the US in 1967. Together with his wife Conching, he has three sons. His eldest son Noel, 32-years-old, was born in the Philippines; the two younger sons, Nathaniel (26) and Christopher (22) were born in the US. When Perry was in college, he was an underachiever. He was grateful to the Block Rosary and the Charismatic prayer group for the support he received from them. At first,

he was distant towards the charismatic group, but eventually was able to feel at home with them. He went to the Holy Land and other religious places with his wife. He is proud to have three successful children, two of whom are earning more than he is earning. He was also instrumental in bringing his wife's family to this country.

Conching is 59-years-old and was born in the Philippines. She is married to Perry. She came to the US in 1968 and is now a retired assistant accountant. She was emotional and teary-eyed as she related the story about her life in the Philippines. She lost her mom and her nephew as well as one of her brothers who was murdered. Her sister is currently dying of cancer. With the help of her husband Perry, she brought the family to this country and was able to have family unity here with the other siblings. She was grateful to the group, though she was not expressive of her feelings. She was reserved and cautious in her sharing most of the time. She is a housewife and very concerned about her youngest son who wanted to leave the army after four years. She appeared to be protective of her children.

Ruth is a 37-year-old, single woman and was born in the Philippines. She came to the US in 1991 and works as a graphic artist. Her father passed away recently and her mother lives in the Philippines. She is both soft-spoken and well mannered. She was new to the Block Rosary. She liked being a part of this group. She had previous psycho-spiritual group experiences. She was an underachiever but was grateful for God 's help while she studied. She changed careers from business management, her mother's choice,

to graphic art, her choice. She is independent and is a member of a Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

Lola is a 72- year-old grandmother who was born in the Philippines. She is very religious and loves praying the rosary and the novenas. She loves the Church and has good relationships with priests in the Philippines who helped her cope with the loss of her husband. She came to the US in 1994 and is a retired teacher. Lola has five children and ten grandchildren. Her eldest daughter is the mother of the three grandchildren who participated in the group process. She stayed in the US for a year, along with her husband, to take care of the children. They went back to the Philippines where he died. She decided to return to the US and live with her daughter. She claimed that she was glad to be a good influence on the family because of her religiosity.

Melissa is a 21-year-old woman who was born in the Philippines. She came to the US in 1989. She is currently a senior at Stonybrook College on Long Island. She lived with her family in Brooklyn and moved to Long Island with them. She misses an aunt who lived with them, but slimmed down and suddenly got married. Her aunt left New York afterwards. It was only at the later part of the retreat that she acknowledged this loss together with the death of her grandfather. She was happy to be a help to my project and was grateful for this opportunity. She was active in the praying of the rosary, novena and masses. Melissa regularly attended the monthly Block Rosary.

Katie, Melissa's sister and Lola's second granddaughter, is 14-years-old and a member of the group. Katie started by saying that she did not come to the group process by choice. She was pressured by grandma to join the pilot project. There was a stare from grandma, who was silent. Katie had just graduated from Junior High as the valedictorian. Katie was vocal in her sharing and very conscious about her figure. She exudes a great deal of self-confidence. She prayed the rosary and the novenas and attended the mass because she was told to do so by her grandma and parents. She is the middle child in the family.

Sarah is 12-years-old and was born in the US. She was the youngest of the group. Sarah is in the seventh grade and in the same school as her sister, Katie. She appeared to be reserved, but well spoken. She was respectful in her manner. She prayed the rosary and the novena as influenced by her grandma. She joined the Block Rosary because her family is actively participating in this form of popular religiosity. She developed good bonding with the younger members of the Block Rosary group.

First Saturday Group Process: October 17, 2000

Five came. It was an introductory session in which the members got acquainted. I had concerns about Katie, who I had thought was too young to join the group. I suggested to the members to use "I" rather than "We", so that each could claim his or her sharing. At first, they were not sure of the process. It was new for them to share personal and emotional issues in a group setting. This was the first time they had come together in

a small group to share under my direction as a pastoral counselor. The group requested prayers and blessings from me at the end of the session. I thanked God for the gift of the members who responded to the process, and I prayed for the strength to continue and for God to bless us along the way.

Second Saturday Group Process: October 28, 2000

I tried to stick to my agenda by the reading of Luke 1:26-38(Mary/Annunciation). I asked them to reflect on who Mary was for them and their family. Most looked at Mary as their Mother. Popular religiosity, especially praying the rosary and novenas, helped them appreciate their devotion and faith. They became more aware of the intention of the monthly Block Rosary Group. There was confusion at first about the context of Mary's visitation (Lk. 1: 39-45). I intervened, saying that we needed to stick to the scriptural text so that we could appreciate the basis of the devotions. With regard to the question of the effect of popular religiosity on their daily lives, Perry responded that he prayed for the protection of the family. He claimed that at present his family was doing well because of his prayers, with the exception of his son's engagement to a non-Catholic. His wife reacted by disagreeing with that. Conching seemed distressed. I allowed the interaction to happen. She appeared to be more open than Perry to people of different faiths. Ruth tried to help Perry to be more accepting of non-Catholic people. Perry was adamant and emphasized the importance of the sacrament of Catholic matrimony. I sensed the strong influence of religion, not only in Perry but also in the other members. It was decided on this day that all other meetings would be held at Cabrini Medical Center.

Third Saturday Group Process: November 4, 2000

All members were finally present. There was a warm welcome and an introduction of the new members: Lola, 72, and her three granddaughters: Melissa, 21, Katie, 14, and Sarah, 12. After introductions and a reiteration of the rationale of the project, I connected to them by reminding them of the reading on the Annunciation and what they had shared about Mary as their mother and protector.

I allowed the process to take over, maybe because I felt at ease since everybody was finally present. They were all relaxed. Katie remarked that she didn't come by choice. The stare from her grandmother stopped her from sharing further. The same thing happened to her younger sister Sarah. Lola maintained that she was a good influence on the girls because of her religiosity. Ernie claimed that he was not religious but had become more so because of the influence of his wife. Vangie, Perry, Conching, Ernie and Ruth had all been influenced by a doctor from the Philippines turned evangelizer. Because of his example of faith, they eventually joined the Catholic Charismatic Renewal.

Katie was eager to contribute her observation that the older members of the group seemed to have a good sense of faith. Melissa shared that she prayed the rosary and prayed the novena to the Blessed Mother because of the influence of grandma. Sarah said she prayed but not without experiencing guilt because of her grandma. Lola

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explained that she was influenced by a monsignor and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and wanted to transmit her religious tradition to her grandchildren. There was a sharing of emotions and tears, especially from Melissa, who was happy that her siblings had started to talk about their faith. She was also touched by her evaluation of her own faith. Other members of the group identified with Melissa's struggle of faith and they were moved to tears, too. Katie comforted her sister by saying, "I love my sister".

The group ended with a prayer prepared by Ruth: "Memorare" to the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is a traditional prayer offering to the Blessed Mother. She asked me if she could pray this prayer, since some of the members of the group liked it last week. She provided a small laminated copy for everyone.

Fourth Saturday Group Process: November 11, 2000

The session started with the issue of food. It became a part of their identity as Filipino Americans. There was a significant difference between those born in the US and those born in the Philippines, especially with regard to the preference for eating Filipino food. There was an awareness of discrimination and of being treated unfairly in the US, especially among those who had been born in the Philippines. Some had a difficult start in the US. On the other hand, there was no problem for those who were born in the US, despite the fact they were called "Flip". There was a common appreciation of Filipino identity and culture, but the parents felt they had difficulty transmitting Filipino cultural values to their children, whether or not the children were born in the Philippines or the

US. What apparently was culturally disrespectful for Filipinos was not disrespectful for those born here, especially the practice of calling the elders by their first names. I directed the sharing. I told them that they needed to talk to each other and not to me. They frequently looked at me and were talking in my direction. There was also a discussion about the Filipino sense of shame: "hiya". If a person is called "walang hiya" (without shame), it is derogatory. All still directed their "comments" to me. I asked them again to speak to one another directly and to claim the "I", not the "We". This discussion led to their awareness of their need to help their needy Filipino relatives in the old country. They realized the importance of communication to family dynamics. I allowed the process to unfold and did not stick to my guidelines.

Fifth Saturday Group Process: November 18, 200

The session started with a continuation of the discussion about Filipino identity and values. Calling someone "ate" entailed a lot of responsibility, as the younger members observed. There was an intense discussion on how to show respect by not necessarily sticking to the Filipino values. The American-born children claimed their own autonomy. Melissa, who was born in the Philippines, started to cry again because of the discussion between her siblings. I asked the group to focus on what was happening. The concept of showing respect was also attached to the respect due the Church, saints and God. There was a conflict with Church authority regarding some teachings on cohabitation before marriage. Some had been reprimanded by priests for not sticking to Church policy but did not express anger. I sensed that there was a fear of getting angry

with the Church. They felt the need to submit to its authority. The Church was an arm of authority for them, and they expected me to expound on Catholic teachings. I approached them as they were, without any imposition of my role as a member of the Church hierarchy. The influence of grandmothers was significant to all the members. It was decided in the end that the next session would be at Perry and Conching's house, which happened to be near the Block Rosary venue.

Sixth Saturday Group Process:

I observed that the change of venue led to the absence of three members: Lola, Katie and Sarah. We first started by eating some Filipino food prepared by the host. They said that they made it to please me because it was my favorite food. Reading of the Last Supper: Luke 22:14-23 was conducted in the living room. The group was uncomfortable, at first, because there was a coffee table in front of them. I suggested that we remove the coffee table and form a circle to facilitate the sharing, which indeed resulted in a free flow of sharing.

I connected the food we ate to another mealtime: The Last Supper. For them, the reading referred to the Eucharist. There was a sense of the importance of the Eucharist over the praying of the novenas and the rosary. The reading triggered discussion of Church policy regarding the Eucharistic fast: an hour before the reception of communion. Ernie shared that when he was a child, he experienced hunger before the reception of the Eucharist. He also started to wonder why it was called Last Supper when, in fact, we still

celebrate it in all masses. This triggered awareness among the members of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Popular religiosity would be more meaningful to them if integrated into or followed by the Eucharist. Ernie said he did not see the relationship between the two. Others said they had daily devotion to the mass for which the reading was significant: to be obedient to the command of Jesus: "Do this in remembrance of me"(Lk.22: 19). I shared a description of my own Catholic upbringing which was influenced by my grandma who came to live with us when my father died when I was seven. After my personal sharing, the group freely shared their religious pasts. They shared the influence that their grandmothers and other church institutions, like Catholic schools, had had on the formation of their religiosity. The concept of the Eucharist as sacrifice was explored, too. Out of this a discussion evolved of the Passover meal and its connection to the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ. Some members said that we needed to suffer like Christ in order to achieve Resurrection.

Seventh Saturday Group Process: December 9, 2000

The session started with the group telling three members, who missed last meeting, that they were missed. It was a great feeling for them to feel needed by the rest of the group. The group and I updated them about the group process involving the Last Supper. I then bridged the theme of missing one another caused by the absence of the Pacana family to the issue of loss. How does popular religiosity help us with the process of grief and loss in our lives? There was a reading of Exodus 14:21-30(Crossing of the Red Sea).

I sensed that they understood immediately the meaning of the Israel's flight from slavery. There was not much scriptural discussion. I noted the commonality of our shared loss of a native country followed with a sharing of personal loss and felt suffering. Everyone including Ernie listened emphatically to Vangie's story of the loss of her baby. Vangie in turn responded with care to Ernie's grief over losing a treasured toy when he was a child. Conching's loss of her mother, murdered brother, nephew and the impending loss of her sister who was dying of cancer were noticeably taken in with sensitivity by the members, as if her losses were felt as the group's loss. It appeared that the group became the extended Filipino family and was supportive in their grief. Some shared that they coped with their grief through the praying of the rosary, through attending mass, or by themselves without outside aid. The Block Rosary group became their family. Lola shared that the Catholic Church and the priest were there when she lost her husband. This led her to do charity work with the sick and the dying in the hospital. The family was an important source of strength for them.

Eighth Saturday Group Process: December 16, 2000

I started by summarizing what happened during the group processes. I did the bridging of commonalities and differences between the members of the group, as we had devoted much time to our search for cultural and religious identity (sessions 3-5). Each one affected the other as he or she shared with the group. I acknowledged how they supported each other during the eight weeks. For the Pacana family, it was five weeks.

First was how they, as a family, resorted to popular religiosity for support through the devotions of the Blessed Mother, novenas and the Eucharist. Second was how these devotions affected their lives both inside and outside their families. Third, we continued the topic on loss and popular religiosity. They listened attentively to each other's sharing and responded with comforting words. The group firmly established that they would continue to care for each other when the retreat was over. I believe that sessions 3-5 and 7 might have made that happen. During these meetings, I allowed the process to unfold.

There was a sharing about the meaning of the empty chair, which was accidentally placed in the circle. At first, they wanted to remove the extra chair but some noted it had significance. They said that it represented Jesus, who was with them throughout the two-month period.

Ruth asked my permission to read John 1:1-10 "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." I told her that she did not have to ask my permission to read the Word of God. After reading the Word of God, she placed the Bible on the extra chair. The group members were amused with the gesture and the explanation. The incident was in keeping with the Advent spirit of the theme of Incarnation. I affirmed their belief that God is with us and that the extra chair was for God.

In Retrospect

The complete transcript of the pilot project is located in Appendix A. I noticed that the group responded well to the subject of popular religiosity and of who Mary was for them. They looked at Mary as Mother and expressed how special these devotions were to them, not only here in the US, but also in the Philippines. Ernie was the only one who did not have that experience, because of his upbringing and his need to stress that he did it all by himself. It became evident, too, that the two youngest were not much interested in the rosary and novenas, for they felt that their elders had imposed these devotions on them. The rest prayed the rosary and the novenas, as was their custom.

What was significant about the project was that each group member was able to claim an individual self as well as his or her close cultural and religious bond to the Block Rosary. As an example, when we first read the scriptural texts, interpretations stayed close to the traditional meanings of the text, whereas later, the reflections embraced a more personal experience of the text. Being in a circle, we were able to acknowledge the value of each other's story and sharing. Although there were gospel readings about Annunciation, the Last Supper and the Exodus event, they had their own stories which grew out of their unique spirituality.

They were able to 'translate' the three readings into the context of their own lives: the scriptures became alive and gained in significance, because I made them aware that

these readings were not only the story of Mary, the Last Supper and the Exodus, but also about themselves. Consciously or unconsciously, they understood my choice of readings.

The **retreat** was a moment to assess the outcome of the group process through a commonality activity, work with symbols, a drawing exercise, the Eucharist, and voluntary feedback. In the commonality activity, they were able to realize that, despite their differences, all were Filipino-Americans. They were able to view their uniqueness and differences. In the choice of symbols and in their artwork they showed their vulnerability in allowing themselves to be seen. It was a good way to affirm themselves and their participation in the process, as well as to claim to their cultural and religious identities.

Furthermore, the selection of the symbols as transitional objects signifying themselves gave them a new way of discovering their own identity. Sharing their symbols in the homily in the context of the mass opened for them an experience of mystical oneness with the ritual, which they previously viewed as something not available to them. Traditionally, the priest is the one who presides and gives the homily. I empowered them to be a part of the ultimate Paschal Sacrifice of the Mass. To participate in this sharing in the context of the mass was a privilege for them. It was an integrative process just as the Eucharist is an integrative process that allows them to actualize their own religious identity.

One transformative element of the two-month group process was the drawing activity, which showed what they had learned about themselves and their families. This was the one drawing activity they did. I could have made a more comprehensive therapeutic assessment if a drawing had been done at the beginning and also at the midpoint. But since this happened only at the end, I was not able to assess their popular religiosity except through each member's sharing of a symbol during the retreat day.

Summary of the Outcome:

They became aware of themselves as individuals and as members of the group. This development of their newfound "we-ness" created a safe environment in which to claim their own identity and identify their own desires and needs. They also discovered their individual "I-ness" – the ways they were different from each other despite sharing the same cultural heritage.

During the group process, each one realized the value of listening through dialogue. These dynamics happened between adults and children, between husbands and wives, and between the Filipino-born and American-born. There was a need to claim one's own identity within the context of the group and the family.

The group had a greater awareness of the meaning of the Scriptures within the context of their daily lives. I saw a deepening of their devotion to the Blessed Mother, praying the rosary and the celebration of the Mass. Through the artwork, they regained a

connection with their child-self and rediscovered their playfulness. During the activities they connected with their sense of pride and shame. Pride meant that the group had a sense of being Filipino in the US, thereby deepening the awareness of their identity as Filipino-Americans. What used to be a sense of shame linked to image building was replaced by their understanding that shame meant having to take a personal ownership for their lives over and beyond culture and religion. The pressure of these influences would be lessened with this realization. Re-discovery of the fear of shame could mean freedom from any cultural or religious pressure.

B. Developments not anticipated in my original Proposal that figured prominently into the shape of my execution and final outcomes.

I did not anticipate that it would be significant that three of the members would come to me for individual counseling. Though in its strict sense, according to Aniebona and Yalom, I should have refrained from accepting them for such counseling, I felt counseling would help them with their pressing problems. I thought at first that I was spreading myself too thin, since I was primarily focused on the group as a whole. My fear, as I brought out in supervision, was that what they had shared with me during the counseling session might pollute whatever they shared in the group. My supervisor and I resolved this by claiming that, since this was focused group process with clinical and religious agendas as guidelines, taking individuals for counseling would be justifiable. I realized that the personal and family counseling not only enhanced the group process, but also to the sharing in the group process. I found my individual supervision with Jean

Aniebona very helpful with the pilot project, and especially with the group process. (See Appendix B) Retreat schedule, Commonality Activity and Feedback are also located in the same appendix.

During the two-month period, Perry and Conching approached me for pastoral counseling. I recorded the transcript in two verbatims: The first counseling session is recorded in Appendix C. The second follow-up marriage counseling was in a form of a verbatim and a clinical case study in which I was able to integrate the clinical principles I described in Chapter II. I felt that this was significant to my pilot project, because the presenting problems were of cultural and religious nature. I further used psychodynamic principles, family systems, object relation, and individuation theories as my approaches. This is in Appendix D.

The last verbatim was my counseling session with Ruth, done after the end of the group process. I included this because I felt that her coming to me was her way of resolving her issues of loss and closure after the pilot project was finished. The transcript of the encounter is recorded in Appendix E. These above appendices were included to illustrate my one-on-one pastoral counseling and couple's counseling with members of the group. I was able to identify the issues to be resolved as they approached me with their immediate conflicts and problems.

C. Beyond Popular Religiosity: Transformative Results

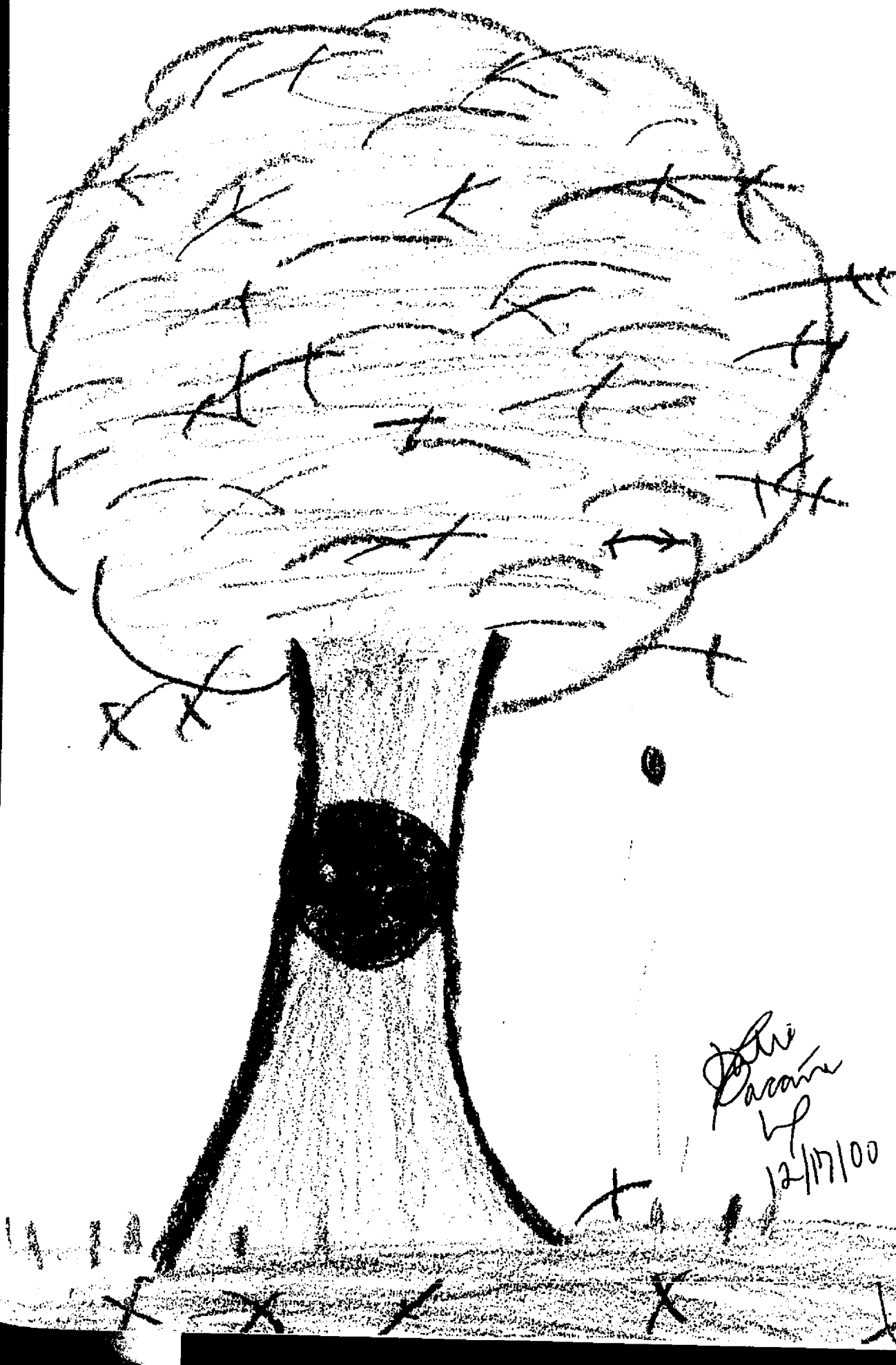
After describing the outcome of my ministry according to the assessment methods specified in Chapter III and presenting the developments of the pastoral counseling sessions that I did not directly anticipate in my original proposal, I will now describe the concrete results of going beyond popular religiosity. I believe that the opportunities for creative self-expression provided on the retreat had transformative elements for group members as they individually discovered meaning through their artwork and the sharing of their self-symbols in the Eucharist.

