

# ECONOMY: CRITICALLY HISTORICIZING AGAMBEN'S *DIVINE GOVERNMENT*

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*This article essentially historicizes the philosophical claims of Giorgio Agamben in his book, *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government*, focusing only on the chapter "Mystery and the Economy," where Agamben deciphers the meaning of economy. Theologically, the Fathers of the Church employed the economic model taken from Greek philosophy to understand the central profession of Christian faith in the Trinity. Using the image of the Father as the King and the Son and the Holy Spirit as representatives, they were able to interpret the relationship between the sender and the sendee and God and the world. However, by historicizing it, the model remains wanting due to the incompatibility between the perfection of the Divine Kingdom and the imperfection of the human kingdom. The history of the economy shows the limitation to capturing the equality of the Trinity in society. We have cited some critical areas where the economic model remains human and fallible.*

*Keywords: Economy, Government, Kingdom, Trinity, World*

## INTRODUCTION

In the book *The Kingdom and the Glory*, Giorgio Agamben (2011, 17-52) revived the Greek *oikonomia* (economy) as a way of understanding or interpreting the Trinity.<sup>1</sup> This Greek economy was transposed into theological parlance that acquired the meaning of a divine plan of salvation (Agamben 2011, 20). Theologically, this economic Trinity deals with God's activity and order in the world.<sup>2</sup> Agamben cited some Church Fathers who draw on the analogy of economy in dealing with divine government in the world.<sup>3</sup> Agamben (2011, 44) calls for the historicization of the economy that should "analyze the concrete modalities in which the mystery of the economy has literally shaped and determined from top to bottom of history on which we are still largely dependent." Thus, this paper is a response and contribution to the call for concrete modalities of the economy in the world.

In this paper, I critically examine in broad strokes the historical contexts of the Greek economy and the Roman Empire by providing events and criticisms that interrogate the assumptions of this economy and the applications to the Trinity

(Cartledge 2011; Kelly 2006; Wand 1963; Deanesly 1925). We will discover that the economy in its abstract or conceptual form can provide explanatory support to the Trinity but fails to account for its historical and social embodiment. Thus, its applications become problematic to society and Trinity. In short, there exists a gap between the model (economy) and the reality (history). Although we retain the social model of the economy in the Trinity, we need to continually reflect on the implications or consequences of this economic model to society and the Trinity.<sup>4</sup> As we see in the contemporary development of the theology of the Trinity, there is a preponderance for the social model, and such a social model considers the value of equality and justice in society. This social model attempts to purge the prejudicial and discriminatory discourses inherent in the economy of the Trinity and defends the particularity of peoples in a multicultural society as well as interreligious and ecological consciousness (Boesel and Ariarajah 2014).

## ECONOMY AS HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT

The word economy (*oikonomia*) was derived from two Greek words, 'oikos', which means household, and 'nemoin', which means administration or management.<sup>5</sup> Thus, economy literally means the administration or management of the household.<sup>6</sup> The household does not only encompass the family in the house but the whole network of relationships in the whole household or estate. Thus, the economy refers to the administration or management of the household or estate.<sup>7</sup> The household was generally managed by the father (*paterfamilias*) and the master of the household (*oikosdespotes*).<sup>8</sup> Aside from the nuclear family, the household would consist of distant relatives and dependents who would cohabit with the royal family. The household would also consist of varying numbers of servants and slaves who worked in the household and served the needs of the royal family. The father was seen as the head or master of the family, possessing paternal power (*pater potestas*)<sup>9</sup> who would govern or rule the people (Saller 1984; 1999).

Following Aristotle, Agamben (2011, 17) defines the *oikonimia* as "the administration of the house." In the economy, the despotic (head of the family), represented by the father, the king, or the emperor (head of the family), administered or managed the affairs of the household. However, since the household could be a large estate, it could not be directly or personally ruled by himself, so he would appoint or delegate his representatives to do it on his behalf. Thus, he ruled the household through a multitude of representatives. The king kept his personal contacts and held regular sessions with his officials on the affairs of the household. In this sense, economy means the government of the household by the head through his representatives. The head could just instruct and direct his representatives to execute or implement his order or rule.