Artwork

The members were asked to use crayons and paper to illustrate what they had learned during the five to eight weeks. When they were finished, they were invited to share the meaning of their drawings, which follow:

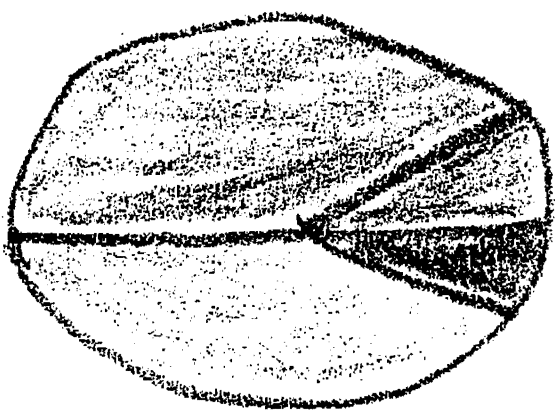
Katie: "A tree with a hole in the middle. When we started the process, we really did not know what we were doing. As we grew, the tree became beautiful and stronger than before. We now have branches that fall off. These represent letting out our feelings. The hole represents the place birds build their nest. The tree has different colors, which represent the diversity and the special qualities of each one of us." (Applause)

Sarah: "Mine is a drawing of Peace and Unity; a circle means forever and a telephone with hello and ring, ring. I drew the symbol of Peace because that is what we wanted to achieve as a group. We treated each other with dignity. Unity means that when we first



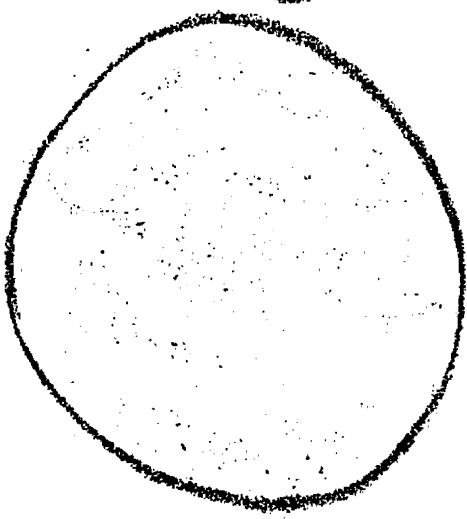
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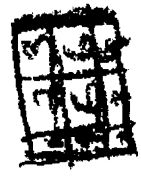
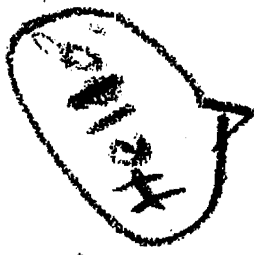


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means
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Sarah Sacana

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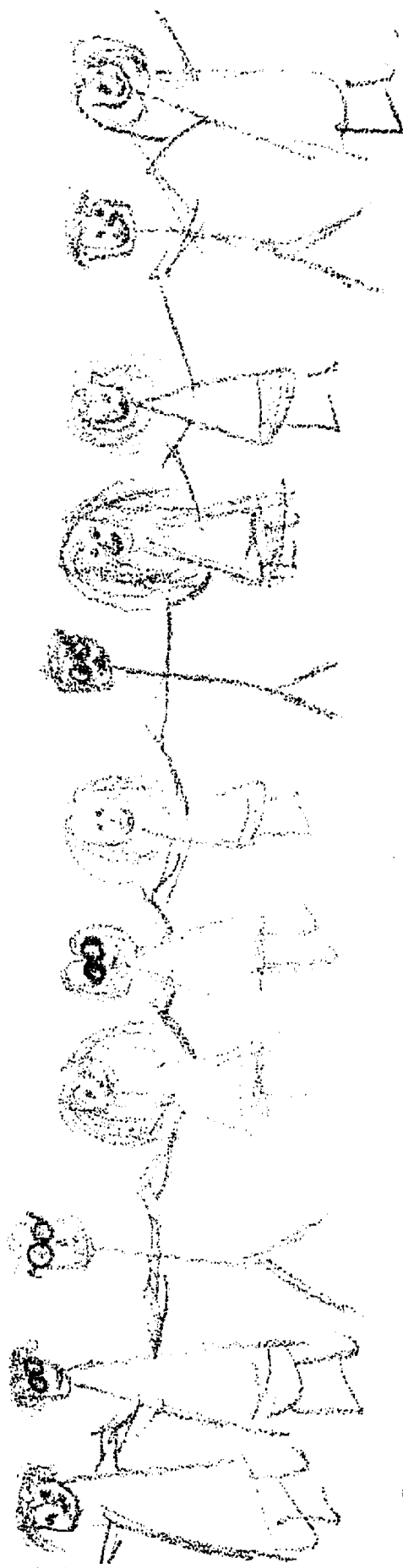
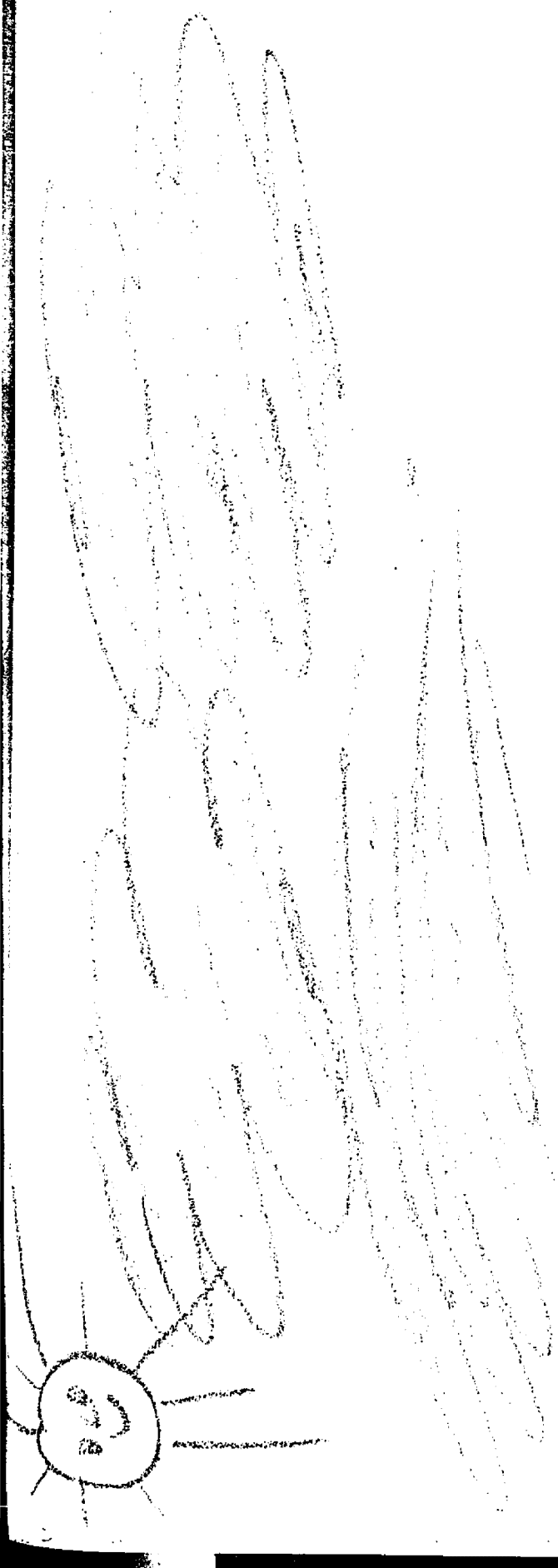
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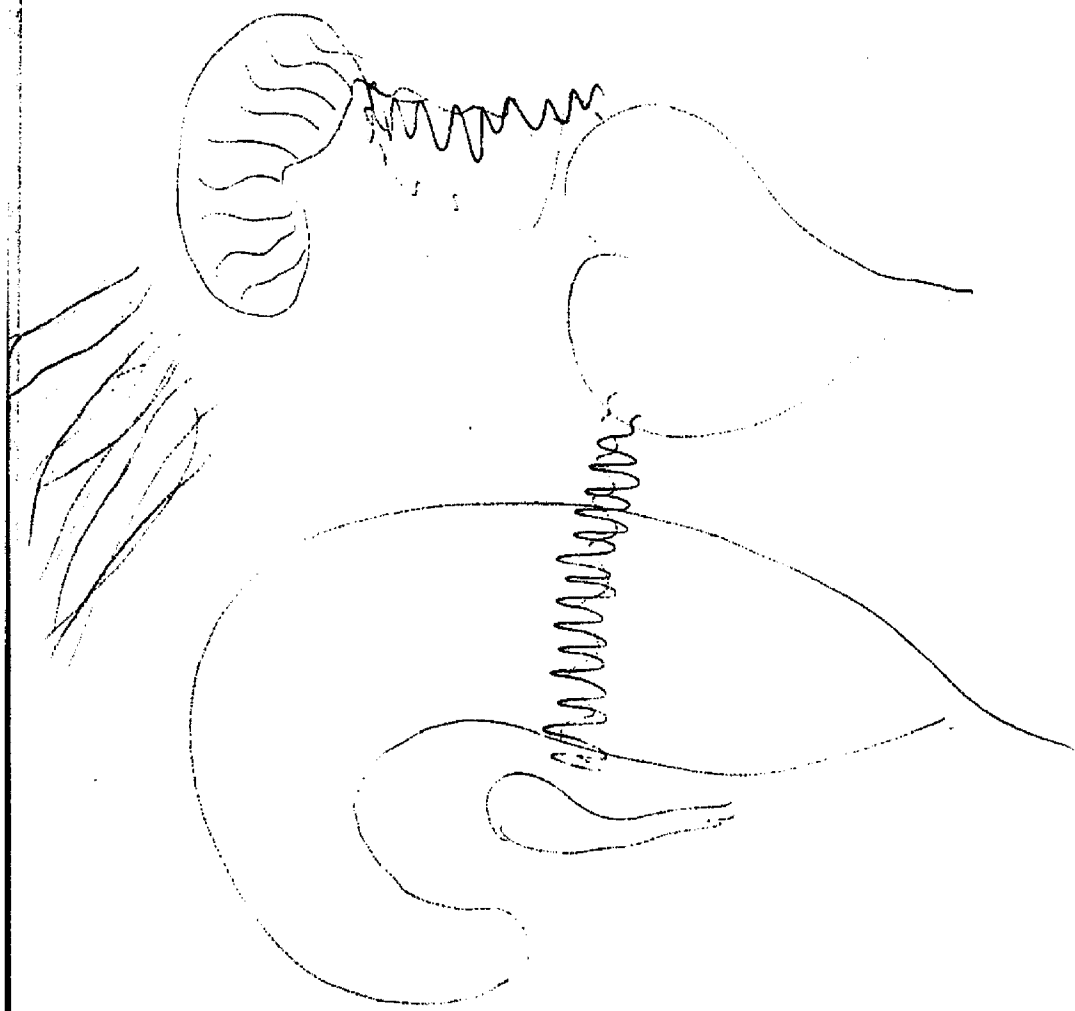
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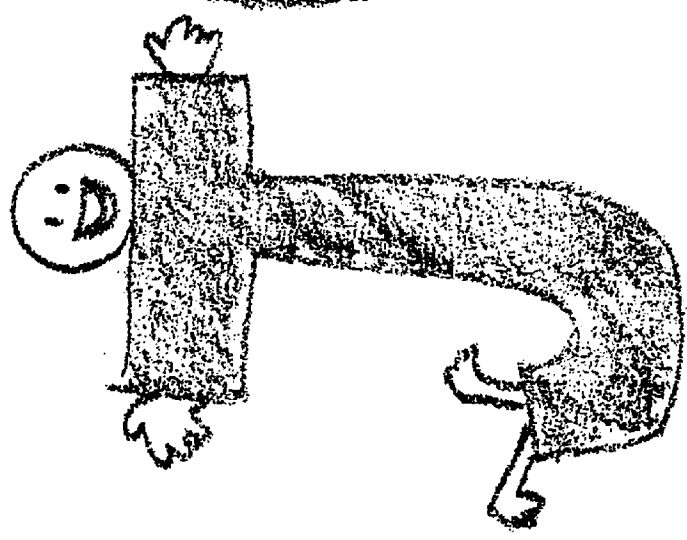
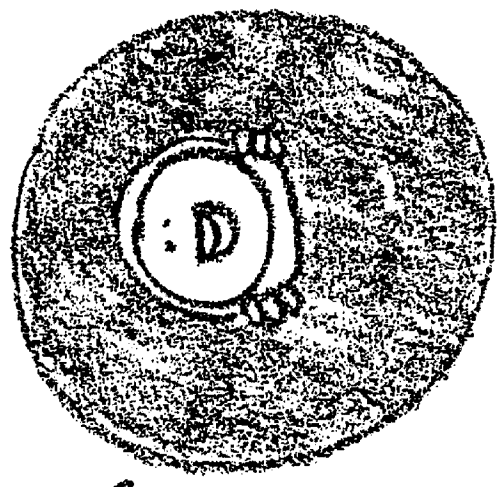
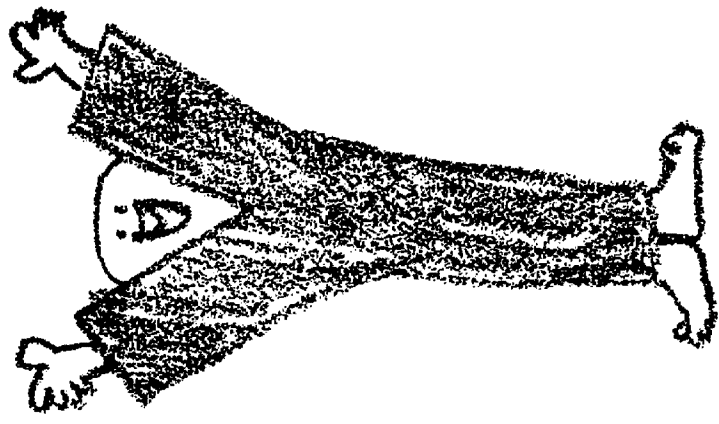




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started we hardly knew each other and now we are one. The circle means forever. We have our bond forever. Hello means listening to each other, as symbolized by the telephone with two rings." (Applause) It had to ring first before we can listen. (Fr. Rafael's comment)

Conching: "A family walking towards the Church symbolizes the saying the family that prays together stays together. They also listen to one another. Flowers symbolize appreciation of nature. The trees symbolize shelter for the Church. The blue sky means happiness and the gray skies mean the areas where we need to listen more." (Applause)

Perry: "I have basically the same thing as my wife. There is a coconut tree, which symbolizes the Philippines. The Filipino family walking towards the Church means the "Family that prays together stays together." The church is where we learn and start to listen. We do not normally pay attention to it in our lives. Regardless of who you are, you come to the priests. The rays that fall upon the Church and the family symbolize grace from God. Regarding parenting, kids get guidance from their parents. Parents get angry at times, not because they do not have charity. It is their way of loving their children so much that they want them to grow up nicely. They receive guidance also from the Church. We learn a lot from the Church. There is love from both the parents and the Church. Regardless of who you are, you are loved. There are white clouds. Everything is so bright. God is upon us. He is protecting us and telling us that everything is OK. Coconut is also our food, a gift from God." (Applause) (Ernie commented that his own drawing was so bad, he was afraid of sharing it.)

Melissa: "There are eleven people holding hands. It is colored blue. It symbolizes the friendship that we have formed in this group. This is how we live together; we've gotten stronger. It is no longer hi and hello anymore. We care for everybody. I also learned that I was right with my insight about how everybody would be with their adaptation with each other right now. At first, I was worried about that. But it turned out that each one cared for everybody." (Applause)

Vangie: "My drawing is very light. I hope everybody can see it. It is a yellow sun shining over an angel and the land. For me, the sun represents light from God. He shines his light on all of us. Each one of us, as represented by the angel image, is treated like an angel. Each individual is a special person like a special angel. Our faith guides each one of us. Our faith gives us light. If we have faith and we pray, everything will fall into place. God will make sure that we are guided properly. That is the symbolism of the light shining on the angel." (Applause) (Vangie was stuttering at times with pauses of laughter.)

Ernie: "Mine is a drawing of a big ear with connection to the heart and the brain. At first we listen as represented by the ear. There are rays that bathe my brain so that the message can be communicated to my heart. Whatever you say to me should be stored in my heart but at times the rays of communication go instead to my brain. What is the other person trying to say to me? What do I feel when he tries to say something to me? These rays to the heart will tell you how you touched me so that we can share and

understand each other better. I hope you understand what I want to tell you. When I listen, the rays vibrate into my heart so that I can feel them. Then they go to my brain, so that I can evaluate my sharing." (Applause) (Perry gave an additional interpretation of his artwork, pointing out that there are mountains separated by water. "No matter how far the mountains are and where the water flows, they are still reachable. No matter what kind of problem you have, you can always find the courage to solve it.")

Lola: "It is a drawing of a volcano exploding with lava pouring out. My drawing is so light, I am sure you cannot see it. When we first came, I felt like we were like the volcano. When we first came, we were tight and filled with sorrow, joy, hatred, etc. But because of Father Rafael's help, the volcano erupted; feelings came out, everything went out. Then some of these things, like the lava, the stones, and the soil, came down and made the trees fertile, like our ideas. When the ideas surfaced, the very good ideas made us strong, made me strong. We understand people. We relate to people because they understand us. This is my drawing." (Applause)

Ruth. "It is a drawing of three people that spelled the word JOY. I used my imagination. Joy is deeper than happiness. You can be sad, you can be joyful. You can understand and comprehend it. Happiness is fleeting; it comes and goes, but joy can stay deep in your heart. Even though we shared our losses, pains, and sorrows, it was a joy to have been a part of this group." (Applause)

Rafael: "Mine is a drawing of a big heart and small hearts. There is a heart but if you look inside, there are other hearts that symbolize each of your hearts. During this journey with you, your hearts came to me and I listened; your hearts are very special. I would like to offer these hearts, big or small, to God. Your experiences here are experiences of the heart. I value that from my heart. You are not the only ones who have learned from the group experiences during these eighth weeks; I also have learned from you. So I guess this will end our sharing today. We will go back to the chapel, and we will be bringing our hearts back to God. I ask you to sign your artwork so that I can remember this group process in my heart. Whatever you have chosen as your symbol of yourself, please bring it with you and we will offer them during the Eucharist. (There was a break before we started the Eucharist.)

Eucharist: Sharing of Symbols and Ourselves

Introduction: My dear friends, today we have one last moment after eight weeks together, the friendships, the love, the sharing, the listening, the growth, the compassion and understanding. As we bring ourselves to the Eucharist, I ask you to remember your family and loved ones who are not here today. We are one with the whole universal Church in thanksgiving.

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have always believed in angels and once had the experience of hearing somebody whisper in my ear "TRUST GOD." To me, because I pray all the time, I am always connected to God. My faith is sealed by God. It is not something that easily can be broken. It is a solid thing. Nobody can tell me to let go of it in the future. I do not think this will happen. My relationship with God is sealed." She placed the book on the empty chair.

Lola: "My symbol is the rosary. I have always prayed the rosary. I meditate on the life of our Lord: on the sorrowful, joyful, and glorious mysteries. When I pray the Our Father, I remember to pray for all members of my family. When I pray the rosary, I ask the intercession of the Blessed Mother for guidance and protection. I go with the cycle of the mystery for my meditation. That is also the cycle of my life. I believe that." She placed the rosary on the empty chair.

Katie: "I chose this violet, cotton flower as my symbol, because it was made of a material that is lasting. It is not as beautiful as a real flower, but it was made of something that will never die. My spirit, even if I leave the earth, will go on. My family will be there to support me. I will join them, too. My faith never dies." She placed the violet flower to the empty chair.

Ernie: "I was not able to pick a symbol for the heart. For me, my symbol is my heart, which becomes so big, so whole. As Father R. said, it becomes big enough to hold others. It feels so much. It is hard to express. I have loved." He looked at the empty chair.

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Ruth: " My symbol is a wooden cross. Since college, I have always had a liking for the cross. I am not sure why. There is something about it. I really did not know what true love was until I read about the crucifixion. I guess the cross symbolized true love to me. It was through the crucifixion of Christ that I felt the ultimate love of God for us. It was by his dying that resurrection took place. Blood and water flowed out of his side. It meant that he gave us everything of himself; that's how much he loved us." She placed the cross on the empty chair. (After the retreat, she asked if she could have it. I said she could; it was her Christmas gift. She was the only one who asked to keep her symbol.)

Melissa. "I chose this pin because of the words in it, which are teamwork and dedication. I feel that dedication is something you have to have in yourself, in order to accomplish a lot of things. I think it has been beneficial for me and everyone during these past weeks to become dedicated to the group before we shared a part of ourselves and opened ourselves to whatever would happen. Teamwork follows from one's dedication." She placed the pin on the empty chair.

Perry: "I chose the image of the sacred heart of Jesus. He is compassionately looking at us with a radiant heart. If we can have His heart, we will not have sorrow. Christ's heart is full of love and caring." He placed the image on the empty chair. (Perry and Ernie did not have concrete symbols at first. Perry picked out the image at the last minute, because as he looked around he saw that everybody except Ernie had a symbol.)

Conching: "I chose the symbol of the Holy Eucharist as shown by this stampita containing a chalice, wheat and a drip of blood with a cross in the background. For me this is the real food. Whoever eats His body and drinks His blood will never be hungry again." She placed the stampita on the empty chair.

Sarah: "I chose the big stuffed teddy bear with a heart that says, Friendship starts with a loving heart! I chose this because this saying has meaning to me. I have friendship with all of you. I have bonded with you all. I have a loving heart that I shared with you throughout these weeks. I have a loving heart, and I believe that we clicked well and that is friendship. I have never felt quite like this before." She placed her symbol on the empty chair.

Rafael: "I chose my very own heart as symbol of the heart, which has been there with you throughout the eight weeks. Even before that I journeyed with most of you in the Block Rosary for many years. I have been blessed to have you during this process. Your response to this group process was great. I stayed with you, and you remained with me, rain or shine. You have shared today the symbols of yourselves. These are intimate symbols, because they are you. You have devotion to the Blessed Mother Mary through the rosary and novenas, the Eucharist, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, teamwork and dedication, prayer and faith, loving and friendly hearts, and the flower of everlasting life. We have our commonalties and differences, but we are all images and likenesses of God. We listened to each other. You were grateful that I was there for you. I asked you to be grateful to each other for the support you received. You were. Each person influences

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the other. What Melissa shared affected everyone. What Ruth said meant a lot to everyone. And so it was for each one of you. We grew as a group. But we need to move on.

What you have told me affected me, too. I have become aware of who I am as a person and as your spiritual leader. Wherever I am, I will never forget this moment and the special cohesion that grew up amongst us. We are children of one God, meant to be respected and listened to. I guess our goal was achieved because we listened to one another in so many ways. We have loved. There were difficult moments when we faced dealing with our losses, grief, and personal crises. At times, I challenged you to become aware of where you were and how you could grow from that experience. I was really touched by the many meaningful moments during our journey together. I thank you. Let us now continue to celebrate this Eucharist and profess our gift of faith. Our homilies ended, our mission begins."

The Eucharist continued.

Towards a Jungian Insight of the Artwork in Group Process

Inclusion of the symbol of the Mandala as a Supplement to the psychological and theological reflection

Mandala

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Since the group always sat in a circle, no matter where we met, I felt that being in a circle was significant to the energy that flowed in the process. The space within the circle was changed from ordinary to sacred space. Mandala means circle, lacking a beginning or an end. As such it represents infinity, perfection, and the eternal, universal consciousness. 'Circle' also implies a totality, a whole formed by an association of parts. This is the reason why the Chinese translate "mandala" as "a circle-like-completeness." (Wilhelm/Jung, 1972, 98).

The Swiss psychiatrist **Carl Gustav Jung** associated the mandala with the Self, the center of the total personality (Fincher, 1991, 2). He suggested that the mandala shows the natural urge to live out our potential, to fulfill the pattern of our whole personality. "The self, I thought, was like the monad which I am, and which is my world. The mandala represents this monad, and corresponds to the microcosmic nature of the psyche." (Fincher, 1991, 20) For Jung the goal of psychic development was the actualization of the self. For him this evolution, however, was not a linear one but more a circumambulation of the self. According to Jung, one needs to pay attention to the symbols of the unconscious as a way of enhancing personal growth. Jung saw the spontaneous appearance of mandalas in dreams and artwork.

Katie "A tree with a hole in the middle"

The tree is a symbol of life, ever abundant and self-renewing. The tree represents the whole self. Jung considers the tree a symbol for the archetype of the Self. As such it

is the urge in each of us to grow and fulfill an inner image of wholeness that mirrors the perfection of God. (Fincher, 1991, 138-140) The tree is drawn in a childish manner: it doesn't have branches; it doesn't have roots. There are at least two interesting features in Katie's artwork, the black hole in the middle of the trunk and the violet leaf falling off. It is noteworthy that there is only one purple leaf in the air, though there are many on the ground.

Black is the color of darkness, evil, death and mystery. Black symbolizes the beginning of any process. Black is associated with that which cannot be seen, that which is beyond awareness, like the dark side of the moon. Because of these associations, it is a natural symbol for the unconscious. In order to establish a sense of self, the ego must be separated from the unconscious. Black also represents our shadow side, the other part of me. (Fincher, 1991, 36-40)

The drawing shows that Katie wants to distinguish herself and has a need to establish her own identity. Having been part of the group process stimulated that need.

It could be said that the nest symbolizes the womb and that there is a need, on the one hand, to feel the warmth of the womb, which stands for wholeness and protection, and on the other hand, to fly away.

There were several examples of Katie's need to fly from the nest expressed in the group process: Katie joined the group process, but said she felt that she had no choice;

she mentioned her use of perfume to cover up the Filipino smell of fish; she asked Lola to be more understanding of her need to be more independent; and she expressed that she didn't want to call Melissa 'ate'. She also expressed her womb need by stating it doesn't make a difference whether one is born in the Philippines or not; it felt great to be missed and that Sarah has to call her 'ate.'

Normally you would expect a bird nest to be in the leafy branches of a tree, yet she has placed it in the trunk, which is associated with nourishment. The one leaf in the air – symbolizes Katie, ready to claim her own identity. Katie took as her symbol a violet, cotton flower, made of "lasting material." This is the second time she used the color violet. Violet is the color of spring and the blooming of flowers announces the return of spring. The flower becomes, not only the symbol of spring, and therefore youth, but also of the transitory nature of life and beauty and of the eternal renewal of life. In religious traditions in India, China and Europe, flowers symbolize the womb that nurtures the divine infants. So the flower may represent the womb in which the divine child – her own individual being – is being born within her. (Fincher, 1991, 124-126)

Katie's artwork and the symbol of the flower represent her readiness to claim her individuality. She is in the spring of her life, but knows that flowers bloom, whither and die. However, she hasn't dealt with her own mortality and is not ready to go there and thus she offers a cotton flower, because "it is made of a material that is lasting and ... will never die." Yet, she shared that she knows she will die one day, but that her faith is

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like the flower: it will never die. In that we can read either a longing for eternal life or eternal youth.

SARAH – “A drawing of Peace and Unity – a circle means forever”

A circle represents wholeness. It encloses a space which is protected, strengthened and delimited. The circle is a symbol of eternity and, thus, a symbol of God. The circle is also a symbol of the self – becoming whole, individuation. (Fincher, 1991, 118-120)

Three is a number suggesting vitality, energy and motion. Three may represent the individual's striving to establish one's identity separate from that of one's parents. The consciousness typified by three-ness tends to be ego consciousness. That is, what can be known tends to be intellectual and not intuitive. In our tradition, God is a Trinity of three co-equal persons (Father, Son and the Holy Spirit) in one. We profess this with the cross as a sign of salvation. Christ was entombed for three days. In general when three is used, one may experience vitality, excitement and an urge for independence. (Fincher, 1991, 96-8)

I think Sarah feels a great need to be listened to by her elders – “ring, ring” – and a willingness to express herself - “hello” -: and as I had explained, “it has to ring first before we can listen.” She also demonstrated a need for independence. There are three objects in her drawing and, in general, when three is used, there may be an urge for independence. The circle also refers to her own wholeness. She is an independent girl,

with her own needs and desires, but also with a need for belonging, wholeness and unity with the others

Sarah's symbol was the teddy bear – 'Friendship starts with a loving heart.'

Teddy bear could be a symbol for a little girl, cuddly and lovable. Sarah's remark, "I have never felt quite like this before", might indicate total surrender to the group and the love Sarah needs and feels. It seems to me that Sarah trusts she will be loved, even though she is claiming her own identity. During the group process she expressed a need for independence; she felt no need to sympathize with the elders for the difficulty they experienced in coming to the US. And like Katie she has to make her case in the "ate" issue.

CONCHING – "The family that prays together stays together, they also learn to listen to one another"

The church in her artwork may symbolize the self, which constitutes the supreme value of truth. The symbol of the church might mean that her unconscious is urging her to 'center' herself. The church represents authority and community as well. The church may also symbolize the most valuable part of the psyche, the sacred part (Akroyd, 1993,123).

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In the system of the chakras, red is the color of the root chakra, security, survival and fear, but also of tribal power, group identity and belief system. Red is also a color of healing. The color red is associated with blood (Jesus' blood – communion sacrament); fire (warmth, but also power to destroy, refine, transform); and anger and suffering. Jung associated red with the feeling quality (Fincher, 1991, 45-9). In Conching's artwork she uses green and blue to complement the red, showing she is working on balance, but since red is the dominant color, even in her writing, we will concentrate on that.

The tree is a symbol of life, ever abundant and self-renewing. The tree represents the whole self. Jung considered the tree a symbol for the archetype of the Self. As such, it is the urge in each of us to grow and fulfill an inner image of wholeness that mirrors the perfection of God. (Fincher, 1991, 138-140) Green is the color of nature, growing of things, fresh scents. It symbolizes natural healthy growth. Green is also a symbol of Mother Nature. (Fincher, 1991, 56-59)

In the system of the chakras, green is the color of the heart and refers to our emotional power and love – our ability to receive and give love. Love is related to hate, but also anger, bitterness, jealousy, and the inability to forgive oneself and/or others.