Thus, this economy is not applied to all families; it is only limited to wealthy families belonging to the elite class. Being big landowners, these wealthy families owned vast tracts of lands or farms and so enjoyed the luxuries and comforts of life. From the aristocracy of ancient Greece to the Roman Empire or the monarchy, the elite classes dominated society. In ancient Greece, the elite occupied the upper classes – the top politicians, the military officers, and the big landowners. In the Roman Empire, the elite consisted of the emperor, the senators, and the knights. In monarchy during the

Middle Ages, the elite consisted of the royalty, the nobility, and the clergy. In this historical formation, the elite was the ruling class. In the empire or kingdom, the emperor or king was the ruler or master of the household. The ruler was assisted by his royal families, the senate, and the royal court in the management of the empire or the kingdom.

The household comprises vast tracts of lands inherited from generations and conquered from other territories. The land was the main source of wealth for the household. The ruler had expanded his territories through destructive wars and violent conquests. It produces a variety of foods and supplies the basic needs of the household.<sup>10</sup> It was planted with different crops and pastured with different animals. The household would function as the procurement, storage, and preparation of food. The slaves or servants were responsible for preparing the food and feeding the people. The household was then supplied with sufficient or abundant food for daily subsistence. The father of the household would direct his ministers to oversee all these activities in the household.

The men were the privileged sex in society. By virtue of their sex, they immediately assumed and merited the role of managers or dispensers in the households. In ancient Greece, society was characterized by aristocracy. Aristocracy refers to the government of the elite class.<sup>11</sup> The aristocrats consisted of the royal family forming the political aristocracy of the government, the religious authorities making the aristocracy of the Church; and the wealthy merchants constituting the aristocracy of business. The king or emperor held absolute power in his hands, and so he controlled the household or kingdom. The king or emperor could appoint his officials to the household.<sup>12</sup> The Greeks assumed that the elite class was composed of the best people who were considered the appropriate people to manage the household. In the Roman Empire, the elite class was composed of wealthy families, such as the royal family and the noble families. In the Middle Ages, the household was composed of the royal family and the royal court. In the domestic family, the father exercised direct rule and imposed his order. The wife, children, servants, and guards were under his immediate or direct supervision. The royal family was served by their servants and guards of their everyday needs.

However, the family was unique because of the marital relationship between the spouses and kinship among the relatives. In their domicile, the royal family would typically consist of the queen or empress of the reigning king or emperor, the princess and the princesses, the grandchildren, paternal siblings, and paternal cousins, as well as their respective spouses and children. In this sense, the members of the royalty were extended families. The family members were bonded by the marital relationship between the spouses and the consanguine relationship among the siblings.<sup>13</sup> Occasionally, that rule was delegated to the wife in running the affairs of the household. Thus, to some extent, the wife could exercise power and manage the household in the absence of the king or the emperor, such as during war or death. She would act temporarily as the regent, not only in her domicile but also in the whole household. On these occasions, the wife could exercise her independence from the husband and creativity in the management of the household (George 2005; Mitchell 2007).

Gradually, that limited use of the economy has been extended and applied in various areas or fields of human endeavors or enterprises. Since it invaded various spheres of public lives, this economic model has been labeled as an 'economic imperialism' highlighting the rule of the elite class in the management of society. However, the expansion is only a replication of the Greek household and Roman imperialism because the social structure privileging the elite class has been retained and reserved for adult males of the landed wealthy families who exercised their powers in the public spheres. By and large, the economy would refer to the administration or management of the male citizens who headed wealthy households and who favored the landed aristocrats. This management subscribed to the exploitation of the lower classes as well as the subordinate status of women in society (Madden, 1996; Block 1987).

## GOVERNMENT OF THE KINGDOM

Normally, the king or emperor resided in the castle or palace, mingled with his royal family, and consulted his royal court. He would spend his daily routines in his residence and transact business about the affairs of the estate. The king or emperor solicited advice and made decisions that were executed or implemented by his representatives. In this arrangement, there is an impression that the king reigned but did not govern his kingdom. In this understanding, a distinction is made between the kingdom and government. The kingdom belonged to the monarch, who lived in his palace or castle, while the government belonged to his representatives in the management of his estate (Dean 2012). Thus, his life revolved only within the royal palace.

In the Roman Empire, the emperor was assisted by the council of the people, the senators, and the knights. The nobility occupied the second highest rank in the social pyramid. Having that rank, the noble class comparatively possessed more privileges in the kingdom. Membership in the nobility was typically hereditary. The military personnel (knights and squires) comprised gatekeepers forming the castle's garrison. In the monarchy, the king was assisted by the royal court, whose members resided in the palace or castle. The royal residence consisted of the headquarters of the administrative offices that served the king's needs and functioned in the kingdom's government. The royal court was the core of the headquarters. The court members regularly attended to the king's needs and received foreign dignitaries. These headquarters employed large numbers of employees in the household, who were differentiated by rank, such as nobles, militaries, and servants.<sup>14</sup> This elite class of nobility advised the king in the government of the kingdom, while the militaries provided security to the royalty.

There were occasions when these elite classes, such as the Parisians, gambled for power. This gamble happens during the succession to the throne. Generally, it was the royal family that made the emperor. However, there were instances when the senate and the knight would interfere in the choice of the successor since they also put their separate candidates on the throne. There were situations of conspiracies, assassinations and power struggles between the royal family and the noble class, such as the senators

or the knights. Sometimes, the queen was involved in the choice of the successor by conspiring the murder of the king or emperor. She would support his favorite biological or adopted son to the throne. Moreover, the senators oversaw the decision-making in the affairs of the empire, and sometimes, their decisions would conflict with the positions of the emperor or king. They would negotiate their differences. Since the military men held the guardianship of the empire, they had the advantage of overthrowing the throne and supporting their own leader to the throne. Aside from the ruling groups – the patricians (royal family and the senators), the praetorians (elite military army), the plebeians or the plebs (the citizens and commoners) would also intervene in the affairs of the empire that would tilt the balance of power of the competing Parisians (Rowe 2006; Peachin 2006).

## ECONOMIC TRINITY

In the Divine Trinity, *oikonomia* is translated into the divine plan of salvation (Agamben 2011, 20). In the Trinitarian discourse, we find the conceptual distinction between ontology (immanent Trinity) and economy (economic Trinity) in theology (Jowers 2006). This theological construct emanates from the scholastic distinction between ‘being’ (*esse*) and ‘acting’ (*agere*) (Capener, 2016). This being is equated with God.<sup>15</sup> In the Trinity, theologians distinguished between kingdom and government. In this distinction, the being of God has remained static and internal, while the activity of God in the world has become dynamic and external. Since God is imaged like a king or emperor residing in his castle or palace, he is also imagined as residing and remaining in heaven.<sup>16</sup> As an emperor or a king, God instructs his representatives to execute his plan or order in the world. In this case, although they all belong to the elite class of royalty and nobility, there is a social hierarchy in that aristocratic order. In that activity, the government implies the king or emperor being the commander, while the representatives are the commands. The king or emperor is then superior, while the representatives are subordinate to him.

In its application to the Trinity, God’s being is the kingdom of God, and God’s action is the government of the world. God’s action is also God’s being. They are inseparable and united. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are consubstantial and coequal. God the Father has begotten God the Son, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. They are co-eternal. However, in the economic model, the king or emperor is distinct from his representatives. The king or emperor sends his representatives on a mission. In effect, the representatives are subordinate to the king or emperor who merely obeys his command or order. In a way, this relationship between the king or emperor and his representatives is also discerned in the case of the Father and Son relationship. The Father sent Jesus to do the mission of redemption, and Jesus obeyed his Father’s will. In fact, the Father was pleased by his Son, and so Jesus was favored by his Father (Mayer 1996; Cowan 2006). In this way, the Trinity consists of the Godhead: God’s being as the Father (the first person), God’s action as the Son (the second person), and God’s love between the Father and the Son as the Holy Spirit (the third person). In this Trinity, we see the double structure of both the sovereignty of God the Father and the government of the Son and the Holy

Spirit (Primera 2015). There is a division between the power that authorizes the action (*auctoritas*). The Father sends the Son and the Holy Spirit - the power that executes the action (*potestas*). The Son redeems, and the Holy Spirit sanctifies. In this case, government is the execution of power from the authority of the sovereignty of the Father (Watkin 2012).