The color blue is reminiscent of a clear sky, suggesting calmness, serenity and peace. The color blue is associated with religious feelings, because of the vastness of the sky, the depth of the ocean. (Fincher, 1991, 50) Blue is in Christian sources associated with the feminine, especially the positive aspects of the archetype of the mother. Kellogg associated blue with the nurturing uterine environment. It is the seed for our idea of the good mother. Before birth, we are underwater creatures. Blue is water: water cleanses,

nourishes and cools. In drawings the color blue often relates to mothering: nurturing, compassion

In the chakras, blue is the color associated with the throat: the power of will, communication and expression, which means outward expression, but also inward communication. The throat chakra also expresses all the chakras below it: fear of expressing insecurities (root); fear to ask for what I want (sacral); I won't talk about what is going on with my emotions (solar plexus); I can't say I love you (heart); and I will not express anything, I can't swallow anything, I hold back (throat)

Gray is a neutral color. It is associated with ashes, stone, mist. Gray as a noncolor suggests lack of feeling, lack of emotions (feelings of powerlessness), sign of depression, a misguided guilt. (Fincher, 1991, 70-2)

Church refers to the house, that is the house of self, the foundation of your being. We know Conching's worry: she wants her family to stay together and not fall apart. She feels that the foundations of her house are trembling and she desperately tries to keep it from falling apart. It is not surprising that Conching's house is red since there is a lot of fear connected to it. When offering her symbol (stampita), Conching talks about "whoever eats his body and drinks his blood will never be hungry again." Red comes back in the offering of her symbol. She talks about the blue sky as representing happiness: clarity is what she wants. The mentioning of the color gray by Conching, which is not in the drawing however might refer to the uncertainty she is feeling with regard to her relationship with Perry, the worries she has about her son(s) and, thus, the

unity of the family. There is no clarity (as yet), something she longs for on a deeper level. It is interesting that the path leading to the church is green, since green is often considered a color of healing. Green is also the color of the heart: the path to her true self (individuated self) is through the heart.

Conching describes the tree as shelter, which might indicate her own search for shelter. That there are no windows in the church might mean that she sees no way out: you can enter but not look out. Windows are an important feature and the absence of windows in a house is significant.

The big cross on the church might mean a time of sacrifice (Fincher, 1991, 122), or it could suggest an ending of a cycle. She might be called to surrender familiar ways of being: it is time for Conching to claim herself. Of course, we have to consider theological interpretations of the cross: the cross of time and space (rational thinking vs. higher consciousness, which is the consciousness of Love); the cross as a symbol of the crucifixion of ego consciousness, after which a resurrection is called for; and the cross as engagement of the Holy Spirit, expressed in Love and light working through us.

Interesting, too, is that although Conching talks about a family walking towards the church, there is no family in her drawing. This might mean that she is not sure whether they will be able to walk the same path together as a family.

PERRY – 'basically the same thing as my wife'

Mountains might refer to goals higher than yourself, in pursuit of distant dreams. Water is a symbol of the unconscious. It is a feminine symbol, representing your own femininity or your mother (Akroyd, 1993, 303). For Perry, seeing water as a barrier to reach the mountains, might indicate a fear of women, his own mother or his unconscious. It might be a fear of Conching, that he can't control her - this might be the reason he dismisses her. She is the last person in the drawing, not walking next to him, but behind him and the two children.

Clouds (white) = clouding the clarity, might be a warning sign of impending psychic disturbance. The number five represents natural wholeness. It might symbolize an active engagement with the real world in making your own personal vision a reality. A feeling of mission may inspire an active approach to goals. (Fincher, 1991, 100-1) In Christian tradition, the number five might refer to the number of wounds of Christ.

Perry's drawing is all in blue which indicates a need for nurturing and compassion. He feels misunderstood (talks about angry parents, but it was their way of loving their children), but at the same time wants to assure someone that his actions are compassionate and meant to nurture the family. Since blue is also the color associated with the throat, we may posit an issue with inner and outer communication. There is a lot going on within Perry which he is not yet ready or willing to address. He might feel incapable, which might be the very reason he holds on to his old values and structures.

The most dominant element are the clouds. Clouds disturb the clear sky. One could suggest that Perry fears the clouds, which might represent his emotional body. Unconsciously he knows that there is disturbance within the family. In Perry's drawing, the light rays from the sun penetrate the dramatic clouds. Although he feels disturbance, he knows that his true self (the sun) can still come through. The most impressive part of the drawing is the clouds and the rays of light: wisdom, belief in deeper understanding, guidance. The family appears to be protected by the light or higher awareness. The tree is doing very well, the tree of potential of Self, of individuation. Perry's church does have windows, so he can look inside and out. He feels confident in his house, though his actions might be misunderstood, but he is not questioning himself: rather, he questions the others for misunderstanding him.

Perry follows his oldest son back to church or does he chase him back to church? The others – he presumes – will follow him, to stay together as a family unit. He takes Conching for granted or doesn't want to acknowledge her on deeper levels (he fears he doesn't understand her: his relationship with his mother might be significant, too). The number five refers to the family, but let's not forget the symbolical meaning of the number five – natural wholeness, and also the number of wounds of Christ. Again, we might think of sacrifice here. Wholeness refers to Perry's obsessive need to keep the family together, although only under his control and guidance. I don't think the son is leading: rather the son is being chased or forced back into the family.

What is interesting is what Perry says: "I have basically the same thing as my wife." He appears to be reaching out, but adds that his drawing is more artsy and graphic. "Graphic" could indicate that what he really wants to say is, "But I have a better understanding of our situation." For Perry, the church (as the priest) represents authority. He excuses his behavior towards his children by saying that love is his motivation, even though he has to show anger. When later he adds an explanation about the water and the mountains, he proves he hasn't really listened to Ernie: rather he shows how self-absorbed he is in explaining himself and his compulsive need to be understood.

The symbol of the cross might again indicate sacrifice. Is Perry willing to sacrifice being one with his family for his higher good (anger = misunderstanding which is explained as love) in order to meet the expectations of the outside world? Perry's symbol is the image of the sacred heart of Jesus – he talks about the radiant heart: The rays of light coming through the clouds are the grace of God, as he explained.

Christ as a symbol may represent the perfection in you (Akroyd, 1993, 121-3). Perry's actions, he feels, are in accordance with God's wishes: he explains "Christ's heart is full of love and caring." The heart is a symbol of love between persons, but also as a source of illumination and happiness (in Christianity, the flaming heart). Heart in a drawing might reveal a concern about relationships or they might be a reminder to focus on that which is really important in a situation.

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MELISSA – 'eleven people holding hands'

The number eleven is a symbol of transition, conflict and the challenge to find balance. The number eleven might represent conflict, which is an important transition in the process, which moves one to a more complete realization of who one is.

The sun may be a symbol of the self, intelligence and the father – the actual father or the father as authority figure. Melissa feels the need to say, "We care for everybody. I also learned that I was right with my insight about how everybody could be right. At first, I was worried about that. But it turned out that each one cared for everyone."

Melissa's symbol was a pin with the words "teamwork and dedication."

Teamwork follows from one's dedication to yourself and the group. Melissa's explanation of her drawing and the pin go well together. What was Melissa's worry?

Does she show it during the group process? The art shows eleven people. The group had ten members. If she added God or Jesus, which one represents Jesus or God?

I think the number eleven here is a symbol of transition, conflict, and the challenge to find balance. Her unconscious mind is still worried about the dedication and teamwork of the group as a whole and maybe herself as well. She needs balance and to feel part of a team.

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Of the eleven people, only two appear to be grounded. All the others seem to be floating: there is no clarity as yet for Melissa about where everyone in the group is, where she herself is. The clouds in the sky point out that there is no clarity as yet in her mind. Blue is the color of communication (outward and inward), the need to find clarity. Melissa explains: "It is colored blue." The color blue is chosen on purpose, without her realizing (or may be unconsciously she does) its deeper meaning.

After rereading all Melissa's insertions and contributions during the group process, it is my feeling that she is not secure in her identity and hasn't claimed herself as yet. Therefore, she clings to old Filipino ways. She appears to be very traditional in her thinking. She still needs to find her way, her grounding (as her artwork reflects) and her balance. She needs to communicate to herself where she is and what she wants (diet under pressure from mom).

Her offering is

- Dedication: to herself and/or the group – if the group appears to be more important to Melissa, she might sacrifice herself in the process
- Teamwork: right now being part of a group seems very important to Melissa.

"Melissa said that there is a child in us all and that we had lots of similarities because we came from the same culture. That was what bonded us and made us feel at ease."

I had a sense that Melissa appeared to be flirting with me. I felt that she needed attention. Normal thing to do for a 21-year-old who is claiming her beauty.

VANGIE – “a yellow sun shining over an angel and the land”

In her explanation, Vangie talks about “faith”: “Faith guides each of us. Our faith gives us light. If we have faith and we pray, everything will fall into place.” *Symbol - Painting of the angel in Living Faith “Sealed with a prayer” – TRUST GOD*

In her explanation, Vangie again talks about “faith”: “I am always connected to God. My faith is sealed by God. It is not something that can be easily broken. It is a solid thing. Nobody can tell me to let go of it in the future. I don’t think this will happen. My relationship with God is sealed.” Angel might be a symbol of blessing or warning, but might also be a symbol of parts of yourself which could lead you to greater fulfillment (Akroyd, 1993, 73).

Yellow is the color of the sun. The light, warmth and life-giving power of the sun are symbolized by yellow. Yellow is a symbol of our ability to ‘see’ or understand. Jungian psychologists found that yellow symbolizes the ability to grasp a pattern of meaning in a scatter of facts and impressions. It is also seen as the symbol of the father and associated with the development of autonomy (Fincher, 1991, 53-6). In the system of the chakras, the color yellow represents the solar plexus – center of emotions, personal power, and self esteem: how we relate to others and how we relate to and understand ourselves.

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Pink is the color of flesh. It is a mixture of white and red: white (= spirit) mixed with red (=energy) suggests innocence. Pink is associated with the physical body. Pink in the mandala may refer to the inner child in a woman, the anima for men. (Fincher, 1991, 64-65) White is the color of the wedding dress, red is the color of blood (when a woman loses her virginity). Positive role of pink: relate to emotional life, an acceptance of the human condition, or enjoyment of the sensuous possibilities of the flesh. (Fincher, 1991, 65) Negative role of pink: a preoccupation with the body, pressing needs of your inner child or the presence of a physical illness. What is in need of protection in oneself?

Vangie's frequent mentioning of 'faith' in her explanation of her drawing and the symbol she chose makes me wonder whether she has deep seated doubt in her faith.

Does she need to remind herself of her faith in God by convincing herself over and over again, TRUST GOD? The angel is important to Vangie (artwork and symbol): does she feel a need to be protected? Or does the angel have a different meaning here?

The sun and the color yellow can both be symbols of the father - as authority figure - and associated with the development of autonomy: there might be a need for Vangie to discover her own identity. It is my feeling that Vangie might be 'hiding' behind God and her faith so as not to look at herself as an individual. She might be trapped in her role as the "good Catholic." The drawing might then be expressing a need to get in touch with her inner child, her true self. The angel would then be a symbol of her inner child, the little girl who wants to come out and be acknowledged. The color blue around the sun - sun as symbol of the Self - might indicate a need to communicate with herself, acknowledge herself, and maybe even claim herself as a woman.

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When going through crisis – after the loss of her son – it is my feeling that Vangie doubted her faith in God: she had difficulty praying. Although she said that prayer helped her deal with the loss, it is my sense that the support she received from the Block Rosary really helped her deal with the loss more: she needed the community. The priest had questioned whether she had been a good mother? She replied it was out of her control. Did she feel judged or maybe even punished by the Church, priest, and God? How did this affect her faith? Where is Vangie at this moment? The Church as authority, as guide. She needed to respect the Church as such: she is not allowed to question its (moral) authority. She has to keep these feelings to herself. It is my feeling that Vangie is in the closet and hasn't come out as yet. Maybe her fear of God is such that she has a need to remind herself to TRUST GOD and have faith.

My earlier interpretation of the drawing seems even more valid for me: the angel is Vangie's true self (inner child) who has a need to be recognized. She has a need to get in touch with herself. The image of the sun with the blue circle around it: circle means sacred and safe space; the sun as image of the higher self or individuated self that invites all our aspects home; and the color blue representing a need to communicate with herself. This is a powerful image. The angel is grounded: it is her own self, not her lost son, and connected to the land, as Vangie explained. The land might represent the family and the community she depends on.

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ERNIE – "Big ear with connection to the heart and the brain"

Ear is a tool for listening and balance. Because of its shape, the ear might also symbolize a fetus in the womb (Akroyd, 1993, 159). Heart is a symbol of love: between persons, but also as a source of illumination and happiness (Christianity, the flaming heart). Heart in a drawing might reveal a concern about relationships; it might be a reminder to focus on that which is really important in a situation.

The color gray is a neutral color. It is associated with ashes, stone, mist. Gray as a noncolor suggests lack of feeling, lack of emotions (feeling of powerlessness), sign of depression: are you cutting off feelings, experiencing a misguided guilt. (Fincher, 1991, 70-2) When Ernie explains his drawing, he talks about rays, which bathe his brain (understanding, listening and hearing what is being said). So the rays in his drawing represent light, the light of wisdom or the light of God. Ernie wants to listen with the heart, but instead finds himself listening with the mind: he might be saying that he wants to get comfortable within his emotional body and not be in his mental body alone. Since his drawing is only in gray, that might suggest that he is, indeed, cutting off his feelings. The drawing could then be a reminder for him to listen with the heart. Interesting is that the ear is not only our instrument of listening and balance, but reminds us (because of its shape) of the fetus in the womb: a need to be nurtured and loved.

When Ernie shared the loss of his only toy, he radiated a need to feel nurtured and feel the warmth of a protecting mother, which he apparently didn't receive. Since he

couldn't deal with the grief, he became determined to fight: "not through praying novenas, but through his determination to persevere and replace what was lost. He became diligent and, challenged by the loss, became successful." He coped with the loss of his son alone: "Ernie said he learned to cope with the grief by himself." He didn't receive the nurturing and love he felt he needed at that time.

Ernie might have a longing to feel really accepted and affirmed (womb warmth). He also has a need to be listened to ("his story from rags to riches was told again."). He might feel he isn't really being heard. (We might be listening, but our behavior might not show that we are also hearing what has been shared.)

Ernie's symbol is his own heart "... which becomes so big, so whole. As Father Rafael said, it becomes big enough to hold others. It feels so much. It is hard to express. I have loved." It sounds like there is a lot going on in Ernie, which he is as yet unable to verbalize to others and to himself.

It was my feeling after reflecting again on my pilot project that Ernie is much more devout and spiritual than he is willing to admit to himself and to others. His devotion and spirituality might frighten him. This might be the reason he said that he did it all by himself (tale from rags to riches, dealing with the loss of his father, his toy, and his son).

Spirituality and devotion

- "He saw a vision of Mary in prayer mode." "Dr. Junie Elizarie, who made an impact on his life and whose example made Ernie religious."
- "He received a sign when he went to receive the Eucharist: the priest gave him a piece from the host used for the consecration when he was asking for a sign in his life."

The ear in Ernie's drawing might express his need to be heard, acknowledged and understood, but also the need to be cherished and cared for in a motherly way (Vangie's reaction to his sharing of the loss of the toy didn't really show empathy). The gray might indicate that Ernie is not really in touch with his feelings: he has dealt with most losses in a mental manner. Ernie might also feel a lack of feeling or love from others (whether this is true or not). The heart might indicate that Ernie wants to connect from the heart level.

LOLA - "A volcano with lava pouring out"

"Lola" means grandmother in Tagalog. Everybody in the group named her that because it was a sign of respect to the elderly. I also called her Lola. It was my unconscious way of not going out of the circle of tradition in my relationship with my own grandmother. The children called her by her first name "Gay" and she negatively reacted to it. She felt comfortable with the title and the group that accorded it to her. Though she did not talk that much, her presence represented the tradition that she brought to the group: Filipino culture and popular religiosity. I had a strong countertransference

to her because of the influence of my grandmother and my mother in my life. I challenged her by my approach to the group, not as a priest who imposes and preaches, but as the one who shared and dialogued with them. I invited her into the process and she took it in, though hesitantly at first.

The image of the volcano and the explosion of lava are quite strong and powerful. Although Lola doesn't seem to say a lot, she is powerfully present. The image of the volcano might mean that Lola has a lot bottled up within her. Praying and devotion might only keep the cork in the bottle: there might be unresolved anger and hurt there. When I looked at the volcano as a mandala process in itself, then the eruption became Lola's unconscious breaking through, asking to be recognized and integrated into her self-image. Since green is the color of the heart, it might refer to a closed heart, with a need to open. As the granddaughters said: they will listen to her if she listens to them. That her artwork is hardly visible might indicate discomfort with her image.

Lola's symbol is the rosary. "I have always prayed the rosary." The image of the good grandmother comes to mind here. Her devotion is real to me, but might be overdone to make sure the granddaughters and the other members of the group hear what she is saying.

RUTH - 'three people that spelled the word JOY'

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Three = a number suggesting vitality, energy, and motion. Three may represent the individual's striving to establish his identity separate from that of his parents. The consciousness typified by three-ness tends to be ego consciousness. That is, what can be known tends to be intellectual and not intuitive. (Fincher, 1991, 96-8) In Christianity God is a trinity of three beings in one. Christ suffered and died and on the third day he resurrected from the dead. The meaning of the paschal mystery of the suffering, death, and resurrection is the high point of Catholic tradition. The Holy Week celebration centers around it.

In general, when three is used, one may experience vitality, excitement, and an urge for independence. The cross might symbolize a time of sacrifice (Fincher, 1991, 122), or it could suggest an ending of a cycle. The cross implies suffering, the suffering of Christ. Of course we have to consider theological interpretations of the Cross: the Cross of time and space (rational thinking vs. higher consciousness, consciousness of Love); the cross as a symbol of the crucifixion of the ego consciousness, after which a resurrection is called for; and also the cross as engagement of the Holy Spirit, expressed in Love and light working through us. Blue is associated with mothering, nurturing. Her role in the group seemed to be to help me in facilitating the group - reading the scriptures, handing the tissues, comforting Vangie, reaching out to Perry, and facilitating the art work. I wanted Ruth to use her talents as a graphic artist so that she could contribute better in the group. She shared a story about having difficulty being accepted in school, because of the way she spoke Filipino. Interesting is that blue is also the color of the throat, communication. It is my feeling that Ruth feels misunderstood or feels she is not

understood. Does she understand herself? Is she in touch with her true self, needs and desires? During the group process she stresses her independence and autonomy.

Her art is really expressing her deeper wish for JOY in her life: the child wants to come out, but can only come out when she feels protected (the circle) and affirmed. The child wants to feel accepted (the 'Y'): raise both arms in the sky, as if to say "Here I am!" Interesting is that the 'J' of JOY could also be seen as a cross, the sacrifice of Jesus. During the sharing about the Last Supper, "Ruth shared that since the mass was the offering of Jesus to the world, she looked at it from a sacrificial aspect. We need to sacrifice for one another."

Ruth's symbol is a wooden cross. Ruth explains that she is "Jesus-centered person." Is she identifying with the suffering of Christ and His sacrifice, which "symbolized true love for me. It was through the crucifixion of Christ that I felt the ultimate love of God for us." The cross symbolizes love and suffering: through suffering she will realize true love? Is that what Ruth is really saying in her artwork and in her offering?

Offering the symbol and asking for it back

Ruth explains: "Maybe the empty chair was really meant for God. Since the Bible is the word of God, God sat on the empty chair..." Later during the offering of the symbols, I suggested that the members "Leave their symbols on the empty chair that is Jesus to us all." After the retreat was over, Ruth approached me and asked if she could

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have it back. She was the only one who liked her symbol so much that she wanted it for her own.

I wonder why she couldn't make the offering. What does that mean? I sensed that Ruth had a difficulty offering herself. She wanted her offering back. I am curious about her devotion to Jesus.

JOY

Now let's go back to JOY: the 'J' as the cross (her suffering, her way to true love, crucifixion of ego-self), the 'O' as the moment she feels protected and confident enough to appear (see the little fingers around the edges); and the 'Y' as the jubilant, newly reborn self.

As I look at the group process and how and where Ruth contributed, I observed that Ruth placed herself outside the group from the very start and was also affirmed in this role. It seems to me that in most of Ruth's remarks during the group process she saw herself as an assistant: "It felt good to be part of the group. I felt needed and ... used my talents. I found that the group accepted me as I am, despite my limited sharing." I confirmed her role: "You did well in the group. Your being here meant a lot to the group and me. I was also part of the group, so I felt how, in my own way, I contributed and made the group a success." Ruth appeared to be saying that she had helped me in the group, too. It is interesting that she was the only one in the group who came back to me after the retreat for counseling. This could indicate Father transference. She was

emotionally aligned with the father against her abusive mother. This might be the reason she aligned herself with me and distanced herself from the group.

So Ruth can reply in confirmation (of my abilities) and affirmation (of her own), it was all right that she might not have been part of the group. "Thank you Father, I needed to hear that. I am happy that you were our leader and you guided us well. I hope that you can give me more guidance this year..."

Rafael - "A big heart and small hearts"

Purple is the color of royalty. It is a color used in spiritual symbolism - personal dedication to spirituality - but purple refers also to the authority of those who rule by "divine right". The color purple may also signify the process of personal growth. It can suggest the restless energy of something seeking to become free at a new level of being. Kellogg suggests that purple might refer to the psychological unity with the mother experienced by everyone prior to the ego's emergence from the maternal matrix. The psychological separation from the mother is revealed by the appearance of red where once there was purple. Purple is also a color used by those who seem to have the ability to generate excitement, to attract attention. This can earn one a special place in the family or community. (Fincher, 1991, 60-3) In the system of the chakras, purple represents the crown chakra - spiritual connection, spiritual insight, vision and intuition.

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Yellow is the color of the sun. The light, warmth and life-giving power of the sun are symbolized by yellow. Yellow is a symbol of our ability to 'see' or understand. Jungian psychologists found that yellow symbolizes the ability to grasp a pattern of meaning in a scatter of facts and impressions. It is also seen as the symbol of the father and associated with the development of autonomy (Fincher, 1991, 53-6) In the system of the chakras, yellow represents the solar plexus – center of emotions, personal power and self esteem. This is how we relate to others and how we relate to and understand ourselves.

The heart is the symbol of love: between persons, but also as a source of illumination and happiness. A heart in a drawing might reveal a concern about relationships, it might be a reminder to focus on that which is really important in a situation. A heart may refer to wounds or suffering, especially if they are "broken" or purple. Hearts suggest that one's emotions are aroused. When there is a heart in one's mandala there is a good chance one experiences the altered state known as love. (Fincher, 1991, 128)

Noteworthy is that I took the heart twice: Once as my symbol and once for the art work. Both times I explained the heart as being my own heart, so my symbol and my person have become one. The bread in the Eucharist is in dogmatic theology not only a symbol of the body of Christ but also the real body of Christ. This is the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist that every Catholic are focused into as the summit towards which their Christian existence is geared into. I am still trying to get away from my

domineering mother, the umbilical cord is still there. The color yellow in my artwork points to a deeper knowing of my own heart and love – as in the system of the chakras, yellow refers to the seat of personal power, but also emotions. I am ready to claim my personal power.

It is interesting that the yellow heart is between the two purple hearts, which might refer to a fear that claiming my own identity might mean breaking away from my mother. The suffering indicated by the color purple and the “broken” heart might refer to my suffering because I know I need to claim my deep fear of allowing this to come to consciousness. It may be a fear of loss. The light is there, which means there is a realization that I can do it. However, since purple also refers to my spiritual connection – my deeper knowing and awakening – it might mean that I am getting ready to claim my own identity.

The dynamic between the outer purple heart, which is “broken” on two sides, and the inner purple heart, which is open at the top, but closed at the bottom. If the outer heart is defined as the outer boundary of the mandala (a closed circle to protect, define and create), then one could say that the openness might indicate vulnerability. I am on my way to create a safe haven for myself, a sacred space in which I can develop emotionally and spiritually.

From the outer heart to the inner heart might indicate individuation: I will gradually learn to create my boundaries, which doesn't mean I close myself off, because

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the top of the heart remains open. And since purple is the color of the crown chakra, which implies spiritual connection, spiritual insight, vision and intuition, I'll remain open at the heart level.

One can interpret the "broken" heart, however, also as an "open" heart. "Openness" implies inclusiveness and inner strength. It also reflects my theology from below and not above. The "broken" heart then refers to my feeling that religion may indeed be imposed by Church, culture, my mother, and that the way Catholicism was transmitted to me was a God from above and not below. This demonstration project showed me where I am, I still feel the need to remind myself I am part of the tradition. Until I realize I have my own identity: there is an individuation of self. One could say that my offering of the heart was in itself a symbol of both the broken heart and the open heart. I brought the heart to the altar in faith that my broken heart is also a heart open to the healing power of Christ and His promise of new life.

The heart might feel and want something else, but the control might feel strong and as yet difficult to get away from. Reason why I felt the need to rebel and felt fear for Katie, my "IT" in the Freudian drive theory. Both aspects are there. My inner need for homeostasis puts me where I am right now, until I find a different way to get to my heart without the feeling you need to compromise. Openness and brokenness are interconnected. Once the self that I take to be so real, is already broken, every moment with it becomes precious. It is when the brokenness and the preciousness come together, we develop, we enter the mandala and the conscious process of individuation can begin.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

- A. The Implications of Results, both anticipated and not anticipated, as I reported them in Chapter IV

Group Process

Having explored popular religiosity through group process, the members experienced a caring encounter not only with me but also with each other. The process was also a religious event in which the compassion of God was mediated to the group. The participants were able to discover their personal issues of faith and life as they interacted with each other outside the framework of celebrating their devotions. I observed that they felt free to share without my adhering too closely to the agendas I had prepared for them (See sessions 3-5 and 7). They were able to discover their own sense of self and issues of loss. The more they listened to each other, the more they became aware of their cultural and religious identities. It was not hard for them to listen and empathize with one another's concerns regarding the family.

Through group process, each one, including myself, became a member of a big family who struggled with his or her weaknesses and imperfections. The support they offered one another had the sense of coming from a caring family. They experienced

"being Church" when they felt bound together as a loving family. Evaluating their own religiosity had a strong impact on the Filipino-born participants. It allowed them to deepen their understanding of their devotions as well as appreciate the different dynamic their children brought to the experience. The American-born members were not as attuned to following religious customs through observance of the Block Rosary devotions and were more concerned about issues of autonomy. However, the depth of faith of the elders did have the effect of amazing the young. This was a moment for them to listen to their elders share about their faith experiences. For the elders it was a moment to understand that their children had a unique way of expressing their faith though perhaps not in exactly the same way as their parents, but still reflective of a spirituality linked to their popular devotions. These personal reflections were not usually a part of family dialogue. The children's remarks about how the elders practiced their faith and were inspired by spiritual leaders implied that the children had also been inspired by their parents. Six members of the group were moved to faith by a doctor- turned-evangelizer. He had made them realize that people of deep faith could affect and influence their search for spiritual identity. I believe they came to realize that they could exert a better influence on their children by living the Word of God and the values of the gospel rather than attempting to impose them.

The stories of vulnerability made the American-born children realize that their elders were human, too. When the American-born children shared, everybody listened. This was significant because some of the children were pressured to attend the Block Rosary against their will. The process gave them a forum for being heard. This led to an

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eventual bonding of the group. For their part, the Filipino-born parents and elders came to understand that popular religiosity, though "transmitted" to them by Philippine Church hierarchy, religion and culture might not be transferred to their children in the same way. There was a growing recognition that values in the US differed from the values in the Philippines. Along with the realization that religiosity contributes to the religious formation of a child, the parents came to appreciate the values of listening over imposition.

The younger members were at first apprehensive that the group process would consist of lecture-type sessions in which they were expected to be obedient to their parents. However, they discovered that they had been given the opportunity to share on equal terms with members of their families. I directed them toward the method of the here-and-now. Since I looked at the group as an open system, I allowed whatever influences they brought with them to have free reign in the process.

I was sensitive to the dynamics of intergenerational relationships. Though the grandma wanted to impose her beliefs, the children heard her but protected their autonomy and sense of individuality. They were able to verbalize this claim and were able to share this with their grandma. Melissa, who was born in the Philippines but grew up in the US, had a difficult time straddling the gap between the differing religious and cultural values placed on her. For example, in session six we saw how Melissa chose to go to a party over attending the Block Rosary only because her grandmother was absent from the session. She was always in conformity with Filipino religiosity, but thrice,

when her siblings shared and talked about themselves and their faith, she cried. For me, this flowed out of her experience of how difficult the acculturation process was. She was trying hard to be both Filipino and American, just like her two younger siblings. Her symbol of eleven people holding hands signified a reaching out to connect everybody into one big family, incorporating both the American-born and Filipino-born. Grandma, on the other hand, wanted to stick to tradition but later on softened her stance when she shared her feelings about the loss of her husband. In the light of this, her drawing of the volcano erupting and the lava fertilizing new ideas signifies her new approach to her children.

The group process, along with the use of the scriptural passages, helped the group members understand their faith in the light of Catholic teaching. Sharing from the scriptures was something they had never done in the Block Rosary Group. They discovered that not to be called *walang hiya* (without shame), they needed to come out of the smaller circle of their cultural and devotional life and enter the life of the bigger group. The process was a way to share their stories and discover the scriptural foundation of what they had been taught by the elders and the Church hierarchy.

Moreover, they were able to partake in the essence of the celebration of the mass as part of the climax of the retreat. They did not only listen to the priest-homilist, they shared their own homilies, offering their symbols of themselves to God and one another. It was a fitting end to the process that they were able to locate their one's spirituality within the context of a Christian community celebrating the Eucharist in a circle around

the altar. The circular movement was an extension of their sense of the sacred coming out of the group process. It was good to share and be in a circle and not just sit on a pew, waiting for the Word of God to be proclaimed and communion to be given. Instead, they actively participated in the celebration of the Word and the breaking of the Bread.

I believe that the group process taught the participants the powerful tool of listening and responding to the Word of God by first listening to one another. The group process helped them to be attentive to what was happening with each member. Though some were not that expressive, they learned to stay with one another without applying any pressure, especially during the last sessions when they shared their sense of loss and how they coped through devotions. Though only one member did not mention recourse to the devotions while coping with his loss, he still acknowledged the need to be supported by the members of the Block Rosary.

One-on-One Counseling

Though I did not participate in one-on-one counseling during the group process, I found the counseling with Ruth after the process ended to be significant. She came to me for counseling shortly after the retreat. Prior to that, she had called me twice for phone counseling. During those calls she shared about the emotional abuse she had suffered from her mother, which had led her to come to the US. I tried to tell her to share that with the group but she waited till the last session to do so. Ruth was an underachiever in school and attributed this to her critical mother and teachers. That might have explained

her bond with Perry, who suffered in a similar way. Her reluctance to share her feelings in the group was significant, and she compensated for that with her readings and helping me with the artwork activity during the retreat. In these calls she also shared her loss of her father, which she kept from the group. Her way of coping was her faith in Jesus on the cross.

I took her in for counseling later, because she felt the need to share her loss of her father and, eventually, her fiancé. The break-up of her relationship happened on the feast of the Corpus Christ (Body and Blood of Christ). Her personal loss was associated with this religious event. By coming to me, she became aware of the human element behind her religiosity. She was able to explore why she clung to controlling people like her mother and former fiancé. I empowered her to claim herself and her authority.

Though she embraced the cross, she was unable to see the resurrection beyond the cross. It was significant that, after offering her symbol of the cross during the mass, she was the only one in the group who took it back. I sensed that she wanted to hold on to the cross and to her suffering. Her coming for counseling was a way to discover that there was more to the cross and her own issues. Though she saw Christ's giving of himself on the cross as the ultimate act of love, she was unable to see how withholding herself in the group went counter to Christ's act. As the result of our sessions, her love for Christ was deepened, as well as her awareness that she could move on and live a meaningful, spiritual life.

Couple's Counseling

Another result that was not fully anticipated were the two counseling sessions I had with Perry and Conching. They came to me because there was a pressing problem with their eldest son who wanted to marry the non-Catholic with whom he was cohabiting. The traditional Church's teachings were dear to them. They kept this a secret from the Block Rosary group because of their sense of "hiya" or shame. They did not want others to know that they could not convince their eldest son to get married in the Church. It was a sign of their failure before the group.

The necessity of maintaining an image as good parents had a deep implication for their spiritual standing before the Filipino-Catholic community. This session led to a follow up session in which Perry and Conching discovered that there was a lack of communication between them. They did not talk to one another. They also discovered that they had parenting problems. Creating a therapeutic alliance with them was helpful in the realization that Perry had an investment in controlling Conching and their sons. Perry was able to see the problem, though he was unable to see the issue of his "coat placed in front of him" as symbolic of the block he put between himself and Conching. Conching was able to claim her voice by sharing her need to be listened to in the relationship. Her claim for independence and autonomy came out. Perry had to respect that. His constant blaming of Conching was not acknowledged in his drawing of the family going to Church. For example, in the drawing, Perry appears to be pushing the eldest son into the Church, while Conching is last. They have a long way to go before

they can claim themselves as co-equal in the sacrament of marriage. The implication of this counseling was huge for them as they began to understand that there is a difference between parenting norms in the US and in the Philippines. In the US, it is not what the parents want, but more a matter of showing respect for the autonomy and freedom of their children. Their children wanted compassion and understanding and a right to self-determination. His 32-year-old son had a right to make his own decisions because he was mature. The transcript of this case study is located in Appendix D.

B. Contributions of My Project to Clarifying and Expanding

Clarifying and expanding the Religious Principles

Theology from below happened through the group process itself. God was the unseen guest, facilitating the members to claim themselves through the community. The process was not meant to teach or evangelize about existing beliefs in Trinity, Christ, Church, etc. The group itself is the family of God where there is caring and patient listening. I felt the love of God working through the twists and turns of events as shared by the members. There was a movement towards building a community of faith. It came into existence through guidance by me, as representative of the hierarchy, and through a searching of the Scriptures and the Block Rosary spirit and resulted in a renewed sense of religious identity. Though there were instances when the group wanted me to dictate the tempo of the discussion, I empowered them to search for their own momentum rather than fall back on the rhythm common to the institutional stance. They did not lose their

way because what brought them together was their common grounding: the one God, one creed and one faith.

In their discussion about Mary, some showed a powerful belief that Mary was their mother and source of perpetual help and intercession. They already knew each other through the practice of their monthly devotions but had not had a chance to experience God through experience of one another. It is my sense that some had this realization that God is not only up there but also down here, dealing with the issues of the here and now. "Where two or three are gathered together in my name there I am in their midst." (Matthew 18:20)

The experience of the empty chair led them to focus on who or what was present. There was a common belief that it was Jesus. It was to the empty chair that everyone offered their individual selves as signified by their symbols after they co-shared their homilies during the mass. The centrality of their faith in Christ was never questioned. The presence of Jesus in the Eucharist as received through the body and blood in the mass was the mystical experience they would never forget.

The group's encounter with the Exodus event led to an actualization of faith. It was a difficult transition, marked by a remembrance of the losses they had suffered and the problems with one another. I identified with Moses, as he led the people of Israel from slavery into the desert where they had to grapple with their faith. I felt a free flow spirit for them to be themselves. I maintained a non-judgmental and non-imposing

stance. Some may have found a new expression of their faith and spirituality; others may not have realized the immediate transformation, but discovered it after the project was over. This was exemplified by Ruth's opening to her need for transformation on her own terms after the retreat was over. In every transition there are hardships and struggles. In every change there is a transformation. In this group process we took a look at popular religiosity from a different perspective. As a result, some experienced a deepened spirituality while others found new meaning in their devotional life.

I believe that my image of God as a caregiver was significant in how group members viewed their experience of God. Since I did not model a King who punishes, I became an object of transformation for them enabling them, to seek a spiritual life that is called to care rather than punishment. I listened to them as a caregiver, listening to the children of God who are made in God's image and likeness. As Christ gathered his disciples to partake in a meal during the Last Supper, I gathered them into a circle to share in a Eucharistic meal in which they were the offering through their sharing of words and self-symbols. At this point I can affirm that the Eucharist is the "summit towards which all our actions are focused" (Catechism, p.311).

During the mass on the last day, I used inclusive language suggested by Johnson's She Who Is in an attempt to celebrate the Eucharist as an event relevant not only to a man's experience but to a woman's also. It is unfortunate that there was no concrete feedback from the group on the new language, but it is notable that the group found this mass to be a meaningful celebration.

"Scripture, like a good listener, repeatedly brings us as interpreters of the text to the possibility of speaking from our hearts" (Joyce, p.59). For example, the Scripture reading in the group process allowed the members to interpret the message of the annunciation in the light of their devotion to Mary as their mother. Members might have been confused at times about the text, as was the case in session two when the annunciation was confused with the visitation. There was also the incident when Vangie remembered that she saw a movie in which Joseph rescued Mary from stoning by marrying her. Once they were able to focus on what was actually in the text, however, the group started to bond as a family, sharing their connection to the texts as they spoke from their hearts.

For the group praying the rosary served as a constant reminder of Mary's special place in Church history. Her place was unique because she was the epitome of the "Fiat" ("Be it done unto me according to your Word" Lk.1: 38) and the "Magnificat" ("My being proclaims the greatness of the Lord" Lk.1: 46). During the second session, Vangie said that Mary was her Mother. All members subsequently claimed that experience as their own. For the group, Mary continues to be the Mother of God. She is also the Mother of the Church, a role entrusted to her by Jesus on Calvary. (John 19:25-27) But she does not take the credit to herself; rather she points to the adoration due her son: "Do whatever he tells you." (John 2: 4) Ruth said: "Mary is important to me because she brought Jesus to me." The group attributed the solution of their problems to Mary's intervention. Perry said " Mary is important to me because, when I was studying, I

prayed the rosary and was able to make it through my exams." Ruth shared a similar experience. Others expressed that Mary came to be their mother after they had experienced the pain of loss.

The reading of the Last Supper brought the participants to a realization of the power of hunger. Ernie expressed this feeling as he recalled the bodily experience of hunger, which he eventually was able to link with his hunger for the spiritual food in the Eucharist. The Last Supper was the institution of the Eucharist as spiritual food: "Do this in remembrance of me." (Lk.22: 19) Eucharist also implied sharing during mealtime. The group came to a deeper understanding of the meaning of sharing during the mass. They came, especially, to a deeper appreciation of sharing as it applied to the expectation that they were to be in communion, not only with the Lord, but also with one another.

After reading Exodus, everybody shared his or her personal loss. Loss was significant for every member. Conching shared about the death of her mother and the departure of her sons from home. Perry acknowledged the same loss. Lola shared about her husband's death. Ruth missed a happy childhood and still mourned her father's death. Ernie shared about the loss of a toy when he was a boy. Vangie shared about the loss of her baby. Melissa shared about the loss she felt when she moved from Brooklyn. The younger children, Sarah and Katie, did not share because they could not remember any significant loss in their lives. In all these instances the Scriptures paved the way to real and meaningful remembrance of what was significant.

Family that prays together stays together. This was mentioned twice as Perry and Conching shared their drawings. The drawings showed a family of five going to the Church. Conching added to her drawing that the family members "listened to each other". This is very interesting since she describes herself in my case study, as longing to be heard by her husband who controls and overpowers their relationship. Over all, prayer had a significant aspect in the group. They asked me to pray with them after almost every session. They prayed the "memorare" together. We attended the Block Rosary three times. This was a living out their belief that a family that prays together stays together. I believe in this theology but I also believe that praying and listening go hand-in-hand. When we pray, we listen to God through the scriptures and our neighbors. When we pray, we listen to the members of our families, too. When we pray, we do not overpower each other, but strive for humility. When we pray, we need to communicate our prayer to each other in relationship. The more communication that happens in prayer, meaningful transformation will happen to bring the family really together.

At this juncture of expanding my theological principles, I would like to integrate and clarify what the group had learned as they were able to express their own theology after two months of group process. I am highlighting their symbols, particularly the ones offered in the mass. It is worth noting that their renewed Catholic theology was defined through their sharing and offering of the symbols. The Catholic Church and myself may well have been an object of transformation for them, too.

Vangie chose the painting of the angel with the words: "Sealed with Prayer" signifying her complete trust in God. Her faith was deep and she would not let go of such a faith. Her belief in God is strong. No matter what trials she might encounter, her relationship with God will never be broken. Her loss of the baby and her daughter's recent encounter with a harsh priest did not make her waver in her faith. Her way of coping with grief was through prayer that strengthened her relationship with God.

Lola's choice of the rosary was a symbol of her adherence to the Catholic tradition of praying the rosary every day for her family. She prays the rosary because, through the intercession of the Blessed Mother, her family will have "guidance and protection". When she prays the rosary, she meditates on the mysteries of the Lord's joy, sorrow and glory. When she said "I go with the cycle of the mystery for my meditation and that is also the cycle of my life", she was acknowledging the importance of Christ in her life. The loss of her husband and the difficulty of parenting her grandchildren might be significant in dealing with the sorrowful that could be transformed into the joyful moments of having a family and faith in the US. There is also in this a looking forward to the resurrection in which all her sorrows and joys will not be fulfilled in the Lord's embrace.

Katie's choice of the violet cotton flower speaks about her realization that there is a spirit within her that will not die. She recognizes the value of eternal life. "My spirit, even if I leave the earth, will go on. My faith never dies" She believes that her family will be with her in the here and now and in the life to come. There was also a sense

that, though her symbol may not be as beautiful as a real flower, her sense of beauty will be realized in the after life.

Ernie's choice of his own heart as a symbol was significant since he was able through the group process, to let his heart grow big enough to hold others. His experience of being in the group process helped him discover his spiritual role in his family, despite his losses and ultimately helped him declare: "I have loved!" He identified with my image of the heart that cares. Ernie had bonded with me in my caregiver stance to the degree that he said, "As Fr. Rafael said, a heart can become big enough to hold others." Ernie was the only one who claimed he was never religious in the traditional sense, but rather spiritual, by virtue of his own discovery of faith.

Ruth's choice of a wooden cross signified the centrality of her faith in the Catholic Church. The ultimate act of crucifixion was for her true love. "Blood and water flowed out of his side. It meant that he gave us everything of himself; that's how much He loved us." Her sense of mirroring the act of Christ in her life was significant in the way she was helpful to me during the group process and the retreat. Of her own volition, she printed the "memorare" to the Blessed Mother to be prayed at the end of the third group session. She freely assisted me with the artwork and the readings of the Scriptures. She joined the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, the Block Rosary and other religious groups so that, like Christ, who poured out water and blood, she could also pour out her love for others.

Melissa chose the pin with the words dedication and teamwork. It was her way of saying that she had to be dedicated to her own beliefs and stance before she could establish teamwork with others. I believe that she had a good concept of what church is. She believes that to be a member of the Christian community, she first has to believe in herself before she can become a part of a team. "Teamwork follows from one's dedication." Her eleven people holding hands showed her sense of Church. This related to her concern that "everybody could be right, but it turned out that each one cared for everybody." She longed for a caring community called the Church.

Perry's choice of the Sacred Heart of Jesus again highlights the theology of the Incarnation. He believes that Jesus continually looks at us with a radiant heart. He longs to have the heart of Christ for it will give him happiness. "Christ's heart is full of love and caring." Perry still longs to have a caring heart though it is still absent in his treatment of his wife and his sons, who are distant to him. It was an unconscious longing to be like Christ in his compassion. I believe that Perry was groping for a transforming symbol that might lead him to the discovery of a radiant heart within himself.

Conching's choice of the Eucharist was in sync with the movement of the group process' direction towards the ultimate group process: the mass. The Eucharist was described in the stampita containing a chalice, wheat and a drip of blood with a cross in the background. Her longing for the Eucharist as a real food signifies her sense of spirituality and priority in life. She was the deeply spiritual member of the group who loves the Eucharist and secondarily, to the Blessed Mother. What was significant in this

symbol was the drip of blood with a cross in the background. This reminded me of her description of kneeling at the entrance of the Church and proceeding on her knees to the main altar without feeling any pain. My sense is that she identifies her life with the suffering of Christ as symbolized by the drip of blood. In my two pastoral counseling sessions with her and her husband, she was suffering from not having a voice in relation to her husband. She was pained by his treatment of her—his disapproval of her for wanting to make choices for herself, for wanting a job, for the way she dressed. (See appendix D: clinical case). It might be a symbol of the suffering she was undergoing in the family which was signified by the drip of blood. I believe she tried to spiritualize her condition by her longing for the real food of the Eucharist while in reality longed to be fed by the food of love, care, and understanding from her husband.

Sarah chose the big stuffed teddy bear with a heart that says, "Friendship starts with a loving heart!" Her sense of spirituality was manifested with friendship. Unlike her elders, she was able to relate with God through others. Her sense of bonding through friendship made her religious. Her loving heart that she gave was her sense of religiosity. Her drawing of "a circle means forever" was significant to her bond with the group. "We treated each other with dignity. I have never been like this before." There was a movement of transformation in her toward growing in spirit. I believe that was her sense of spirituality, hopefully forever. For me, a caregiver model of God was transparent in the way she treated others.

It was touching to witness their offer of their symbols to the empty chair. There was silence and reverence, for they all knew that Jesus in the empty chair was there to accept them. For me, in this moment the group achieved a new level of spirituality and mystical communion that it was uniquely theirs. And they accomplished it in the context of the Eucharist, an important sacrament in their Catholic Christian life.

In summary, the group had a sense of being Church without, at first, knowing it. Their concern for one another affirmed that love and care were alive in the process. In fact, it clarified their approach to one another. It was my approach: theology from below to the theology from above mirrored back to them as the image of a caregiver God who was present in the group process. This presence was felt even more during the retreat as signified by the empty chair. "This empty chair was Jesus who has been with us all the way." It was in this journey that God became more meaningful to them through their own practice of faith. It was through their devotions and the Eucharist that they had a link to God. By being there as their priest and pastoral counselor, they were able to attain a new level of knowledge regarding their devotions and the Eucharist. It came, not through the teaching, but through a grappling with religious experience. The Eucharist, as the climax of the experience, became more meaningful with the encounter of Christ in each other as they shared themselves through their symbols. They offered symbols of themselves to God as represented by the empty chair. Lastly, the reading of the scriptures made the group experience meaningful. I believe that the Bible readings that were used in the group process helped the Filipino Americans reconnect their popular religiosity to their spiritual lives. "We can remain connected with meaning and value

through faithfulness to our many spiritual practices. Each day, we can reaffirm our love and commitment, each day, we can reconnect to our people and our texts. These spiritual practices give shape and structure to our lives." (Ochs and Olitzky, p.185).

Clarifying and expanding the Clinical Principles

In Clark's article, "Clergy as Systems Analysts", he looked at family systems theory from an inclusive perspective when he said that one measure of the health of the system, be it congregation, family, or marriage, is the degree to which the differentiation of its members is fostered (p. 256). I treated the group as one emotional unit of interlocking relationships in which my goal was to allow the group to experience differentiation of its members. This was a difficult challenge for me since the group was composed of people from different family structures. They were Vangie and Ernie who had two children; Perry and Conching who had three sons; Ruth, as she related to her mother and significant others outside the group; and Lola whose three granddaughters were part of the group. I paid particular attention to small family dynamics, as well as intergenerational dynamics.

I looked at the group as a family system to which I directly related through the group process. The group members had influenced each other through their participation in the big group in the Block Rosary. They had their norms to follow, either directly or indirectly dictated by religion or the culture's sense of "hiya". They functioned as a unit

in which they observed the guidelines of attendance at First Saturday masses. They had their own unique ways of celebrating, which included praying and eating together, each family bringing a dish to be shared by all at one table after the Eucharistic meal.

My group has a life of its own but is still affected by life experiences such as the Block Rosary. Family systems theory is concerned with how systems regulate themselves so that homeostasis is preserved. Lola had been a consistent influence on her grandchildren and, to an extent on the group. Her symbol of the rosary was representative, not only of Filipino popular religiosity, but of cultural imperative to hand down those traditions to succeeding generations. "When I pray, I pray for all the members of my family." She wanted to perpetuate that family transmission. Her silence on the issues between her granddaughters was indicative of her internal process of questioning whether she should remain firm in her religious tradition or allow herself to engage on the level of her grandchildren. In the beginning, it was difficult for her to relate to her granddaughters on equal terms. A homeostatic instinct was operative that wanted to maintain equilibrium and balance. During the retreat, she transcended that instinct through her active participation in the commonality, drawing and symbols activities. There was an apparent transformation in her actions towards her granddaughters and the group. She not only prayed the rosary, but also included her meditation on "the sorrowful, joyful and glorious mysteries of the Lord Jesus Christ." This choice denotes an opening to being in touch with the different emotions and feelings that her grandchildren had shared and expressed, whether they be joy, sorrow, or triumph. In her drawing of the erupting volcano, she concluded by saying, "We understand people.

We relate to people because they understand us." We can conclude Lola felt understood, not only by the group, but also by her grandchildren.

The dynamics of relationship, as shown in the struggle of the three children to cope with Lolas's imposition of prayer, were also affected by the children's parents and their expectation that the children become good Catholics according to the devotional standards of the Block Rosary group. Lola had more control, since she was empowered by her grandchildren's parents to do her style of parenting, the Filipino way. This affected Melissa, who is now 21 and still living with her Filipino family. At times she functioned as a substitute mother, since the mother and the father were absent most of the time due to their work schedules. Melissa felt pressured to care for the younger siblings. Melissa established an alliance with her grandma in taking the reign of responsibility for the care of the young ones. However, because the kids were left with Lola, who had seemed to have more power and control over them, Melissa's role was compromised and she was caught in the middle.

Using family systems theory, I allowed them to communicate with one another, beginning with Katie and Sarah who spoke about their relationship to their grandma. At first, they were afraid to show their feelings of guilt-- "I pray the rosary, not without guilt from grandma (Sarah)" --and later, of imposition-- "I came to this group not by choice (Katie)". Despite Lola's piercing stare, they were able to claim their autonomy and share that with Lola.

I created a therapeutic alliance that made it a safe forum for sharing. Melissa had a different way of approaching this family dynamic. Because of the pressure she felt to be a mother to Katie and Sarah, she tried to stabilize the confrontation by crying. This worked and homeostasis was achieved. Homeostasis is the automatic tendency of a system to stabilize. In the conversation regarding calling the elder one "ate", in which Sarah said that she would not call Katie her "ate", I facilitated the confrontation. Sarah said that not calling Katie "ate" did not mean that she was disrespecting her. Katie expressed that she cared for her sister by allowing her to use her clothes. Sarah indicated that she felt slighted because Katie had confronted her before the group. I noted that it was all right for them to express their emotions. Melissa could not take the conflict and cried. I noted again, it is important to recognize emotions. It is worth noting that Katie is the rebel in the family, as was it manifested in her drawing of the black hole. In her drawing she represented the group as a tree with falling branches. "These represent our feelings. The hole represents the place where the birds build their nest." She was different. The boldness of her colors in the drawing indicated her differentiation. During the feedback session of the retreat, she affirmed her own transformation as a consequence of being in the group process, but also as it manifested in her lifestyle and attitude toward her peers in school. This was reflected in my notation of her statement: "Katie said that in school she had not given importance to others. Now she appreciated people as they were." She had also erased a pre-conceived notion about adults. She realized they were willing to listen, as she had experienced from being part of the group. She eventually said that she chose the cotton violet flower because it represented the everlasting. With

confidence Katie reflected: "My spirit, even if I leave the earth, will go on." This represented her claim to authority.

Sarah, on the other hand, called her drawing "Peace and Unity—a circle means forever and a telephone with a hello and ring ring." Despite the confrontations, she acknowledged the value of listening and establishing peace and unity through dialogue. Her message about treating one another with dignity was heard. Her symbol of the circle captured the mandala experience of gaining greater consciousness on her path through the sacred circle. The group process helped each member, including myself, to actualize his or her own personal individuation, culminating in a symbolic offering of the individuated self in the context of the celebration of the Eucharist. It was significant that these acts took place in the context of the larger Christian community. Just as the circle had an effect on each one, so each one affected the circle. It is worth noting that it was the youngest member of the group who came to the Jungian insight of the circle as a group achieving a level, not only of deepened ego consciousness, but also of greater group consciousness. Sarah, the youngest American-born child, became in the context of family systems, the catalyst for intergenerational communication when she expressed that she felt listened to. During the feedback session at the retreat, Sarah said that she had learned that adults were not hard to deal with, after all. She said: "They accepted me as I am. I experienced listening to others during the weeks I was with them."

These family dynamics within the group and outside the group were valuable to the whole system of differentiating members. The reason I chose open family systems

rather than the closed systems was because its potential for development extended beyond those original members; hence, new information could be integrated from the outside and unneeded matter could be eliminated from the inside. My case study with Perry and Conching contained their relationship with their sons who were an integral part of the unit. What triggered the presenting problem was something from the "outside"--their eldest son's "living in sin" and marrying a non-Catholic. As we progressed in counseling, I was able to take a nonjudgmental stance and succeeded in dealing with their communication issues, allowing the therapeutic stance of dyadic relationship to be enhanced by the nonjudgmental stance. This helped in the eventual resolution of respect and care for the family as a whole. The couple's realization of their lack of communication caused them to focus on the values of autonomy. This, in turn, shed light on the authoritative posture that Perry and others wanted to impose on their children.

Vangie was concerned about the way her husband was dealing with the loss of their deceased baby. I helped keep the conversation focused on Ernie and Vangie's loss. The group deeply empathized with their grief. In another instance during the retreat, Vangie related that she had accompanied her daughter Elaine to see a priest who eventually reprimanded her for allowing her daughter to cohabit with her Caucasian boyfriend. The couple already had a child. Elaine cried because the Church had made it difficult for them to process the marriage papers. Vangie felt hurt and eventually sided with her daughter by welcoming her and the baby into her home. Conching and Perry comforted her by relating a similar experience in which a priest reprimanded Conching for allowing their son to live with his girlfriend outside marriage. It had offended

Conching, also. I intervened by asking why they weren't angry with the Church teaching or the priest. Both responded that they respected the church and the clergy and it was proper to keep those feelings to themselves. I pointed out that, while the Church was a guide and a symbol of authority, they were still entitled to their feelings. This incident underscored how strong the influence of the Church had been on the development of the superegos of older members of the group. This is true of the other members of the Block Rosary group, also. Sin meant breaking away from God. The group had co-opted that sense of sin to apply to disobedience of its policies. The Eucharistic fast had to be observed or else one could not receive communion. I was often asked during the Block Rosary to give them the Church dispensation so that they might eat before the mass.

"There is no instinctual urge, no anxiety situation, no mental process which does not involve objects, external or internal; in other words, object relations are at the center of emotional life." (Mahler on object relations theory, p.53) The Church was a significant object for these two families, but rather than exploring their relationship with the Church, they succumbed to their interior submission to the Church and did not allow their emotions to surface. I helped them explore their emotional situation and their right to question the Church's authority as well as examine their relationships with priests and the Church. Using object relations theory, the Church became an object of relation or transformation for them.

The basic tenet of object relations theory is that of the primary, absolute need of human beings for attachment. In applying this tenet to Vangie, we see her chose her

attachment to her daughter over her attachment to the Church, but still respect the Church's authority. This created a split in her alliance: her own biological family or the spiritual family? Veering away from Vangie for a moment and recalling the issue of split-level Christianity, as I presented it in Chapter I, we see how it might also hold true for the other members of the group. The members had to pray the rosary and devotions and would profess not to indulge in vices like gambling and drinking. After the mass, some would do the opposite of what they had professed and rationalize that they were meant to socialize, of which gambling and drinking happened to be a part. There appeared to be an incongruity between how they observed their religiosity and how they lived.

Now going back to Vangie, splitting leads to object relations' second central concept of the child's inner world as it is shaped by internal representations of others. In Vangie's case, growing up in the traditional Philippines as a devout Catholic shaped her symbol "SEALED WITH PRAYER". "My faith is sealed by God. Nobody can tell me to let go of it." It is my sense, because the Church represented God for her, she continued to affiliate with the Church. She said that her relationship with God is sealed. We can induce, then, that if her relationship with God is sealed, her relationship with the Church is also sealed. Despite that, I kept the emotional side of the incident open for her. She still had resorted to her faith, as shown in her drawing: yellow sun shining over an angel and the land. "If we have faith and we pray, everything will fall into place." (Vangie) Through loss of her baby and in the incident of her daughter being rejected by the priest, Vangie was able to access her own internal resources. It was only after completing this

task that she was able to reach out in prayer and eventually to her husband and the Block Rosary group.

Lastly, object relations theory looks at why we need others, how we take them in and how we relate to them internally. In Vangie's case, her faith is the object that sustained her before and to which she still clings: "My relationship with God is sealed". This was Vangie's coping mechanism as she sought her ego strength. Through her Church involvement and prayer she became so close to the Church object that she was attached to the religious identity it represents. It was at this juncture that her religion, culture and personality became intimately intertwined. This led her to trust in God all the more. These twist and turns of coping were her way of achieving and finding a homeostatic balance, not only for herself, but also for her family and the Block Rosary group.

In retrospect, I saw how Vangie's participation in the group became an object of transformation for others in the group as I also was for them. Being a priest, I represented the Church. Vangie never got angry with me, because she was able to see beyond the object I represented for her. I represented an alternative experience to the one she had with the priest who was condemning. Throughout the seven years I had been with the group, she experienced me as compassionate and understanding. It is my sense that she was grateful to me for not condemning her for her acts but rather embracing her for whatever she brought to the group. She related her early experiences of the Block Rosary, both in the Philippines and the US, and how she had been helped to cope with

her problems through saying the rosary and novenas and by attending mass. These were her psychological symbols of getting fed spiritually. She distinguished between herself and the other, between what was inside and what was outside and eventually accepted and integrated both the good and the bad parts of the self and others. Vangie eventually experienced her own way of differentiation from the group.

I observed that all the Filipino-born participants had a strong reference to the influence of the superego. At first, they had been very dependent on me as a minister to start the process. When they had difficult challenges, they came to me for a solution. As a pastoral counselor, I re-directed help to support of their ego strengths in dealing among themselves as a family. They could solve it their own way. It was the empowerment that was necessary. They wanted me to tell them what they should do during the group process, since my previous role with them had been a preaching role. They expected the same dynamic in this forum. There were many instances, especially with Perry, when no matter how often I suggested they speak with an "I", that they would revert to "We", thus looking to me for validation. Ruth also was able to claim her own differentiation through the verbatim I had with her regarding her autonomy. In that session she discovered how her mother's abuse led her to cling to controlling figures like her mother and fiancé. This is located in Appendix E. Melissa did this, too, as well as the other members of the group. It was significant that Katie and Sarah showed no strong superego identification with the Church but rather with their grandmother. However, Lola's close identification with the Church was indirectly projected on to her granddaughters. The Church and superego were powerful influences on them in terms of family systems theory.

In summary, the group members are not alone in their struggles towards their sense of individuation. The other in object relations and family systems affects each one. Each one, including their transforming objects like the Church, became objects of relations to the other. I directed them to their ego strengths and their support groups: their family and the Block Rosary group. The group is an emotional unit in which the members' psychological processes were helpful to surfacing their conscious individual selves. Their sense of coming to consciousness was linked to the group process: meeting in a circle, from the first session to the last, and ultimately celebrated in the context of the Mass. Carl Jung concluded that "Growth toward wholeness is a neutral process that brings to light one's uniqueness and individuality. The result of individuation is a harmonious unity of the personality with the self serving as a unifying principle." (Creating Mandalas, Fincher, p. 2) Throughout, they were in the mandala experience of circle. This eventually led to a sacred circle of consciousness that empowered them to embrace their religious identity.

C. The Contributions of My Project to ministry in a wider context.

My contribution to ministry after undergoing this demonstration project is a guide for Filipino-Americans on consciously integrate their popular religiosity into the context of the larger culture without sacrificing their essential beliefs. One's common belief, if shared with others, has the power to transform the other. If piety is observed within the context of the family, popular religiosity can be "transmitted" consciously and in a

manner that respects the autonomy of those who receive it. Since each person can become an object of transformation for the other, a caring stance is needed to effect a loving response.

I was able to help the immigrants discover a sense of Christian community that evolved out of the group process and was based on the sharing of self. The believers became aware of their hierarchical, privatized sense of faith. My project was a challenge to engage their faith beyond the observance of an inculturated ritual. It was a challenge, also, to make us aware that there is a dynamic spirit in our personal beliefs waiting to break free, as my group experienced. It just needed to be embraced and integrated into the vitality of their lives.

Through group process, we encounter each other in a circle rather than in a structured life situation. Since each person becomes an object of the transformation for the other, it adds to the development of the sacred circle, while at the same time promoting differentiation and individuation. As layer after layer of popular religiosity accrued to Filipino Catholic practice --as passed on by the influence of the Spanish inquisition over the course of four hundred years--not even a hammer and chisel would have been enough to uncover the real spirituality that was waiting to surface. Filipinos were colonized by the Spaniards under the symbols of the cross and sword. The painful discovery of the imposition that these symbols signified could not be fully realized in one or even eight group processes and counseling, but can be followed up by a constant process of individuation, prayer and introspection that one day might result in wholeness.

Imposition of religious authority, as shown by the "transmitted religion", can also bring forth an effective integration of one's faith if evaluated through a process that also can deal with its death defying elements. The group process can provide a forum that has the potential to impact each person. Through sharing what has and is happening in their lives, they can move toward a deepened faith and personal actualization. This is not easy; there may be many experiences of dying required as my group experienced, to draw forth a meaningful spirituality from one's popular religiosity.

My project helps ministers to view their practice of rituals. After going through this project, I believe that there are symbols of imposition, like the symbol of the "sword and the cross" as exemplified by the Spanish inquisition in the Philippines, that triggers a reaction in us and call us to look at an area in our religious life. This can be a whole topic of exploration in another project, but my demonstration project has paved the way to that study, especially in the context of colonized Christian countries like the Philippines. I conclude that my project demonstrates how the meaningfulness of the group process and individuation put flesh on the liturgical life of Catholics who are called to grow and be nurtured as a body through the Scriptures and the Eucharist. I feel that my project will help Christians feel more secure about the process of integration, although it may be foreign to their culture and practices. Observance of one's beliefs can be a way to explore one's identity and faith problems in the family and can even be a way to enhance an already existing spirituality that the person is trying to deepen. Unless the minister is someone who cares and listens to his or her flock, the faithful might never feel comfortable enough to embark on such a journey.

My project demonstrates how the concept of acculturation goes hand-in-hand with the process of faith maturation of the individual and the group. There is a group consciousness that is available to the individual in his or her discovery of mature faith. Culture can be a friend to the maturation of faith. The diversity of beliefs and culture can enhance the unity of any ethnic family.

D. Implications for Future Ministry.

In my recent celebration of the Block Rosary at which the group was present, Sarah, the youngest member of my demonstration project, hugged me and asked, "Can we do the group process and retreat again?" I was taken aback by her question. I smiled and responded: "You and the whole Block Rosary community are doing it right now."

In retrospect, the process worked. The group has not missed a session of the Block Rosary since. I saw the transformation of parents and grandparents as they related to one another in a more relaxed way in the Block Rosary. What transpired in the small group can be translated into the context of the larger Christian community. The group can be a medium of transformation for others. By their memories of the event, they can remember and continue sharing their faith experiences with others. Besides, the Church is the Christian community of faith. The Church can be a source of support for its members.

It is not only the task of the minister to be a hierarchical power and influence on his or her parishioners. The pastoral swing is to the empowerment of the members to discover how they can make this Church come alive through what the Church tradition has to offer. Ministers need not go beyond religious practices in order to incorporate a deeper faith experience in their ministry. These beliefs and symbols are readily available to them as they practice their faith. It is the task of the minister to uncover the cherished traditions which can bring new life and meaning to the faithful. The Scriptures, rosary, novenas and the Eucharist have been available for years. Their value becomes dormant if they are not properly utilized. Artwork and symbols only bring to light what is already there.

Ministers can also go beyond popular religiosity by being creative in the integration of pastoral counseling and care. In my case, I was able to bring out the family issues and concerns that lay behind the disconnect between older and younger members. I believe that both the parents and children now have the realization that Christian community is their family, and whatever problems they bring to the community can be dealt with. I was able to bring the Filipino-born and the American-born members together through intergenerational connection.

Pastoral counseling and care can be a powerful tool to enhance the dynamics of relationships. Pastoral counseling has been looked upon by new immigrants as something to be feared and something that is negative, since the term alone has the implication of bringing out weaknesses in the process of preserving an image of the self

or the group. If pastoral counselors can provide immigrants with care, pastoral counseling can be a liberating moment for individuals, couples and families. Ministers and caregivers need to be sensitive to this discovery. I strongly believe that, through group process, pastoral counseling and retreat, those working with immigrant ethnic groups will find their work more fulfilling and satisfying.

The use of Scripture is also a powerful tool to reach out to our parishioners and congregants. It is a way to discover their faith, just as they have learned to discover themselves and their relationships to God. I believe that a spiritual and a therapeutic stance can help bring forth individuation and differentiation both in the individual and a group. My demonstration project group has already formed a group to come together to reflect on Sunday Scripture readings.

I will not be there forever as a helping companion to the Block Rosary. There will be other caregivers to provide care for them in the future. I will be moving on to another form of ministry, but this approach to ministry will be one I cherish wherever I go. I will take along the dynamic memory of this event in my heart. During the retreat, I chose my heart as my symbol of a caring embrace of other hearts. I conclude the process with the parting words: "In my heart, I thank you, and wherever I will be, I will never forget this moment. We move on. Our project has ended, our mission begins."

APPENDIX A

Beyond Popular Religiosity Among Filipino American Families Through Group Process in Pastoral Counseling and Care

Pilot Project (October 17-December 16, 2000)

Student: Rafael P. Macaranas

Mentors: Jean Aniebona/Dr. Eugene Borowitz

January 17, 2001

First Group Process: Saturday: October 17, 2000

Cabrini Medical Center: Meditation Room

Five came. Three were excused for schedule reasons. Two were absent. We contacted the two absent members but they could not be reached. We were late starting the session because one member had difficulty finding parking. We started at 5:50PM and ended at 7:35PM. In the future I'll have to be stricter with the hour-and-a-half schedule. I need to establish ground rules for the second meeting.

We introduced ourselves, starting with my sharing. Rationale of the project was explained. I shared my autobiography with them, starting with my age and journey to America, up to and including my present position as the pastoral care coordinator of Cabrini hospice. I had been with the Block Rosary prayer group for the past seven years. I shared about my family and loved ones.

Next Ernie shared. Ernie is 54-years-old, born in the Philippines. He came to the US in 1972 and works as an automation engineer. Ernie had a difficult life in Philadelphia as a street vendor. He had a "bad" beginning, going in and out of jail. He found his strength in the experience of emigrating from the Philippines and making it here in the US. He married Vangie and had two children. A daughter, Elaine, and a son, Ernest, both were born in the US. Elaine recently got married and has a son. There was a long gap between the first-born and the second-born, with the death of a two-week-old child in between. Ernie's wife shared her grief, while Ernie nodded his head, confirming the story.

Perry started sharing anxiously about his life. Perry is 59-years-old and born and raised in the Philippines. He has a Chinese father and mother. He came to the US in 1967 and works as an engineer. Together with his wife Conching he has three sons. His oldest son Noel was born in the Philippines, the two younger sons, Nathaniel and Christopher, were born in the US. Perry was an underachiever in college but was intelligent in his field as an engineer. He was grateful to the Block Rosary and the Charismatic prayer group for the support he received from them. He was, at first, distant towards the charismatic group, but eventually was able to feel at home with them. He went to the Holy Land and

other religious places with his wife. He was proud to have three successful children, two of whom were earning more than he was earning. He was instrumental in bringing his wife's family to this country.

Conching came next. Conching is 59-years-old and was born in the Philippines. She came to the US in 1968 and is a retired assistant accountant. She was emotional and teary-eyed as she related her story about her life in the Philippines where she lost both her mom and one of her siblings. She brought the family to this country and was able to have family unity here with the other siblings. She was grateful to the group, though she was not expressive of her feelings. She was reserved and cautious in her sharing most of the time. She is a housewife and very concerned about her youngest son who wants to leave the army after four years. She appeared to be protective of her children.

Ruth was smiling. She is 37-years-old and born in the Philippines. She came to the US in 1991 and works as a graphic artist. She is a single woman, her father passed away, her mother lives in the Philippines. She is both soft-spoken and well-mannered. She is new to the Block Rosary. She liked being a part of this group. She had previous psycho-spiritual group experiences like this before. She was an underachiever but was grateful for God's help while she studied. She had a change of careers from business management to graphic art. She is independent and was experiencing a spiritual renewal at this time.

Vangie confidently told us about her life. Vangie is 52-years-old and was born in the Philippines. She came to the US in 1973 and works as a bookkeeper. She has been the mover of the group. She prepared the list and contacted the group members regarding the formation and diversity of the group. She had experienced a deep loss when her son died. The baby died because doctors did not discover his illness until it was too late. She was angry at the hospital. She did not sue the hospital. The Block Rosary group was a solace. She was active in leadership and prayer. I sensed an unresolved grief.

I was satisfied with the first meeting, despite the absence of the original volunteers. We went overtime. My concern for the next time is how to accommodate the sharing of each member in an hour-and-30 minutes. The group was attentive to the issue of loss in their lives. It was also a great feeling to be with them as they listened to each other and got to know each other better.

My concern was the 14-year-old Katie who would be joining us next Saturday. I processed my concern with my supervisor and thesis mentor, Jean Aniebona. It was my fear of Katie's "childishness" and her inability to stay with the sharing for the duration. Was her being a minor a concern? Yes? Confidentiality? Yes. I will just have to test out the reality of my fears at the next meeting.

They suggested that we end with a prayer. I concluded the meeting with a prayer and a blessing. I thanked God for the gift of people who responded to the group. I prayed for the strength to continue and for God to bless us along the way.

Second Saturday: October 28, 2000
Cabrini Medical Center: Meditation Room
5:00-6:30 PM

All five came. Two couples backed out. The Pacana family (3) were not sure they wanted to take part in the group process. They suggested Guia (another member of the Block Rosary) would be a good possible replacement, since Ruth could pick her up along the way in New Jersey. I was disappointed with the non-show of the other members. On the other hand, I was glad that the five who started the group came and were excited about the continuation of the demonstration project.

I started the meeting with the reading of Luke 1: 26-38. It was about the Annunciation of the angel Gabriel to Mary as the favored daughter and about Mary's response, "I am the Lord's servant, may it happen to me as you have said." The first theme of the project is how popular religiosity (devotion to Mary, praying of the rosary and novena) affects them and the members of their family.

I started by asking them what they had learned from the reading. They focused on Mary's role. She was chosen by God to be the mother of Jesus. She responded to the angel "Be it done unto me." Mary was special to them. Though she was an ordinary woman, she was elevated to be the Mother of God. They talked about the visitation of Mary to cousin Elizabeth, when the baby in her womb leapt for joy.

Conching said that Mary was betrothed to Joseph. The punishment for getting pregnant by a man other than the betrothed was to be stoned to death. Vangie remembered that she saw a movie in which Joseph rescued Mary from stoning by marrying her. Ernie, her husband, reacted saying he had never heard this. I intervened that that was not from the Scriptures. Perry said that it was Hollywood's invention. So we were able to resolve that from now on we would confine ourselves to the scripture readings and not the contents of Hollywood movies.

The second question was: "Who is Mary to you?" Perry responded that Mary was a mother to him. Ever since he was a kid, his mother taught him that he should pray the rosary because Mary is the mother of God. The way to Jesus is through Mary. The closest person in the life of Jesus was Mary. So our prayers are answered because of her intercession. Perry said: "Mary is important to me because when I was studying, I believed that it was through praying the rosary that I was able to make it through my exams." He was theoretical. He had a problem claiming even his theology. He used "we" and would invite his wife to affirm him. He finally claimed the belief as his own. He acknowledged Ruth's experience of making it through her studies by praying the rosary.

Ernie started by saying that when he was in the Philippines, he never prayed. He only learned to pray because his wife taught him to pray. Along the way, he made retreats with the other male members of the Block Rosary group. He narrated that while he was praying in front of the tabernacle, he saw a vision of Mary in a praying mode. It was during that time, he started to pray the rosary on his own. He liked it. Conching shared

that, for her, Mary was the Lady of Perpetual help. Her husband Perry chimed in, saying that this was his image of Mary, too. Conching said she used to pray the rosary and the novena every Wednesday, especially at Baclaran, Manila (Shrine of Our Lady of Perpetual Help). She would pray the rosary kneeling down, beginning at the entrance of the Church and proceeding on her knees to the main altar. She did not feel any pain during the process.

Ruth said: "Mary was important to me because she brought Jesus to me." What was important for her was Jesus. Mary was significant because she interceded for us. She went through a psycho-spiritual process group in which the priest taught her that theology. She expressed the need to pray the rosary to pass her courses, too. She pointed this out to Perry. She shared a prayer from her memory of the "memorare", Morning Prayer to Mary. Everybody liked it. She felt affirmed by the reaction and the compliments of the group.

Vangie started by saying that Mary was a mother to her, too. She found solace in the prayer every time she experienced difficulties in her life. I asked if she was able to pray the rosary when she lost her baby. She responded that it was difficult to pray at that time. She was hurting and in deep pain. She said that she had a dream of a small car circling round and round. There was light shining through.

Vangie's husband Ernie chimed in saying that he identified with his wife's pain when she shared about the loss of their baby. Conching also said that she shared that moment. Ernie said that it also had been difficult for him to pray at the time because he wanted to be there for his wife. I noticed the whole group was empathizing with Vangie and eventually with Ernie. Someone said that she was in sync with what Vangie said. Mary was for her--Mother. She was a mother in pain missing her baby Edwin. I summarized the sharing of that experience with them, helping them to be aware of their common bond to Mary as their Mother.

Ruth made an attempt to comfort Vangie with an interpretation of the dream, saying that the car moving around her was her baby. And the light was God watching her baby, protecting him.

The third question was: how does this popular religiosity affect you and the members of your family? I affirmed that the question had already been touched upon previously but now we would approach it in a more concrete way, from the vantage point of how it was affecting them now.

Perry was the one who started by saying that praying the rosary helped him in his life. He prayed for the protection of the family. Everything was all right now except for his first son who was engaged to a non-Catholic. Perry disapproved of the engagement. He wanted to evoke the support of his wife about this. She declined. So I asked, "How does this concern you?" He answered that he wanted his son to be married to a Catholic because that was what his family and Church wanted. Ruth chimed in by saying that religion did not matter. Perry said that she had been a Buddhist and now was a Methodist

and not a Catholic and did not understand. He responded to Ruth intellectually about the importance of Catholic Marriage. Conching made a statement, not in support of her husband, but for openness to other religious traditions. Perry did not like that. He tried to stick to his point by saying "Ruth, I hear but..." Ruth pressed Perry to be emotionally open. I asked Perry what was happening. I said, "I had the feeling that Ruth wanted to care for you by sharing her opinion." He kept silent and nodded.

I said there were only two minutes left and that it was almost time to wrap things up. They all said: "Already?" It was quick. They wanted to continue.

I shared my feeling that the group was growing closer. I summarized briefly what happened during the session and gave them some details of the next meeting. They decided that they would not meet at the Block Rosary group house but at Cabrini. We were supposed to be meeting at one of the houses for the next meeting. Ernie suggested that it would be better to meet at Cabrini rather than at home. I gave them the questionnaires about themselves and their families to be submitted next Saturday.

Third Saturday: November 4, 2000
Cabrini Medical Center 5:00-6:30PM

I was glad that nine members of the group attended. One couple had dropped out and had come to Cabrini to talk to me about not being able to attend because of schedule difficulties and other obligations. I was hopeful, however, that the Pacana family, originally three, now wanted to include the 12-year-old granddaughter in the group. At first, I had concerns because she was not on the list. I asked the group how they felt about it. They were OK with the new addition but were anxious about the outcome of the third group process.

The new members were: the grandmother, 72; granddaughters, Melissa, 21; Katie, 14; and Sarah, 12. They appeared to be indifferent to the process at first, except for Melissa, who was excited and all smiles at the beginning of the group.

I started the process by reviewing the purpose of the group. I introduced myself as I had the first Saturday. Then I asked who would like to be next. The new members pointed to the other members to go first.

Perry spoke next this time sharing about himself and his history and beliefs with surety and confidence. Conching followed. She had not finished when Melissa inserted herself into the process, telling the group the fact that she was a senior at Stony Brook College in Long Island. Melissa is 21-years-old and was born in the Philippines. She came to the US in 1989. She was happy to be a help to my project and was grateful for this opportunity.

Next was Katie. She is 14-years-old and was born the US. Katie started by saying that she came but not by choice. I comprehended that right away. She pointed at her grandma. She did not want to talk about it. There was a stare from grandma, who was

silent. Then she shared that she just graduated from Junior High as the valedictorian. The group affirmed her. She was not yet open about herself, still testing the participation of the group. Next came 12-year-old Sarah who was soft-spoken and shy. Sarah was also born in the US. Next, the grandmother, Lola, spoke telling the group that she was 72-years-old, born in the Philippines, very religious, and that she loved to pray the rosary. She came to the US in 1994 and is a retired teacher. Lola has 5 children and 10 grandchildren. She added she was glad to be a good influence on the mother of Melissa, Katie and Sarah and the family as a whole because of her religiosity.

Ernie said he was never religious in the Philippines and his contact with religiosity was through his wife. His wife invited him to join the Charismatic renewal and they were introduced to Dr. Junie Elizari, who made an impact on his life and whose example made Ernie religious. Perry chimed in, too, saying he had a similar experience. Perry said that Dr. Elizari was a medical doctor who changed his profession to full-time lay evangelist, spreading the word of God and witnessing to a life-in-the-Spirit through his life. Along the way he was transformed. Perry also had a transformative experience through a vision, just as Dr. Elizari had. Vangie and Conching and Ruth also recounted the same experience with Dr. Elizari. This man had touched them and made a difference in their spiritual lives.

Katie said, "You guys seem to have a deep sense of faith." She started by sharing her own faith and her Grandmother's influence on her and her sisters. She talked about how they prayed the rosary because of grandma. She was very cautious not to offend her grandmother. Melissa also shared how, when they were growing up, it was their grandmother who taught them how to pray. Sarah chimed in by saying that she prayed, but out of guilt because of her grandma.

Grandma affirmed her good influence on the kids. She said that the children have to be religious, too, but she acknowledged that the culture in the US compared to the Philippines is a much less religious one. She shared her experiences of the Charismatic renewal in the Philippines and of the Monsignor who influenced her. The old group picked up the conversation about the charismatic renewal and were going on and on.

I butted in and reminded them that this was not about the charismatic renewal prayer meeting. This is a group process. There was a pause. They continued to talk about their faith. I noticed that Ruth picked up some tissues and passed them to Melissa who was beginning to cry. I let that happen. There was silence. I directed the group's attention to Melissa as I said, "Melissa, what is happening?"

Melissa shared that these were tears of joy because she and her family started sharing openly about their faith and prayers. It was new for them to talk about it to each other. I knew there was something going on there. Katie also started to cry, as well as Sarah. The grandmother did not, however. Vangie, Ernie and the rest of the members of the group were crying too. Vangie identified herself with Melissa's struggle with faith. Ernie identified with her later on in a different way.

Katie began to comfort her sister. Melissa said that she was crying because she felt one with her sister in her experiences. I love my sister. She was able to express that feeling but hesitantly. It seemed as if they had never shared their feelings to each other. She said that she wanted to be good and change her lifestyle. She had been preoccupied with other things but this time it would be different. She was touched by the life of the members of the group. It had a positive influence on her. She wanted to know more about the renewal. This prompted the other members of the group to talk more about the renewal and also the block rosary.

Sarah was more reserved in her actions but upfront with her feelings. She was able to share that she also loved her sisters and was able to claim that she felt comfortable going through the group process. She was able to share her feelings toward her sisters and her grandmother, who she said, was putting guilt on her. I guessed that that was the issue she wanted to resolve through this process. She appeared to be smart and kind.

The session ended with good words for each other and the assurance that this group would be beneficial for everyone. They were reminded of the prayer that Ruth had said for the group. She had made a plastic lamination of the "Memorare" prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary and led the group in the prayer. Some members of the group comforted Melissa.

Fourth Saturday: November 11, 2000
Cabrini Medical Center: Meditation Room
5:00PM to 6:30PM

We began by listening to Katie's remark about having perfume on her jacket because it smelled of fish. She had eaten some Filipino food and said she did not want to offend people with the fish smell.

The conversation shifted to Filipino food and the fact that everybody smelled the same way as Katie on a regular basis. She responded that it was proper to wear a perfume so as not to offend others.

Perry said that he also ate fish and Filipino food. That is their food and it was all right. I asked about the significance of the smell of Filipino food to them. Sarah said that she did eat some Filipino food but not all dishes, especially "dinuguan" (blood of pork), which she did not like. But most of the time, she ate whatever Lola served. Katie echoed her sister's statement. Melissa just smiled because she liked Filipino food as compared to her sisters.

The discussion turned to the difference between the experiences of being Filipino in the US and in the Philippines. Conching opened the sharing with her being reminded of the situation in the Philippines. She said that there was massive flooding that affected her relatives in the Philippines. Most of her immediate relatives were already here; her distant relatives were still there. It is during this time of the year on December 1 that all her relatives and family in the US chip in to give a box of goods and clothes to be sent as

balikbayan (homecoming) boxes to distant relatives. It was a gesture of help and kindness to the poor relatives who never made it to the US. She felt pity. Filipinos are not as lucky as we are. What made it worse is the fact that the President of the Philippines is in the process of being impeached for involvement as the king of illegal gambling in the country. Perry continued to use "we" when speaking of his experience of the Philippines and when complimenting his wife. I made a note to remind everyone to use "I" when speaking so that each one could claim what he or she had said and not involve the other. It was also for the purpose of personal clarity of what one wanted to say, not mixing it with what someone else wanted to say. Perry continued to say that they had given things even to those who were not relatives. He was fulfilled doing that.

All, including myself, were born and raised in the Philippines, except for Katie and Sarah. That was a significant difference within the group. Katie shared that she had been mistaken as a Hispanic and Chinese and she resented that. Her friends told her that Filipino food and being "Flip" were cool. I responded by asking what that meant. It was short for Filipino, she said. She told us that there were only two Filipinos in her class. Perry, who is Filipino-Chinese, reacted by saying that even though he was born with a Chinese father and a Filipino mother, he was still piqued by some people. He was reacting to Katie's remark but was unable to express how the remark hurt him. Instead, he bought into the remark by claiming that he had once felt piqued, too, by a Filipino bully in the Philippines which resulted in a fight.

Perry shared that being a Filipino in the US was tough. He had to fight for his rights. He said that Filipinos are more talented but are too shy to speak out. In fact and reality, they are. He cited an example of doing a calculus problem in three minutes which took his boss weeks. He felt discriminated against at his work, despite his competency.

Ernie spoke about starting from being a nobody to being a somebody. It was a difficult experience for him when his father died. He worked his way up by stealing and even went to jail because he wanted up. His experience of difficulty here in the US was something his daughter Elaine barely comprehended. It had taken some time for her to accept and recognize it. He wanted his kids to know that, but it was hard, especially for those who were born here. I intervened, pointing out that he also wanted the group to know this. Sarah responded that she did not identify with what had happened to Ernie and Perry and the others because her parents had never told her about their difficulties. It was her Lola who had shared stories of eating leftovers as a must, the father's command. Ruth, shared that her parents, while she was in Japan, had never told her things with authority; it was her grandmother who told her what to do. It seemed that the grandparents were empowered by the parents to raise their grandchildren. Sarah was still somewhat adamant about her stand that she could not understand what they were saying. That was not her experience. She looked at her elder sister Melissa for support.

Lola confirmed that her three granddaughter's parents had empowered her to take care of them. The granddaughters respected her, but not always. When they were a little bit younger, they used to call her "Gay". She said this was offensive to her because a grandmother should not be called by her first name. Sarah and Katie reacted with a

giggle and started to talk to me. I said, "Tell that to your grandmother". But instead, both faced me and said they could not remember calling her that. Katie said she had been reprimanded for not addressing her elder sister as "ate" which was the expected way in the Philippines. Her Lola said it was so. It had to be that way. The two daughters said no more.

Melissa explained that she was different from her two sisters because she was born in the Philippines and came to this country when she was nine. She was aware of being a Filipino. She remembered the two times she had gone back home and how much she had enjoyed the Philippines. She also talked about the times when she was in school and had to defend herself against classmates who would laugh at her because of the way she pronounced English words like Oprah or locomotion. She held to her claim that she was right to defend herself until she finally lost her accent. She became courageous. She said "no shame". Conching reacted that "no shame" in Tagalog, the Philippine national language, is Walang Hiya, which was derogatory in Philippine culture. She defended Melissa by pointing out that what she really meant to say was that she was able to say words with conviction and courage despite the accent. I pointed that out that Melissa was claiming a right for herself despite Philippine orientation and accent.

Ruth shared that when she came here as a tourist, some friends and relatives advised her to get married to an American so she could stay. She said no. She went from California to Jersey where she found herself an employer to petition for her immigration papers. She was proud of such an achievement and being free to be who and what she wanted to be. She had not experienced much discrimination as a Filipino. She had studied at the IS (International School) for 11 years in Japan where she also experienced no discrimination by other Asian classmates. There was an open-mindedness and openness to other cultures. She apparently came from a well-to-do family from the Philippines.

I summarized the discussion by saying that the theme that had been running through the discussion was being a Filipino and claiming that identity. Some had experienced difficulty because they were Filipino, yet they had carved a niche for themselves here. Some had no difficulty. So there were varied experiences that were uniquely their own. Just as happened last week, family communication was happening.

Communication between the children and the grandmother appeared to be important for the whole group, because they identified themselves with the dynamics. Conching said that two of her sons were American-born. Vangie and Ernie said their daughter had been born in the Philippines but their son was born in the US. They appeared hesitant to discuss their American-born children, but I sensed they had become more open to talking about it. Before I said it was almost time to end the session, Vangie asked Ruth about her earlier statement about not struggling to be a Filipino in Japan. Ruth answered that there was a difference between Western /Caucasian mix vis a vis being a Filipino in Japan and in the US.

Katie said that she was appreciative of being Filipino because she thought them prettier than people of other cultures. She was very concerned with her features and she claimed the beauty of a Filipina. I said we could continue with the sharing next week. I reminded them that the next meeting-- November 25, the Saturday after thanksgiving-- was a free Saturday for us. But we would see each other the Saturday after that.

November 16, 2000

6:00PM Supervisory meeting with Jean A.

I had a supervisory session with Jean during which I presented the first half of the pilot project. We reviewed the sessions. We also reviewed my growing edges and the problems I had encountered so far. I told her about the couple that had asked me to give them counseling. I said it would be good if it were done outside the group process and that I could suggest to them not to bring issues back to the group. The rationale would be that they could "pollute" the group process.

Another thing that I brought up was that Ruth called me twice for advice. I did give her advice. But again, it would be better to suggest to her that she bring her issues back to the group. I still have four remaining sessions and I need to introduce the remaining goals and integrate them into the group process. I will be meeting the group on November 18, 2000. I will have my supervisory meeting with Jean next week.

Fifth Saturday: November 18, 2000

CMC: Meditation Room

5:00PM-6:30PM

I noticed that Ernie changed his seat and sat between Katie and Sarah. Lola was seated near Katie. The other seating arrangements did not change.

I opened up by asking if there were anything they wanted to share from the previous meeting. Vangie opened by saying that she ended the meeting with a question to Ruth about how her living in Japan had affected her decision to stay in the States. Ruth said that it did not affect her that much. In fact, her ease of adjustment happened because of growing up in the Philippines. She was eleven when she went back to the Philippines. She had difficulty adjusting to her classmates who noticed how funny her accent was. She had an accent that was American. It took her some time to adjust to the language of the Filipino. She had American teachers at IS (International School). She felt privileged to have been trained that way and was easily accepted at Maryknoll College, one of the elite Ladies Catholic Colleges in the Philippines. Well-to-do families sent their children to school there. Her father was an accountant who was very communicative with her. Her grandmother was the one who had the greatest influence on her.

I made the connection that grandmothers seemed to be influential with their grandchildren. Perry said that that was very Filipino. "We cherish that. Respect for elders is important." It was difficult for him to influence his kids. Conching said that

Perry was strict with his kids while they were growing up. Perry responded that he only wanted his kids to succeed. I allowed them to talk. Values in the States were different from the Philippines. His three kids wanted to do it on their own.

Katie responded by saying that it was not different from the Filipino experience. Though she was born in the US, the influence of the Philippines had the same impact. Her experience in school affected her becoming an American, but she was still respectful to her elders. In fact, she still called her elder sister Melissa "Ate". This was important to her. Melissa responded that she was honored by that. Melissa responded that, while she came to the States while still young, it did not change her values. She was still very close to her parents and Lola, as any Filipino would be.

Vangie responded, "It should be that way. It was a sign of respect that every Filipino had to practice." It appeared that this was her way of saying; "It was good and that was what we had learned when we were growing up. It should be that way here, too." She was able to pass that value on to her children. Her eldest Elaine had difficulty adjusting to what was Filipino. She had gotten pregnant without being married. She had a Caucasian boyfriend who gave her a son. Vangie was in a hurry to get them married in the church. She was frustrated that Elaine chose not to be married in the church. It took a couple of years for them to get married in the Church. Their youngest was born and raised in the US. That was a different case. They used to bring the children to the Block Rosary until Elaine got pregnant; now only the youngest, Ernest Junior' continued to come to the Block Rosary.

I asked the American-born children how they felt about Vangie's statement? Sarah responded that it was not the same for her. She did not call anyone "ate", but she still felt good about it. She said that she called Melissa "ate" but not Katie. Katie responded that she wanted to be called "ate", too. Sarah responded that it was not fair for her to ask that because she wanted to be called "ate", too. Melissa said that "ate" entailed a lot of responsibility. Katie responded that she felt responsible for Sarah, too. She allowed Sarah to use her clothes and other personal things. She took care of Sarah's needs. Sarah said, "Like what?" Katie responded, "You remember that pair of pants I let you use?" Sarah replied: "That? For only one pair of pants? Sarah directed this to me and I said that she should say that to her sister and not to me. She faced her sister and shared how she felt about it. Katie said Sarah should call her "ate" too. Sarah said, "Do you deserve that?" Katie responded, "I do!"

Ernie, acting as a referee, said that Sarah should call her elder sister "ate". "It is the right way. It is the Filipino way and it is a better way to live in the US. It makes us distinct from others. Other people will admire us if we respect each other." Sarah responded that it did not mean that she did not respect Katie by not calling her "ate". Calling her Katie was already a sign of respect. Melissa rescued her youngest sister Sarah by saying that it was all right to call Katie by her name if there were no attitude of disrespect. Most of the time Sarah called her by her first name and it was all right. Her youngest sister was not disrespectful. I intervened by being curious: "It sounds like you

are protecting your sister." "I am!" Melissa said. And she started to cry. Ruth offered a tissue again to Melissa.

Melissa then shared that she was the eldest and felt responsible for her siblings. It appeared to be true that "ate" entailed a lot of responsibility. I sensed that she was internalizing what she was saying. She was protecting the youngest sister. The youngest sister had a mind of her own. Lola responded that when Sarah was growing up, she had been independent. Katie was independent, too. She appeared to be diplomatic to the two granddaughters. She did not want to confront the two. She said that she used her authority to tell them what to do and they would listen to her. She was happy with that. So far, she had no problem being a parent to the two of them. Lola said that their parents had worked throughout and she was there for them. She took the responsibility as a parent for them. She felt good being there for them. "I wonder about their autonomy?" I posed. Lola said that it was important to have respect. She appeared to have evaded the question.

Perry said that Filipino respect entailed some sort of religiosity. I asked him what he meant by that. He responded that every time one respected elders he was expected to kiss them like the saints. He meant the statues. It also meant that when one bowed down to receive "mano po" (putting the elder's hand to one's forehead), one would be respecting God, too. Ernie said that it appeared that he was talking about something different than we were. It was different. We were talking about us and not the saints or God.

Time was up and we would continue this next meeting. I told them that we would not meet on Thanksgiving Saturday but the next Saturday. Vangie suggested that we meet near the house where the Block Rosary would be held. The group unanimously agreed to the suggestion that they would meet at Perry's house, then go together to Jesse's place for the Block Rosary.

Ruth wanted to end with a prayer. I suggested the reading of Luke's Last Supper, which she readily read for everyone. Everybody departed with a "Happy Thanksgiving!"

Sixth Saturday: December 2, 2000
Perry and Conching's House
6:00PM-7:30PM

I received a call from the mother of the Pacana family that grandma and the kids would be late for the meeting. They were coming from Pennsylvania. The group had previously decided to move the venue from Cabrini Medical Center to Conching's place.

When I arrived, Melissa was there informing us that if the other members of her family did not arrive on time we should start, since they were still in New Jersey. While waiting, Perry and Conching prepared Arroz Caldo (Rice Soup) for the group. We all sat down and ate the Arroz Caldo. Conching said that it was Fr. Rafael's favorite Filipino food and that's why she had cooked it.

We all ate with the exception of Melissa. Melissa declined because she was on a diet. She told us that she had gone from 165 pounds to 125. She could not stop eating "ensymada" (Filipino sweet bread). It was her favorite Filipino bread and it was this that made her fat. She said she felt beautiful even when she was fat. She had gone on a diet because of her mom's pressure. Her aunt had an influence on her, too. Her aunt had slimmed down and gotten married two months ago. The group affirmed her beauty, whether she was fat or not. She liked feeling light and pretty before her friends. She smiled all the time.

We started the group process in the living room where there was a coffee table in the middle. We had difficulty listening to each other while sitting on the couches. I gave them an overview of the last session in which we left off with the reading of Luke's Last Supper. Ruth handed the Bible to Melissa who read the scriptures. Vangie shared the words that were significant for her: "Do this in remembrance of me." (Lk. 22: 19) Conching said that it was the last meal of the disciples with Jesus. It was meant to be the Eucharist that we celebrate and it was from these words that the significance of the mass derives. Vangie continued the sharing about the significance of the reading. Ruth said that it was the Passover meal in which Jesus offered himself to them. I noticed that the group was having a theological discussion about the details of the reading. Vangie recalled that she did not know the text well. I reminded them that we needed to stay with the Scriptures and recalled how the first meeting had been momentarily derailed by Hollywood scenarios.

I felt that we were not going anywhere and that the other members of the group were not in a discussion mood. I asked them what was happening? They were just not getting it because of the physical structure of the room. I suggested that we get up and stretch for a while. I told them they could remove their shoes. All except Ruth removed their shoes. I suggested that the coffee table be removed. Perry and Conching removed it immediately.

We all sat on the carpet. We felt at ease and began sharing openly with each other. Vangie shared that Jesus in the Last Supper was asking us to join at the Supper of the mass. I noticed that Ernie moved his head back suddenly, as if disturbed. I asked Ernie what had happened, why he suddenly drew back. Ernie said that he was bothered by the word Last Supper. He could not comprehend why it was called the Last Supper. Ruth said it was the last Passover meal, Jesus' last act with his disciples. Ernie said he still did not get it. "If it was the Last Supper, why do we have to repeat that on Holy Thursday, Easter and the daily masses?" He then started sharing that, though he was not religious in the past, he still remembered the moment when he received his first communion. He was told not to eat anything before hand. He remembered that he was hungry. He associated his first communion with an empty stomach. The group laughed.

Conching started to share about the importance of the Eucharist in her religiosity. She shared that the mass was more important than the rosary and the novena because of the reading we had just heard. It was Jesus who was there. We receive God. Perry responded by saying, no, the rosary was important, too. It was the Mother of Perpetual

Help that was significant for him. He also affirmed his wife's point about the importance of the mass. Every First Saturday mass and other masses were significant.

Vangie said that she would wake up every morning just to attend the mass. Ernie would even encourage her, though he went only when it was connected to devotion. Ernie said that he still did not go to the regular celebration of the mass. His wife does that. He reiterated that it was not his way.

Conching, too, said that she has a daily devotion to the mass because of what Jesus said in the gospel: "Do this in remembrance of me" (Lk.22: 19).

Melissa was silent. I noticed her. She said that she started to pray the rosary because of the influence of her grandmother in her life. She was the one who taught her how to pray the rosary and go to mass on a daily basis. Praying the rosary was significant for her family, therefore it was for her, also. She sounded as if she were trying to appease me. She was proper in her response.

Conching said it also was her grandmother who had influenced her to pray. Her whole family was strict about praying the rosary, but especially her grandma. I made the connection that Ruth had mentioned about how influential her grandma had been. Ruth was silent throughout this session, though she acknowledged the good influence of her grandma, her Catholic school education and the Maryknoll sisters who had been essential to the development of her religiosity.

I summarized what had been said about the influence of grandmothers on Filipino spiritual life. Melissa agreed that grandparents had always been there, having nothing to do when they retire but help their grown children rear their children. She had benefited from that.

I also shared my own experience of my own grandmother, who was there when I was growing up. My father died when I was seven and the youngest in our family was only two-weeks-old. We were six children. When we prayed the rosary, my grandmother was there, praying with us and taking care of us. It was from her that I learned my first rosary prayers.

Perry said that he grew up in a very strict Catholic family. His father physically beat him when he was disobedient, especially as regarded his prayers. His mother was emotionally abusive. It was his mother's stare; he had to shut up. He carried these experiences when he was growing up. Even up to now he was strict with his kids. He learned his approach from his parents when he was in the Philippines.

I shared with them that the theme of the whole session had begun with the reading of "Do this in remembrance of me." We seemed to be remembering a lot about our religious past. Then I said that Ernie's reaction to the Last Supper was a reminder of his first communion which had stayed with him. Vangie shared that the Last Supper made

her appreciate more the value of the mass as more important than the Block Rosary. She still values the rosary but the mass has new meaning for her.

Ruth shared that since the mass was the offering of Jesus to the world, she looked at it from the sacrificial aspect. We need to sacrifice for one another. Ernie said that suffering has importance, too, in our faith. Conching said that we need to suffer.

I told them that we had a few minutes left. Was there anything that they would like to share before the group goes to the Block Rosary? Melissa said that she could not go to the Block Rosary because of the party she had to attend that night.

I told them that there would be two more meetings before we wind up the project. Vangie said we only had one. I told her that we still had one group process during the morning of the retreat. Conching asked if we had to give money to the retreat house. I told them it was not required but a donation would be nice. Vangie said that we needed to bring our own food and that we would have a fellowship before we were adjourned.

Conching had prepared Arroz Caldo, my favorite Filipino food which she gave me before we dispersed. Perry offered coffee to everyone. The group declined because we were running out of time.

Seventh Saturday: December 9, 2000
Cabrini Medical Center: Meditation Room
5:30PM-7: 30PM

Perry and Conching came at three o'clock to talk to me about the problem of their son's upcoming wedding. I had a counseling session with them. This afternoon session was a follow up to counseling session before Thanksgiving. I decided to take them since the group sessions were not strictly group process but a focus group with an agenda to process the group's family systems, object relations and religiosity. Please refer to the two verbatim that are attached. Vangie and Ernie who had come to town with them rode around Gramercy Park and waited for the rest of the group. Ruth came from work at exactly 5PM. The Pacana family arrived around 5:15PM. We started at 5:30PM. We ended up a little bit later than usual. I originally prepared a reading on Exodus to be read by Ruth.

I welcomed them and asked their permission to tape the last two sessions. All agreed. Katie had a question regarding the use of the tape. I told her that it was for my project. It was not meant for public consumption. She agreed. I asked the group to reflect on what transpired during the last meeting. Vangie said that she missed the group. She was concerned about what had happened to the three members of the Pacana family. Lola said that they came a long way and were not able to make it even to the Block Rosary. Conching said that they missed them. There was difficulty with our sharing on the Last Supper. They felt that the group was not complete without them. Katie and Sarah were amused with the feedback and the reactions of the group.

For the sake of those who had not been there I shared what was said about the value of the Eucharist and prayer in their life. In short, I recapped for them how popular religiosity affected their day to day life. Ernie said that he was not religious nevertheless but was able to see the relationship between the Last Supper and the experience of his first communion so many years ago. Katie said that it was a great feeling to be missed. It made her feel so important.

I bridged the theme of the last session to the theme of today's session - exploring the subject of loss - of missing each other triggered by the absence of the Pacana family. The next to the last session would be devoted to exploring the subject of loss. I told them that we have many losses in our life. One of the great losses as immigrants was leaving the Philippines. The question I posed to them was, how does our popular religiosity help or influence our experience of loss. I asked them to reflect on the story of Exodus in which the people of Israel leave Egypt to go to the Promised Land.

Conching talked about the losses in her life: the death of her mother and the moment her sons left home. It was difficult for her when her children left home. Her way of coping was to pray the rosary and other novenas dedicated to the Blessed Mother. Perry added that he, too, had a deep relationship with God in the moments when Conchings's sons left. I said: "They are your sons, too, Perry." "Ah yes, they are our sons". His particular devotion was to the Blessed Virgin Mary: Our Mother of Perpetual Help. I asked him why he chose the Blessed Mother of Perpetual Help and not Fatima, Lourdes, (Vangie added Guadalupe). Perry responded by saying that the name itself was significant: Perpetual Help. The Blessed Mother would always be there.

Lola shared that she experienced her most significant loss with the death of her husband seven years ago. It was painful for her. Her way of coping with the loss was through prayers, novenas, and the Blessed Mother. She also said she went to Church a lot, especially seeking contact with priests. She also said that she helped the dead. The group laughed. She corrected herself, by saying the dead she meant the sick and the dying. I intervened, pointing out that maybe her slip related to the death of her husband. She might be missing him. Lola said, yes, she missed him. She said that that was her way of dealing with grief, by visiting the sick and the dying. They were good works of charity.

Ruth shared that she once spoke to me about her own losses but I encouraged her to share them with the group. She looked at me and then shared that she had a sad childhood. What she missed was a happy one. Her way of coping was to look on the brighter side of life. She did not have a good relationship with her mother, who was emotionally abusive. That was one of the reasons she stayed in the US. Her father passed away a few years ago. Her prayers and involvement in the renewal were a way of coping with her loss. She felt good. She appeared to be lecturing us about looking on the brighter side of life with God so that the sad moments disappear.

Next came Ernie. He remembered when he was a young boy, he had only one toy because his family was poor. His cousin, who had many toys, took the only toy he had.

He was angry. His wife said: "Tell me about the toy and I will buy it for you." The group laughed. I wondered why Vangie said that. Vangie responded that she was protecting her husband. She wanted to comfort him for his loss.

Ernie continued, saying that he coped with his loss, neither with prayers nor novenas, but through his determination to persevere and replace what was lost. (His wife, later influenced the development of his prayer.) He became diligent and, challenged by the loss, became successful. His life story of rags to riches was told again. I asked him how he would deal with a personal loss in the family. He was silent a bit, then said that it was painful when he lost his son Edwin. He was angry with God. It was difficult for him to comprehend that such a thing could happen to him. He shared that his son died on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, which was celebrated just yesterday. This painful loss was brought home to him once again on the feast of the Blessed Mother.

Vangie had tears in her eyes while her husband was talking. She said her faith helped her cope with the loss. She prayed a lot for acceptance. Her praying the novenas and the Block Rosary helped her cope not only because of her prayers but also because of the support she received from the other members. Ernie said he learned to cope with his grief by himself. The arrival of Ernest Junior helped him to smile again and forget the deceased baby. He had no time to grieve, only time to be happy with the other newborn. If Edwin were alive today, he would be 21. Ernest is now 18. Katie was giggling with Sarah when he mentioned Ernest's age.

Melissa spoke next, saying that her loss was her move from Brooklyn to Long Island. She had a comfort level in the city and found adjusting to a suburban way of life difficult. She missed her old life in Brooklyn.

Eighth Saturday: December 16, 2000
Philippine Pastoral Center, Manhattan
10:00-1130AM

I started with an evaluation of the whole project, ending with the retreat. I reminded them that this was the last group process. Before the session began I had asked Lola and Melissa to help me lay out both secular and religious objects on the table near the place where we were meeting. This was visible for all. The group process continued as usual with the chairs in a circle. Perry and the whole group arranged them, leaving an empty chair. There were eleven chairs in all.

I noticed that there were eleven chairs. I pointed that out to them. Some commented that the chair was for somebody. Vangie said that it was meant for Jesus who had been along with us throughout the eight weeks. All agreed. They were wondering why there was an empty chair. Perry said that it was not intentional. It just happened to be there. The group stared at the empty chair with wonder and curiosity. Perry stood to remove it. I said that maybe we could leave it that way.

I summarized the group processes over the eight weeks. We started with only six members. The theme of the first week was how popular religiosity affected their family lives and how praying the novenas and rosaries were important to them and their families. Second was the theme of how popular religiosity influenced their work and lifestyle. The third theme concerned the influence of popular religiosity on how they coped with their losses. The last time we gathered there was an unfinished sharing about our losses. The reading was from Exodus. Katie brought up the movie Prince of Egypt. I brought their attention to that part of the movie in which Moses lead out of the land the reading Moses; lead the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt to the Promised Land.

Ruth was asked to read the text. There was not much response to the text. I noticed Ruth placing the Bible on the empty chair. Ruth said that maybe the empty chair was really meant for God. Since the Bible is the Word of God, God sat on the empty chair. Ruth noted that there was a passage in the Gospel of John, which said that "in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Ruth picked up the Bible and read John 1 for all of us. She said that the Word of God was Jesus. He was the Word made flesh and dwelt among us. I recognized the relevance of this reading that the extra chair was for God. I felt that it was an appropriate way to end a session on popular religiosity.

APPENDIX B

RETREAT SCHEDULE:

| | |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8:00-8:30 AM | Gathering at Cabrini Medical Center |
| 9:00-10:00 AM | Breakfast and Introduction |
| 10:00-11:30 AM | 8 th and Last Group Process |
| 11:30-12:00 AM | Picking Out Personal Symbols. Break and Tour of the Retreat House (Filipino Pastoral Center of the Archdiocese of New York) |
| 12:00-12:30 | Reflection and Prayer |
| 12:30-1:15 | Lunch and Fellowship |
| 1:30-2:00 | Icebreaking Activity "Commonalties" |
| 2:00-3:00 | What I learned during the Eight weeks Activity "Drawing out through Paper" |
| 3:00-4:00 | Sharing of work |
| 4:00-4:30 | Reflection and Prayer |
| 4:30-5:30 | Eucharist and Sharing of the Personal Symbols |

Commonalties: Activity

I prepared a game in which I participated as a member of the group activity. There were nine chairs for ten people. The ninth chair was given to Lola who was the umpire and referee. We chose her to be the non-mobile member because of her age. This activity required a lot of movement. In it, the person without a chair had to stand in the middle and mention something he or she had, such as a black belt. Anyone who had the same item would then stand and look for an empty chair. Some said they had earrings, black socks, black hair, black eyes, blue socks, eyeglasses, etc. It was fun. This activity reminded them that they had differences, but also similarities. They laughed heartily when Perry said he had a Filipino nose. Everybody stood up.

Feedback

Lola said she could have joined them: "If you could do it, I could do it, too." We should have included her. Ernie noted, "Nobody is better than the other is. We are all created equal". Conching said that Perry did not move a lot which would have been good exercise for him. Further, all were equal and nobody was better than the other. Ruth noted that she and the others were not aware of what they were wearing until they focused on it. Melissa said that there is a child in us all and that we had lots of similarities because we came from the same culture. That is what bonded us to one another and made us feel at ease as the joke of having the same Filipino nose showed. Perry added that we all are children of God. Ernie joked that Perry looked Chinese. There was laughter.

Ernie shared that he had found himself during the group process. He brought up his first communion again. These eight weeks had been fruitful for him. He received a sign when he went to receive the Eucharist: the priest gave him a piece from the host

used for the consecration when he was asking for a sign in his life. He said because of the group, "I have learned to love more people." Vangie related that her daughter had gone to see a priest. The priest said: "Why did you let them live together without getting married?" She answered that it was out of her control. Her daughter cried because the Church had made it difficult for her to process the marriage papers. Vangie sided with her daughter. Conching related a similar experience in which she also was offended by a priest who reprimanded her for allowing her son to live with his girlfriend outside marriage. Perry affirmed her account.

I intervened by asking why they were not angry with the Church or the priest. Both Conching and Vangie responded that they respect the Church and clergy and that it was proper just to keep those feelings to themselves. The Church was a symbol of authority for them. The Church was a guide for them. They realized that they were not able to control their children in the US as they had in the Philippines. Because Perry's mother had been strict with him, he sensed that he had to be strict with their children, too. It was hard to tell those who were born here what to do. Vangie said that we have to treat each person as a unique individual.

Sarah said that she had learned that adults were not hard to deal with after all. She said: "They accepted me as I am. I experienced listening to the others during the weeks I was with them."

Perry said that we are all beautiful and we are all special. He had learned, he said, that all of us have our expectations of the other but that we do not have to force others to live up to what we expect of them.

I added that I learned to listen more during these eight weeks although it had been very difficult. I could hear what people were saying, but at times it was more challenging to listen to what was happening in the group. I was thankful for whatever was brought to the group.

Vangie quoted the Bible, "Many are called but few are chosen" and said they were all chosen as members of this group. She had learned to treat individuals as special and learn from other's experiences.

Katie said that in school she had not given importance to others. Now she appreciated people as they are. She had also erased a pre-conceived notion about adults. She realized they were willing to listen, as she had experienced during the five weeks of being a part of this group.

Ruth said that she became more sensitive to the feelings of others. There was validity to what everybody shared whether they were adults or children (she called the younger ones children). Ruth said we realized that when we listened to each other's feelings, there was not much difference between us.

Vangie said that as we progressed as a group, we began to trust one another. Ruth said that she had listened to the call of God who made all things beautiful for her. She had learned that all things would be worked out in and through God.

Lola stated that she appreciated my method of leading the group process, because it was experiential rather than imposed. I did not teach but I facilitated with a method. She referred to the process that began when Katie mentioned the smell of fish on her jacket. She said that I was sensitive to what was happening in the group and proceeded from there. I had listened to them and was open to everyone.

Lola said she had learned that there are different kinds of solutions to all the problems we have. She was happy that her kids were open to each other and to the group. She was proud of them for being in the group. She now had a good relationship with her granddaughters. She was more open to Sarah and hoped now that Sarah would respect her more and listen to her. Sarah responded that she would if only her grandmother would also listen to her.

Lola said to Katie: "Do not be afraid to tell me about your boyfriends. It's all right." Katie reacted with a smile to the statement. Katie said it was personal and her Lola had no right to know that. Vangie jumped in: "Your mom wants to be your friend, too." She continued that Lola had been advising the three kids and liked Melissa because she was mature and responsible. She had no problem with her. Their mother gave material things to them but also loved them, too. Vangie urged them to love mom, too.

Melissa responded that in the absence of their mother, she was their mother. The younger siblings agreed. They respected her and both of them called her "ate" Melissa. Lola talked to them and reached out to them. Katie shared that Lola needed to be more understanding of her. She wanted to be more independent. Sarah also responded the same way.

Supervision with Jean Aniebona
December 21, 2000
D.Min. Project

What was notable about the session with Jean was my admission that I was not able to write down the conclusion of the 7th Saturday group process and it was almost a week now that I was not able to sit down and write the 8th group process and the retreat itself. She pointed out that I had a resistance to ending the process of the group. Before she pointed that out to me I had told her that I had a great retreat and the group process ended well. The group wanted to extend the project, but I told them we needed to end somewhere. Jean had picked up my issue with ending and closure. I thought this was a very significant countertransference issue for me.

I have had issues with ending and closure before; that was why it was difficult for me to sit down and write up the ending stages of the project. It is worth noting that I am

nearing the end of my own group at the Postgraduate Center For Mental Health. My group in pastoral counseling has been together for almost two years. I need to explore this issue on closure in the project. Though I was trying to be professional with the whole project approach, I was transparent with it with my supervisor. She sensed the parallel that was happening in my own life as a pastoral counselor experiencing the same group process in school. I felt good sharing this with my supervisor.

I shared the struggles I had during the last few weeks when I was not able to see Jean because of her schedule. Maybe this was one of the reasons for my struggles. Because of the counter-transferences I experienced, I needed the guidance of a group therapist. I made two decisions that were not in line with the norms of group process in its strict sense. I decided to take on Perry and Conching for counseling not once but twice. My supervisor was understanding about it, but she pointed out to me the rationale that it might pollute the group. I had been careful not to do that. Perry and Conching shared what transpired in our session with the group according to my suggestion. I made the suggestion but left it to their discretion whether to share it with the group.

I did the bridging of commonalties and differences with the members of the group. I was able to connect the issues that were presented and showed how one affected the other. I also noted how one person in the group, consciously or unconsciously, affects the others' lives. Despite my violation of the above norm, I remained aware that in order to survive, there has to be a free flow of sharing between members. I noticed in particular the way Perry and Ruth, from day one, rescued and complimented each other. There were instances when Ruth tried to rescue Perry through her compliments about his use of prayer. The two obviously identified with one another. Perry shared that his father and mother abused him as a child. Ruth's mother also abused her and her deceased father sided with her mother. In addition, both were underachievers in school. My supervisor noted that the children of critical parents often had difficulty in school.

APPENDIX C

D.Min. Project Verbatim I

Student: Rafael P. Macaranas

Mentors: Dr. Eugene Borowitz/Jean Aniebona

November 27, 2000

Clients: Perry and Conching were participants of the group process who requested pastoral counseling. I have known them for the past nine years during my pastoral care work with the Filipino community in New York. This was our first meeting in a counseling context. Perry is a 59-year-old engineer of Philippine-Chinese descent who is strict and calculating. He was involved with the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and Block Rosary, organization that look at religion as essential to family upbringing. Conching is a 58-yr. old Filipina who had many issues of loss. She just lost her mother last year. Her brother was murdered many years back. Her nephew died in his sleep last year. Her sister is dying of cancer. She is worried about her youngest son coming out of the army. But both are worried about the situation of their eldest son who is engaged to a non-Catholic. Both are religious and traditional Catholic Christians.

P Perry
C Conching
R Fr. Rafael

C1 We come to you Father because we are worried about our oldest son, Noel and his fiancée. Up to now, they have not made a move to make wedding plans.

P1 My son is not making any move about a Catholic wedding.

R1 What is the problem here?

C2 I am concerned about Noel. We wanted him to get married in the Catholic Church but he does not seem interested.

P2 Besides I do not like his fiancée. She is not Catholic.

R2 What seems to be the obstacle about her not being Catholic.

P3 I do not want my son to be with her. First, she was a Buddhist. Then she converted to being a Methodist. I do not like that.

C3 We come from a traditional Catholic background. You know that. We wanted them to get married in the Catholic Church. All of us in the family were married in the Church.

R3 I see no difficulty in their being married in the Church.

C4 I beg to disagree, Father. They went to Fr. S. and he got angry with them. They did not pursue the wedding plans.

P4 Besides, they lost my son's original baptismal certificate.

R4 You are angry, Perry.

P5 Who would not be angry with what they have done? (He looked at his wife.) We should have told them to go to Fr. Rafael. You are more spiritual than that priest.

C5 No. The problem here is that you were strict with your son. You pushed him so hard to get married in the Catholic Church. Now what has happened? They are in a mess.

P6 I am just doing my job as a parent. Besides I do not want them to get married in the Methodist Church. I do not want to attend their wedding if they get married there. I would never step into that Church.

C6 I will. He is our son. He is my son. Why are you so hard on him?

P7 I do not want our grandchildren raised as a Protestant. You well know that we are all Catholics.

C7 What do you think, Father? I know there are policies that the Catholic Church gives regarding grandchildren. Tell us about it.

R7 Yes, there are policies that the couples agree to sign, that once they are married in the church, the children are to be baptized in the Church. But what seems to be the problem here for the two of you? Noel is 32-years-old and Jasmine is 25. They are mature enough to make the decision for themselves.

P8 They may be old but they are like children.

R8 What do you mean by that?

P9 They have made a lot of problems for us. You know the problem is Jasmine's mother. She is the one controlling everything here. I do not like her. I do not want her to be involved with the whole preparation.

R9 Wait a minute. Now, it seems that the problem has shifted to Jasmine's mother.

C10 She is not Catholic. But she is not a bad person.

P10 I simply do not like her. I will not go to their wedding.

C11 He is your son. If that is your decision, it is your decision. I will go to their wedding no matter what.

P11 Then, go. (Angry)

C12 I am getting frustrated with the whole thing. I want them to get married in the Church because they are living in sin right now. They have been together for a year now and they have not made any move. Father, what do you think about that?

R12 I am not in a position to judge whether they are committing a sin or not because I do not fully know the whole situation. What has been bothering you about it?

C13 I do not want them to live together without being blessed by the Church. I do not want them to live together right now. I want them to be blessed by the Catholic Church or maybe even by the Methodist Church. They would have been married anyhow by then. Civilly, they would be married.

P13 I hope they choose our Church.

R13 I wonder how you would feel if they attended both the two Churches?

C14 That would be a good idea. The problem here is Perry. He was strict to our kids. Ever since they were kids he wanted them to be what they did not want to be. He was the one who said that Nat should be an engineer. My son just followed Perry. Look what happened? We just wasted our money. He chose to be in a computer school. He was happy with that not with what you wanted him to be.

P14 What about his future?

C14 His future is what he makes of himself. He is happy and I am glad for him.

P15 I wanted them to have a good life here in America. I have been there. You know that I had a hard time adjusting to this country. It was difficult to live in this country if you do not choose the right profession.

R15 You had a hard time adjusting and now you made the choice for them, even choosing their own professions?

P16 Definitely. I wanted them to be successful.

C16 Are they happy?

There was a pause. (Two minutes) I allowed them to reflect on that feeling for themselves.

C17 You are so busy with your activities that you forget to take care of your sons.

P17 You were the one who was always with the religious group.

R17 It is good that you are talking to each other about these issues. The only way to resolve these concerns is for you to talk to each other first, then talk about your children's concerns. My main concern is that you allow them, both Noel and Jasmine, to talk these issues out between themselves. They have their own problems and are of age to make their own decisions.

C18 We will see them at Thanksgiving. I guess we will not push the issue. If they were ready then I would be there to support them, even help them with our religious connections. If not, then I will just be there for them.

P18 I guess I will do the same. (Not yet convinced.)

R18 What if you were in their situation right now. What would you do?

C19 It will be tough, but I guess I do not have to force them to get married in the Church if they are not comfortable with it.

P19 I will still encourage them to talk to Fr. S, our pastor.

C20 But Fr. S got angry with me for bringing them and allowing them to live together.

P20 See... The priest got mad at you because you pushed it.

R20 I sense that you are blaming your wife for helping your son go to the Church. I have a feeling that that you need to talk these things over with each other and then come back to me. We have a couple of minutes left....

C21 I am glad that you were able to see us this evening. I wanted to confer this to you since the last time Perry and I came to you.

P21 Thank you Father for your time. Will you be available next week?

R21 Give me a call first and we will set the schedule.

C22 I have my calendar with me, right now.

R22 How about Thursday after Thanksgiving?

C23 That will be fine with me. Perry would that be OK.

P23 That will be OK

R23 I will see you then the same time. Happy Thanksgiving.

P24/C24 Happy Thanksgiving, too.

APPENDIX D

D.Min. Project Clinical Case Discussion

Doctor of Ministry: Pastoral Counseling

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion/PostGraduate Center For Mental Health

Student: Rafael P. Macaranas

Mentors: Dr. Eugene Borowitz/Jean Aniebona, CSW

Introduction of the Case

I am currently a chaplain at Cabrini Medical Center where I have ministered to the sick and dying for the past six years. This clinical case was an attempt to explore my pastoral counseling skills to supplement my Demonstration Project as I led the group process for the past two months. Before the second year of my Doctor of Ministry Program, which enhanced my pastoral counseling framework, I felt inadequate as a pastoral counselor for couples. It has been my goal to do marriage counseling in the context of pastoral counseling with Filipino families with whom I have worked outside the hospital setting.

For the past ten years, I have been the spiritual director for the participants of the Block Rosary Group, meeting with them once every month. They have known me as Fr. Rafael. I have known Perry and Conching and their three sons through the years. The eldest is 32-years-old, the second is 26, and the youngest is 24. This couple invited me to officiate at their wedding anniversary which was held in conjunction with other members of the Block Rosary who were celebrating their wedding anniversary.

This year the couple, who became part of the core group composed of nine Filipino immigrants for my D.Min. Project, approached me for pastoral counseling. They had parenting and authority issues with their sons, especially with the eldest who is currently preparing for marriage. I met them during the second and the fourth weeks of the project. During the second session, the couple presented relationship problems caused by imposition, miscommunication and deep hurts inflicted by the husband to the wife.

Personal Information, Family History, etc.

Perry is a 59-year-old Filipino of Chinese-Filipino descent. His father was born in China but grew up in the Philippines. His mother was a Filipina. Perry was born in the Philippines and raised with a very strict background. While growing up, he was ridiculed by his classmates because he looked Chinese and had to fight his way through school, claiming his identity as Filipino. His parents were strict and critical towards him, especially with regards to his studies.

His father abused him, beating him because he did not obey and follow the rules. His father also controlled his mother. She did not protect Perry because she was submissive to the father, as was the custom in a closely-knit Chinese family. She had the obligation of pleasing her husband in order to save face. She exerted a kind of abuse that was silent and emotional. Perry said of her: "Her looks could melt me down." As a result of his extremely critical parents, Perry was an underachiever in school.

Conching is a 59-year-old Filipina who was born of traditional parents from Filipino descent. She was religious and would kneel at the front of the Church in Baclaran (a Marian Shrine in the Philippines) and would proceed to the main altar of the Church on her knees. She was the third child of seven siblings. She was the eldest girl in the family and was quiet and submissive. Conching was emotional but could not express her emotions in front of her husband, Perry, and was not able to confront him.

She was a housewife and mother and was not allowed to go back to work because Perry was afraid of losing her. He felt that he was earning enough to sustain the family. He decided this against Conching's wishes. Her sole consolation was being a good wife and a good mother. She experienced losses in her life, including her mother, who died a year ago and for whom she was still grieving. She also lost a brother who was murdered in the Philippines. Her sister is currently dying of cancer. She held on to her faith and religion as her only source of support and strength. She joined the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and is also active in the Block Rosary. She is currently a Eucharistic minister in her Church.

THE VERBATIM ACCOUNT

Clients: Perry and Conching. This was the second follow-up marriage counseling session between two Catholics who came to me about a problem with their son Noel who was engaged to a non-Catholic. Both wanted a Catholic wedding. I observed that Perry was controlling of his wife and family. In my first counseling session with them, I was able to assess that the problem was really in their relationship and had little to do with the son's wedding. Unfortunately, there was no time left in the session to share this. I recently had renewed their marriage vows with some other members in front of the Block Rosary Prayer Group. They came to me and I let them sit opposite but near each other. Conching removed her coat and placed it at the back of her chair. Perry put his coat in front of him on his lap. I told him to feel comfortable. He said that he felt comfortable with it like that.

P *Perry*
C *Conching*
R *Pastoral Counselor, Fr. Rafael*

C1 Hi, it is good to be back again here at Cabrini. How are you?

R1 I am fine. How was your Thanksgiving?

P1 We spent Thanksgiving at Vangie's. We were not able to spend it with the family.

C2 You know that Nat is in California. Chris is still in South Carolina. He is still in the army. He will be coming back home soon. Noel was not available.

R2 I thought that you would be joined by Noel and Jasmine?

P2 They were not able to join us either. But we had a pre-thanksgiving dinner at home. They came to join us the day before.

C2.1 It was a nice day. Noel and his fiancée told us that they have planned the wedding for March 15 next year in the Catholic Church. Our guests would be limited.

P3 By the way, they were impressed with your homily in New Jersey. They said you were good. That might have helped them make a decision.

C3 I am still worried. They are living together. It bothers me. They should be married first. I am not comfortable with the whole thing. They are still living in sin.

R3 I wonder why you are so worried about their living together.

C4 They should be married right now in the Catholic Church. That is what I want. They are not living in grace.

P4 I am becoming suspicious whether they will be married at all.

R4 Perry, you don't seem sure that they will pursue their plan.

P5 I am not. I told Conching to tell them that they should talk to the priest first but she did not do it. I told her.

C5 Perry, you always tell me what to do.

P6 You are his mother.

C6 Perry, Noel is your son, too.

P7 (Perry looked at me as if he needed me to defend him) Yes, but she is the mother.

R7 What is happening here?

P8 Nothing.

R8 I sense that there is something going on here.

C8 Yes, he always blames me for everything.

R9 (Conching started to face me) I am curious why you are telling that to me. It would be better if you tell that to Perry.

(Conching started to face her husband)

C9 The problem with you is that you always put the blame on me. You do not share the responsibility.

P9 What responsibility? I do everything for you. I help you raise the kids. I earn the money so that our family survives.

C10 If something is wrong, you always put the blame on me. You always tell me to talk to my kids. You do not talk to them. If they are at our house, you always avoid talking to them. You go to your room or just shy away.

P10 Just once. I do not do that all the time.

C11 No, most of the time. You do not stay. You yell at them over the phone every time we talk to them. Why do you yell at them?

P11 They should know better. If they aggravate me, why should I submit to them? I am the father of this family. I should be the one honored.

R11 It sounds like you are the one controlling the family.

P12 I should be. My parents did that to me so that I could discipline them, too. That is the only way I can make them become good and successful.

R12 Wait a minute, Perry. Do you think that what your parents did to you is applicable to your kids here in the US?

P13 I guess not. It might be different. But I still want my kids to be raised and live as Catholics.

R13 It sounds like your Catholic faith is influencing your parenting.

P14 It should. Should it not?

C14 Perry, be gentle with our sons. That is the reason they are not close to you because you yell at them and then you always put the burden on me. They are your sons, too.

P15 What do you mean, I do not care for them?

C15 You do not listen to them.

P16 Who says that? I also listen to them. If that is what you want, I will.

C16 You do not listen to me.

P17 I listen to you all the time. I care for you. I always attend to your needs. Remember the time you wanted to go to The Holy Land the second time? I said yes. I buy you clothes and a lot of things. I always give you whatever you want. I provide for you.

C17 But Perry, you do not listen to me.

R17 Conching is reaching out to you. Are you aware of that?

P18 No, Father. What more does she want from me? I come home from work tired. I do not need to quarrel with her.

C18 That is the reason I keep this to myself. I do not want to start a fight with him. He puts the blame on me. That is always the case. I also wanted to go back to work but he would not let me.

(Conching starts to cry)

R19 You are crying, Conching.

C19 I am hurting, Father. I can not share it with Perry. He will not listen to me.

P19 We should not be telling this to Father.

R20 I wonder what you meant by that. It is my belief that this is something that you need to say to each other. I wonder if saying what you mean to your hurting wife would be beneficial to this relationship.

C20 That is his problem. We do not share this with each other. He puts the blame on me. He even criticizes the way I dress.

P20 I only wanted you to dress formally as a Eucharistic minister. You don't even want to buy some decent clothes for the Church.

C21 Perry, that is not what I want. I do not want all these material things you are giving me. I just want you to be good to me and our sons.

P21 I am good to them. I have changed a lot over the years. Right Father? (He started to be uncomfortable)

R21 I believe you have to share that with your wife. (Perry started to face Conching again)

C21 Yes, you have changed a little. It does not mean that you will continue to take me for granted. I am your wife. They are your sons, too. It is time that both of us be responsible for them. I am tired of telling them all the time what you want me to tell them. If you only change your attitude towards them, then they will not be far from you. Our sons are close to me. I am sad that you are far away from them.

P22 You spoil them. You just gave Chris five hundred dollars for his airfare because his debts became bigger. I do not disagree with you giving him the money. I just want them to realize the value of money. You are blaming me for not being close to them. Now you know why I place this coat in front of me.

C22 (Conching briefly stared at his coat) It was my money, not yours. So you do not have to complain.

(Conching was crying again.)

(Perry looked at me).

P23 Father, we love each other. We've been together many years.

R23 I see that. I recently renewed your wedding vows after thirty-three years.

P24 No, Father, she gave you wrong information. It would have been 34 years.

R24 Perry, are you aware of what just happened? You just blamed your wife again.

C24 See. He is always putting the blame on people. Just like what he did to our friends.

P25 Do not include our friends here. It is we.

R25 It sounds like Perry wants to focus on the two of you. I believe that you need to talk more about this marriage. The problem is not outside; it is here with Perry and Conching.

There was silence.

P26 Forgive me if I hurt you. I will change.

C26 I do hope so.

R27 My sense is that you continue to communicate with each other. You came here to talk to me about Noel and Jasmine but it turned out to be about the two of you. It will

take time for change to happen between the two of you. Conching, it is all right to share how you feel and tell your husband about your concerns. It is all right, too, for you, Perry, to listen to your kids and especially to your wife. It looks like you are on two different wavelengths here. I do hope they meet.

C27 I am grateful to you, Father, for this opportunity to talk to each other. It makes me feel good that the things that I have been keeping to myself are now shared.

P27 We love each other. I guess I have to be more open and understanding.

R28 There seems to be an opening to sharing more in this relationship, not only on the part of Perry but also for you, Conching. Keep that up. I would love to stay with you a little bit longer but I guess time is up.

P28 Thanks once again for your time.

C28 Thanks, Father

R29 You are welcome.

Perry and Conching's Presenting Problems

They came to me for enlightenment regarding their eldest son's wedding to a non-Catholic woman of Chinese descent. They did not want her to be a part of the family. It would be a shame to have a daughter-in-law who did not share their Catholic faith. This presenting issue led to an issue that both of them had to face.

They had not been talking to each other and had problems with control. Conching was afraid to confront her husband who was a control freak. She was submissive and was not able to express what she wanted. She had no voice in this relationship. Perry felt that it was his obligation to have an ideal family in which he, as the head of the family, had full responsibility. He dictated the whole movement of the family. He had abused the sons verbally and physically, which was why they had left home early. He wanted the Filipino parenting he had experienced in the Philippines to be applicable to American parenting. It did not happen that way.

Women's Issues, Conching's Issues

What I did in these sessions was to make Conching aware that she could still be herself despite the "we-ness". Empathy is central to an understanding of the self that involves "we-ness"—transcendence of the separate, disconnected self (Jordan & Surrey, *Psychology of Today's Woman*, 1989). The theory of the self-in-relation describes self-development within relationship, in which the goal of empathy becomes the motivating force in the growth of the self over the life span (Jordan & Surrey, 1989). Chodorow (1989) noted that a mother treats a boy as a "sexual other" and pushes him to differentiate. Since Conching had no daughters, her sons became her own preoccupation.

She was helpless to protect her sons from her abusive husband. She would just be silent and take recourse in her rosaries and novenas. Her faith and religion were her way of coping. In this way, she avoided the issue with her husband. Perry could not understand such a bonding of mother and sons. This was clearly expressed in C21 when Conching said, "our sons are close to me." Perry's response in P22 was, "You spoil them".

In our sessions, Conching became more understanding of her sons, though she was pre-occupied with the Church's notion of sin, which the patriarchal church had inculcated into her. Hence, there was distress and conflict within her. The self-relation model suggests that women organize their sense of identity, find existential meaning, achieve a sense of coherence and continuity, and are motivated in the context of relationship.

A woman's sense of self is connected to her ability to be in relationship and experience intersubjectivity --the ongoing responsiveness to the existence of others and the expectation of mutuality. Conching was deprived of mutual respect from Perry whenever she had to assume the blame for things which did not work out well. Perry continued to wash his hands of responsibility and let Conching assume the burden. For example, the incident of the mistaken number of years they were married was blamed on Conching. She had mistakenly told me that they had been married for 33 years instead of 34. In P5, Perry told her to talk to a priest, but she did not do it and she was blamed for that. During the previous session, Perry faulted her for talking to Fr. S (her pastor) rather than to me.

R18.1 What if you were in their situation right now, what would you do?

C19.1 It would be tough, but I guess I do not have to force them to get married in the Church if they are not comfortable with it.

P19.1 I will still encourage them to talk to Fr. S.

C20.1 But Fr. S got angry with me for bringing them and allowing them to live together.

P20.1 See... The priest got mad at you because you pushed it.

In this vignette, I wanted the couple to back off the issue with their children by asking them to put themselves in their situation. I felt that Perry was not listening to Conching. He appeared to be self-righteous. In short, lack of mutuality from her husband had contributed to a difficult relationship. This model emphasizes that development is a dynamic process of growth within a relationship, in which all people involved are challenged to maintain connection and to allow and adapt to the growth of the other. My goal was for them to connect with each other, as the vignette tried to portray.

The basic elements of the relational self in women are summarized as:

1. A basic emotional connection and the ability to identify with the other. Conching could not maintain an emotional bond with Perry who continually shut her off through his intellectualizations.
2. The expectation of mutuality and sharing of experience. Perry did not want to talk to her or her sons when they were together. Conching claimed that he would go to his room or leave the house every time they had occasion to be with each other.

C10 If something is wrong, you always put the blame on me. You always tell me to talk to my kids. You do not talk to them. If they are at our house, you always avoid talking to them. You go to your room or just shy away.

P10 Just once. I do not do that all the time.

C11 No, most of the time. You do not stay. You yell at them over the phone every time we talk to them. Why do you yell at them?

3. The expectation of relationship as a process of mutual sensitivity and responsibility. In this vignette, Perry yelled at his children instead of talking. His way of defense was through avoidance of an open conversation. He appeared to look at open communication as negative. He was the authority in this family. I brought up the issue of control in R11 and he acknowledged it in P12 through his rationalization that they needed to be successful.
4. Mutual empowerment developing in the context of relationships. Conching was never empowered in her desire to go back to work and earn a living nor in her quest for self-respect. In C18, Conching was crying when she said: "I always wanted to go back to work but he would not let me." Moreover, she apparently lost her freedom when he asked her to stop working and be a full-time mother.

The milieu of Western society is predicated on disconnection, autonomy and individual achievement. Many women are unable to act on their own needs because they are unable to experience the sense of self necessary for self determined motivation outside of a primary dyadic relationship (Jordan & Surrey, 1989). Acknowledging a woman's basic relatedness is also acknowledging her basic vulnerability to loss. Conching had always wanted to be independent by having a job but her husband always foiled it. She had had many experiences of loss in her life: loss of mother, murder of brother and an impending loss of her sister to cancer. Her cry for autonomy was still another loss.

Conching had difficulty expressing her anger. Anger towards men is held in check by stereotypes of women as ferocious, vengeful and castrating. Girls are raised to not express anger and aggression, which inhibits their capacity for competitive and assertive behavior (Lerner, *Women in Therapy*, "Internal Prohibitions Against Anger.", 1994). In the Philippine context, they have to be meek and quiet or they are branded as outside the norm of a *Maria Clara Filipina* (an ideal Filipino woman). "Never speak in

belligerent, harsh or loud tones. Such a speaking style could disrupt harmony, initiate disagreement, and spark off a quarrel" (Roces & Roces, 1994, p.30).

Tears, self-criticism, depression and/or guilt may express the experience of hurt. When a woman shifts from anger to hurt, she is retracting her statement of being separate and alone. Expressing hurt draws the object closer; hurt emphasizes the "relational we". Conching was afraid of her husband's reaction to her anger, so she built up the hurt in its stead. She feared separateness and aloneness. It is worth noting that one of her goals during the retreat I gave last December was to face her fear of rejection and being alone. In order not to be alone, her recourse was to abide by what her husband wanted for her. Her separation-individuation from her own husband was difficult because she could not find her "I" in the "We".

Lerner (1994) said that struggles for individuation are never entirely resolved and are worked on in a variety of relationships throughout one's lifetime. Girls are discouraged from being different from mother; they are expected to be loyal to mother, to conform and to inhibit anger. In this case Conching's mother was silent and submissive to her father. That made her idealize her own mother. Her resistance to confronting Perry's controlling behavior stemmed from her fear of trampling on the tradition that women had to be submissive to their husbands and thus become like their mothers. Tradition and culture clouded her own cry for autonomy and freedom. On the personal side, Perry was hard on her. He became a block to her own sense of self-worth. She reached out to the Church and the other groups to re-gain her own good image.

Interventions and Transformations Creating a Therapeutic Triangle

I was able to achieve management of the three-person relationship as it is described by Paterson et al (1998). Being the third person in this counseling, I was able to impact a dyadic relationship (Family Systems Theory). I was able to create a new system. Partnering is a process in which each person brings into relationship his or her history and personal attributes and attempts to combine them with another's, so that a new system emerges. I intend to investigate the historical development of their relationship, using Mark Karpel's Evaluating Couple's framework. I will ask them in the near future to do a genogram. I failed to do this in the beginning of my therapeutic encounter with them.

As demonstrated in the verbatim, I accomplished several goals. I was able to go beyond listening by taking charge of the interaction. In the future, I will also look into the possibility of seeing them separately. Second, I worked with Perry and Conching as a unit in which their children were kept in mind as connected to their relational challenges. I was able to create a new kind of relationship and partnership. Third, I acted as a "translator" for the couple. I functioned as the one who understood the behaviors, perceptions and experiences of each and how these influenced the couple's functioning. For example, Perry's coat which functioned as a symbolic block in the relationship was "psychologically removed" because I was able to get them talk to each other openly in

the succeeding sessions. R12, R17, R20, R25, R27 were some of my helping ways to "translate" the couple's concerns and show how these affected their relationship to each other.

At first, Conching appeared to be voiceless but as the sessions progressed she slowly found her voice through my interventions. I was able to encourage them to talk to each other face-to-face. Though Perry did not want to share their interaction with me, I encouraged them to talk by asking Perry to be up front. In R20, I intervened by asking Perry to talk to his hurting wife. I affirmed it was all right for them to talk to each other as co-equals and with respect. Perry came from a "Filipino macho mentality" in which expressing one's feelings to the other is not allowed, especially to a counselor, much less to a priest. Perry was able to realize that such a value would not help them communicate. I allowed them to share and communicate.

Perry looked at me as his "Father" as he often addressed me in P18, P19, P21, P23, and P24. Since I represented the authority in the Catholic Church, my sense was that I represented for him his own father who was strict and authoritarian. I was his projection of a powerful influence in his life. He wanted me to side with him so that he could be more powerful against his wife. He tried to triangulate me in this counseling encounter. I was aware of such a position. I was a "Father" to him in my pastoral encounter with him. Moreover, he idealized me as a good homilist and a good priest. At first, he tried to get me on his side by affirming me as good and spiritual as opposed to Fr. S, who got angry at his wife for bringing up the issue of cohabitation without the benefit of marriage. (P20.1) Perry appeared to take the side of the Church, which appeared to have a great influence on him. He wanted to align himself to the Church by taking its side.

Theological, Psychological and Cultural Reflection of the Case *Religious and Spiritual Development*

Religion has been significant to the couple. It was something that both had in common. What I observed, however, was that religion appeared to become an obstacle rather than a way of understanding each other and loving their family. There were many shoulds and should nots in their religious background. I sensed that Perry felt that what he had experienced growing up, should be transmitted to the children. For this reason I felt it was necessary to explore their faith development with them. Was being religious synonymous with being spiritual in their minds? Would the fulfillment of their obligations in the Catholic Church make them spiritual? How would their spiritual relationship with God be different as seen through the lens of Perry and Conching as individuals? Would the sacrament of marriage enhance or destroy their I-ness and autonomy?

After 34 years of marriage, Conching was at the crossroads of claiming her own autonomy as a woman. It was hard for her to differentiate herself from her husband because of his powerful influence over her. What made it difficult for Conching to establish her own voice was her dependence on Perry economically and emotionally. She

was dependent on him all the time. The patriarchal church, with which she affiliated herself, enhanced the difficulty of becoming independent. She aligned herself with the powerful Catholic Church and looked at her marriage with Perry as sacramentally binding. As a priest, I am aware of the teachings of my tradition regarding the sanctity of marriage as a sacrament. It is the binding of two people to become one in Christ. Christ the Lord raised marriage between the baptized to the dignity of the Sacrament. (Cf. CIC, can. 1055 1; cf. GS 48 1: Catechism of the Church, p.414)

The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church; "the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life." (Catechism of the Church 1661; also confer Council of Trent: DS 1799) The love of the spouses requires, of its very nature, the unity and indissolubility of the spouses' community of persons, which embraces their entire life: "so they are no longer two, but one flesh." (Matthew 19:6; cf. Genesis 2:24) Bearing this in mind, I have a sense that Conching could not imagine a life on her own or even apart from Perry. The reason I explored this area of their life was to help them recognize that love through the sacrament could enhance their unity as persons who are images and likenesses of God.

In Filipino culture, image building is important. Counseling was not looked upon as something that was normal. So for the Catholic Filipino couple to come to me for counseling was a big step, which they kept a secret. Filipino image building may strengthen the so-called indissolubility of marriage as espoused by the Catholic Church (Catechism of the Church, 1661), but it can be at the expense of freedom and autonomy.

Both came to me because I am a Catholic priest, and the expectation was that I would tell them what to do. Moreover, their presenting problem was a moral question about whether it was unethical to allow their eldest child to live out of wedlock. This created a lot of anxiety. The issue of shame was primary since they had been active in religious activities; they had to be an example of good spiritual parents to their children and to the whole community. Since marriage establishes the couple in a public state of life in the Catholic Church, it is fitting that its celebration be public, in the framework of a liturgical celebration, before the priest (or a witness authorized by the Church), the witnesses, and the assembly of the faithful. (Catechism, 1663) The couple's eldest son opted not to marry first but try cohabitation. The pressure to be religiously good was strong in the Block Rosary Group. Perry and Conching could not convince him to get married in the Catholic Church or even be married at all.

C4 They should be married right now in the Catholic Church. That is what I want. They are not living in grace.

I heard that they felt their struggle towards that goal was not achieved. They finally realized that it was out of their control. What they could control, however, was their own rocky relationship. I heard their cry for help, which I found significant to the resolution of their communication problem. During the second session that I had with them, it was

obvious that there was a relationship problem clouded by their religious setting. The husband emotionally abused the wife by being silent. Perry believed that he was always right. He was passive-aggressive at times. He would remain silent, pretending to agree but conveying aggression in other ways. On the other hand, Conching had to collaborate, too, in order to avoid conflict. She had to sacrifice herself by remaining silent to save the relationship. She was willing to be a victim so that confrontation would not surface.

Cultural Transmission

I intervened with regard to transmission of values by saying that what may have been right for Perry, may not be applicable to what is appropriate for his sons. In addition, I pointed out the age we live in and the cultural baggage. These were the transferences that they brought unconsciously to me. Both were comfortable sharing these things with me because, as a Filipino priest, they felt I could understand them and their issues. As a priest-counselor, I mirrored back what was happening between them that at times felt uncomfortable: R7, What is happening here? In R8, I said: "I sense that there is something going on here." In R12, "Wait a minute, Perry. Do you think that what your parents did to you is applicable to your kids here in the US?"

What I found out was that what may be cultural may not be personal and vice versa. For example having control over others was a personality issue for Perry and not just an issue of transmission of the cultural value of respecting elders. He strongly believed that culture dictated that the sons had to respect their parents and elders, which he did not experience with his own children. I sensed that there was a deep intrapsychic experience of conflict between cultural authority and autonomy. I also believe that merging cultural and personal issues can make it difficult to attain clarity of the family problem because this process involves a great deal of deep introspection, counseling, supervision and even spiritual direction for both pastoral counselors and clients, especially Perry.

Ego Strengths and Deficits

Perry had ego strengths in himself and in his achievement as an engineer. He designed everything according to his whims and wishes. He was able to show that, though he struggled academically while growing up, he had made it here in the US. He was able to hold on to his marriage for 34 years. Perry had the Block Rosary support group and the men in the group made a retreat once a year. His deficit is his closed-mindedness toward the reality that parenting is not an individual task but also a partnering task with his wife. He does not have to do it by himself. His wife was willing to share that responsibility.

That was what Conching had been working toward with a "hammer and a chisel" throughout their married life. She needed to be listened to by her husband. She needed her husband to be good to her and her sons. Perry had to stop the control and let go in order to promote a loving relationship with his wife. It was not material wealth that she wanted but the love, goodness, and understanding that her husband had to give.

C21 Perry, that is not what I want. I do not want all these material things you are giving me. I just want you to be good to me and our sons.

It was not just "bringing home the bacon" that could make the family happy. It was sharing and listening.

Conching's ego-strength was herself. She needed to have a voice, which slowly she was finding in the Church, Block Rosary Group and the Charismatic Renewal. She needed to look into herself more and ask herself what outside involvement had to do with self-empowerment. She had to take care of herself and empower herself to talk and share her feelings and thoughts with her husband.

Pastoral Impact Upon Life Cycle Events

In the light of Freud's theories of psychosexual development, Perry had a very strong superego that had developed through his conscience and was enhanced by his family, the Catholic Church, and Filipino culture. He chose to come to me rather than to a counselor because he felt comfortable with a priest who reminded him of that Church that had influence in his life. The development of the ego, id, and superego during the oral, anal, and latency stages is worth noting for both partners. I sense that Perry had a problem with the anal stage since his parents abused him. He was bombarded with critical judgements and as a consequence could not claim his own identity. Perry appeared to be obsessive-compulsive.

According to Erickson's stages of trust, autonomy and initiative, I could see Perry as having feelings of inadequacy in the anal stage. In the anal stage, there is a conflicting pattern of activities occurring within the sphincter muscles, a "holding on" and "letting go." Also, there is a disparity between the child's urgent drives and the ability to handle them. The child must learn to voluntarily hold back and release at a specific time and place, which is so different from the previous manner of excretion, whenever and wherever the child pleases (Erikson, Life Cycle Completed, 1994).

Shame may also manifest here because of parental censure, of being found out, of being bad, or inadequate to the job, or of being judged at a time when the nervous system can't handle the evaluation. Filipino culture worked hand-in-hand with the Church-imposed superego. Religion is deeply imbedded in the traditional Catholic Philippines. Shame and Hiya were predominant in Perry and Conching's actions. According to Mary Hollnsteiner, *hiya* may be translated as "a sense of social propriety". As a preventive, it makes for conformity to community norms (as cited in Roces & Roces, 1994, pg 3). When one violates such a norm he ordinarily feels a deep sense of shame, a realization of having failed to live up to the standards of society. To call a Filipino walang hiya or shameless is to wound him or her seriously. This played a huge part in the heightened expectations of the couple's culture. Image is the number one thing to be protected.

Erickson (1994) pointed out that those childhood difficulties in this area are often reflections of problems in the marital relationship and/or in the culture. Perry had to do things his way, to the extent of imposing what he believed was right on his sons. He had to be the head of the family because that was what he had learned in the Philippines. Conching, on the other hand, had less ego strengths but also more superego.

The Philippine Catholic Church had been strict about the rules one had to obey. One such rule was not to live in sin before marriage. This was very significant to Conching and she felt it was her failure that she could not make her son get married before cohabiting. She also was a religious person, so coming to me, a priest, was an affirmation of the alignment she had with the Church. The closer you are with the Church representative, the closer you are religiously. Her conscience bothered her. Hence, her closeness to the clergy was a balm to her guilt as a "failed parent" for not making her son follow the Church way.

Conclusion (Personal Evaluation: My Own Countertransferences and Struggles)

Over all, I felt good in my helping ministry with Perry and Conching, as I was able to use the psychodynamic principles, family systems theory and the establishment of a good therapeutic alliance. Concretely, they became more open to each other, thereby opening themselves to a growth process. I was able to empower them to grow as persons in their own religious beliefs and culture.

My big countertransference in the study was my tendency to protect Conching, seemingly Perry's victim. I was curious why I protected her, since personally I have a protecting and a controlling mother. The issue of shame and good image is very Filipino, and I grew up with it as the norm. My mother had many shoulds, should nots, do's and don'ts. These were going through my mind throughout my counseling sessions. I flip-flopped through the process of siding with Perry, the authoritarian, to a more autonomous claiming of one's self like the cry of Conching's discovery of herself in the "We".

I am also at the threshold of differentiating myself from my strict Catholic background to being Rafael. The Church I grew up in reinforced a moralistic approach of the couple regarding their treatment of their sons. I identified with the couple's religious development rather than their faith development. It was all right to remain silent and suffer rather than fight for one's own freedom and autonomy. I did not want to stir the waters, so I just glided into whatever my mother wanted for me. Though I was assertive in encouraging them to communicate through marital process, I was hesitant confronting them more from the family systems theory. My father died when I was seven. My mother and the Roman Catholic Church replaced him.

My mother and the Church had a big influence on my growing up, similar to what Erickson describes in the epigenetic life cycle in which it is difficult to claim one's autonomy because of a critical and strict environment (1994). At times, I identified partially with Perry's obsessive-compulsive behavior. I also wanted to claim my autonomy but authority was imposed on me as a child and during my seminary years. I

struggled to claim my own autonomy and identified with what Conching was experiencing. I wanted to protect and rescue Conching. I had feelings of anger towards Perry, who represented my controlling mother and the Church as I was growing up. It was difficult to counsel Perry, because he represented powerful images from my past. Moreover, it was tough for me to counsel this couple whose life was encircled by religion. This is the current challenge I have to face in my ministry. The patriarchal Church was their refuge, which became my own, when I was in the Philippines. I would be shameful if I were to go outside the circle of tradition and religion.

While I was counseling the couple, I needed to view their religious and cultural perspectives from a greater distance so that I could be more sensitive to Perry's personal issues, apart from religion. Discernment and prayer will help me in pastoral ministry with couples. Perry's psychological make-up needed to be attended to. He was obsessive-compulsive and, at times, very oppressive to his wife. I needed to be sensitive to that. By allowing them, especially Perry, to call me "Father" repeatedly, I gave tacit approval to the institution I represent. This was positive in regard to their faith. It was not affirmative when viewed from their need to explore their own personal struggles and crises. By unconsciously accepting that religious role, I was not able to explore their issues more fully with them.

This has been my struggle as a pastoral counselor (Marriage and Family). It is not easy to be a pastoral counselor and a priest at the same time. The pendulum of counseling still swings towards the priesthood and away from it. I need to be aware of where the swing is and realize that counseling is not my agenda; it is the client's. I am grateful for this opportunity to broaden my pastoral counseling skills. Priesthood and Pastoral counseling are not two separate entities; the transferences that each elicit can be used in the service of the other. They are one and the same. I need more supervisory training in this field so that I can be more relaxed when doing helping ministry with couples and my clients in general.

APPENDIX E

D.Min. Project Verbatim 3

Student: Rafael P. Macaranas

Mentor: Jean Aniebona CSW/Dr. Eugene Borowitz

January 4, 2000

Client is a 36-year-old woman who was born in the Philippines. As a child she lived a number of years in Japan. She attended Maryknoll College in the Philippines and finished with a BA in Business administration. Her mother chose what she would study, although she loved fine arts. She is currently employed as a graphic artist in Manhattan. She was a member of the group process that I facilitated. I ended the process with a retreat on December 16, 2000. During the two-month process, Ruth was reserved and was not very expressive of her feelings, being more observant than participatory. She called me a couple of times on the phone; I encouraged her to relay to the group what she shared to me. It was only on the last day of the group process that she began to share her painful experiences.

The third time she called me was after Christmas. She wanted to talk to me. I felt that it was an appropriate time to offer and arrange for a counseling session.

C Client, Ruth

P Pastoral Counselor, Fr. Rafael

C1 I came to you to let you know why I was not that open during the project.

P1 I was wondering why it took you so long to open up during the process.

C2 I thought it was a psycho-spiritual project in which I would be a guinea pig. No offense meant.

P2 I do not understand why you looked at yourself as a guinea pig.

C3 I just said it because I really thought it was just an ordinary project. When I saw the changes and the good sharing of the group, I changed, too. You know that I was not an original member of the of the Block Rosary. I was not as devoted to Mary as the other members of the group. I am a Jesus-centered person. In fact, I came to sign up for the project because I felt God was calling me to respond when you were looking for volunteers.

P3 You felt that God was calling you, despite the fact you were new to the group?

C4 Yes, Father. I guess I trusted my gut feeling. Initially, I did not really understand the process. I was the only one from New Jersey and everyone else was from New York.

P4 You felt as if you were not part of the group?

C5 Yes, you are right. That was my initial feeling. I have come to you to let you know that I have learned a lot from it. It turned out to be good for me. I started to share about my painful past, but I guess there was no more time.

P5 Tell me more about that past.

C6 Well, I grew up with a very abusive mother. She controlled me when I was a child and beyond. She was a powerful influence in my life. My father sided with her all the time. So my father also partook in the abuse. I hate them

P6 Hate is quite a strong word.

C7 I never want to be with my mother again. I have a freer life now that she is far away. However, she helped me financially when I was starting my life in the US. I have my own apartment and I am independent. I do not want to go back to the PI to be with her. I came here 10 years ago. It felt good just to be free.

P7 You are free from what?

C8 I guess from the painful memories I had. (Ruth started to stutter)

P8 You are trembling as you share this. I wonder what is happening right now.

C9 I had a rough beginning. I grew up in Japan, went back to the Philippines, and was criticized constantly by my mother and my teachers in the Philippines. I remember my teacher criticizing me for not knowing the Bahay Kubo (My Nipa Hut, a traditional Filipino song). Was that ridiculous? She did not understand that I did not grow up in the Philippines. I was at the IS (International School) in Japan.

P9 You appeared to have lost your voice while growing up.

C10 It made me just become more shy and reserved. I had few friends and simply submitted to my elders. That is the story of my life.

P10 It might have been the reason you joined the group, because of the elders or me in the group.

C11 Maybe you are right. I guess God called me to. I had to submit to Him.

P11 God appears to be important in your life.

C12 Yes, Father. He is my guide and solace through the painful moments. I had no recourse to others but Him. He is Jesus on the cross. That was the reason I wanted to have the cross as my symbol in the Eucharist. Jesus died for us. That was true love. I felt good that Christ loved and cared for us by giving his life on the cross.

P12 Christ is not only a good example to you. He appeared to be your God who is there through difficult moments.

C13 I have that devotion. It is my belief and I feel good about my relationship with Christ. I joined the Catholic Charismatic Renewal because I felt the joy of being with Christ. I do not have those deep devotions the other members of the group have for Mary. I shared the "Memorare", to the Blessed Virgin Mary but not because I have that devotion. I shared it because it is my Morning Prayer to start me up. Then, I focus more on Jesus.

P13 I hear you have a deep spiritual relationship with Jesus. I wonder how you cope with the painful memories you have?

C14 I simply do not know, Father, why I focus more on the positive aspect of life, not the negative every time I am with God. What I know is that often I am submissive to controlling persons in my life.

P14 What do you mean, controlling?

C15 Well, my mother controlled my life until I moved from the Philippines. Secondly, I had a fiancé who was as controlling as my mom. My relationship with him lasted four years. I don't know why it lasted that long. Now I am beginning to see that I am drawn to controlling people in my life.

P15 Tell me more about your controlling fiancé (She starts to cry).

C16 We were together for the past four years. He was religious and came from a traditional Italian-American background. I thought I clicked well with him, but in the long run, he was controlling and I found myself abiding by his dictates. Last June, 2000, he broke up with me. It was on the feast of Corpus Christi (Body and Blood Of Christ). It was painful but I was involved with the Renewal and the Block Rosary then, so that helped me cope with the pain. I do not understand why I still long to be with him.

P16 You love him?

C17 Yes, I guess I am still in love with him. I want to know where I am with him. He still calls me and gives me a kiss on the cheek. But I know it is over.

P17 You still are not clear where you are with him?

C18 I still don't know. What I can remember is that when he left me last year, it was all over. We did not live together. Both of us had our own apartments. You know, I am a Maria Clara Filipina. I would not allow myself to cohabitate with someone without getting married.

P18 Ruth, I hope you know where you stand in this relationship.

C19 What I know is that I cling to controlling persons. He is controlling. I hope you can help me with this.

P20 Ruth, I hear where you are right now. I guess we need to talk about it more so that I can help you better. What I can say is that you have yourself right now. You have deep faith and strength in yourself. I am amazed at your faith in Christ. I wonder if you have people apart from the group that you can share it with.

C21 I have friends but no one to share the things I shared with you. I am alone in the US, right now. It felt good to be part of the group. I felt needed and I was able to share and use my talents. I found that the group accepted me as I am, despite my limited sharing.

P21 You did well in the group. Your being there the past two months meant a lot to the group and me. I was also a part of the group, so I felt how, in your own way, you contributed and made the group a success.

C22 Thank you Father, I needed to hear that. I am happy that you were our leader, and you guided us well. I hope that you can give me more guidance this year. I would like to come back to you for counseling

P22 Yes, I'd welcome that, Ruth. How about January 23?

C23 That will be fine. Same time?

P24 Yes. Till next time. Take care and God bless you.

I had supervision with Vivienne Joyce, CSW, PGCMH faculty. She had a felt sense that my countertransference with Ruth was strong especially on the issue of control. I have a very controlling mother. I was not able to hear what she was saying when she started to tell me that she hated her parents. I reacted with "Hate is quite a strong word." I should have stayed with her but instead I was protecting her from dealing with the darkness of her experiences. I was really rescuing her from that emotional distress. When she said that she was looking at the positive side rather than the negative, it might have been that she was opening up to dwell with her issues she wanted to talk with me during and after the group process but was not able to. I might have trusted the fact that I could see her again for follow-up counseling, I was already looking forward to the next session, which would enlighten her immediate concerns and issues.

Hate in my tradition is the opposite of loving. But hate and love are intertwined. I believe that talking about it means to be comfortable with it without being dogmatic. I had been so influenced by my dogmatic background that I was not able to see it coming. By seeing hate as the opposite of love, I was not able to focus on the issue of dwelling with love rather than love of her parents and others. I believe it is fine to just stay with her issues and not mix them with mine.

Over all, I felt a liberating experience Ruth had with me not only for pastoral counseling but also for the group process and retreat. My demonstration project was full of dynamics that involved Ruth that was helpful to the development of the thesis. One memorable event was Ruth's offering of the wooden cross during the Eucharist on December 16, 200 (Retreat Day). After offering it during the mass, she was the only in the group who asked for her symbol back. I was curious whether it was a gesture that Ruth might not have been ready to embrace what the cross really meant for her. After a number of follow-up meetings with her, I believe that Ruth can now look forward to fully claiming that cross in her life, this day and beyond.

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