We can see the identification and distinction in the case of the relationship between the Father and the Son. The Johannine Gospel records two articulations of Jesus: The Father and the Son are one (Jn. 10:30), and the Father is greater than the Son (Jn. 14:28). Here, we see the identification of the Father and the Son as well as the distinction between them. There is the implication of both equality and subordination in their relationship. In the Father and Son relationship, the Father sent his Son into the world with a mission to proclaim the Kingdom of God. Moreover, this Kingdom is equivalent to the household or estate of the emperor or king. Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God (eternal life in Johannine rendition) in the world. Moreover, we can also see the connection between the Father and the Son. In the Parable of the Sower, the father owns the land or farm and sows the seeds on the ground (See Matt. 13:1-23; Mk. 4:1-20; Lk. 8:4-15). Here, the farmer and the seed refer to the father being the landowner sowing the seed and the son being the seed sown into the field. In this scenario, the father is involved in the affairs of the farm or the field. The seed would grow in the soil or ground. The laborers will be the servants who will harvest the fruits of the farm. Unlike the emperor or king, the father is engaged in the affairs of the field by sowing the seeds. Although after sowing, he disappeared, the son took over the scene. The seeds will grow on their own depending on the kind of soil or care given to them (Taylor 1987).

Historically, the empire or the kingdom is characterized by conquests by means of violence and slavery of the colonized people. Since the land was the main source of wealth, territorial expansion and slavery would ensure the increase of wealth and availability of labor in the kingdom. The conquest was marked by bloodshed, where millions of people were being slaughtered, and tracts of lands were being seized. The colonized people were mercilessly enslaved. Cruelty was commonplace in war and in captivity. The slaves were often oppressed and exploited. They were prisoners or captives of war who were subjected to corporal punishment, sexual exploitation, torture, and execution. The slaves were owned as property by their masters, who could sell or use them or even punish and kill them. The slaves were forced to work in the empire or kingdom. They worked on household chores, in engineering projects such as roads and building constructions, and on plant and animal farms (Hunt 2018).

In the Gospels, we can discern an ambivalence. We see Jesus preaching peace but also division. He said: "I have come not to bring peace but division in the family" (Lk. 12:49-52). He prohibited Peter to use his sword against the soldiers arresting him. He admonished his disciples never to use the law of retaliation (an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth). He preached to his disciples to love their enemies and pray for their persecutors. However, in some parables, we see traces of imperial savagery and servitude. We see the existence and acceptance of slavery in various passages, such as the Prodigal Son, the Ten Gold Coins, the Unforgiving Tenant, and the Tenant Farmers. The treatment of the slaves was ambivalent. On the one hand, Jesus was

merciful to them. He healed the slave of the centurion (Lk. 7:1-10) and restored the severed ear of the high priest's slave (Mt. 26: 55-55; Lk. 22:49-51; Jn. 18:10-15). Jesus also sympathized with the burdened and wearied laborers. He wanted them to come and rest for a while (Mt. 11:28-30). Jesus compared the relationship between God and humanity to that of a master and slave, such as in the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant (Mt. 18:23-35), where the king forgave the debt of his servant; the Parable of the Tenants (Mt. 21:33-46) where the landowner cruelly retaliated the murder of his servants by killing the tenants; the Parable of the Wedding Feast (Mt. 22: 1-14), where the angered king ordered his troops to destroy the invited guests who refused to attend the wedding feast and drive away the strange guest who attended the wedding feast without wearing the festal garment.

Moreover, the mission of Jesus is portrayed as the suffering Servant of Yahweh. He underwent that cruel and violent passion from his arrest, trial, crucifixion, and finally, death. He was both physically and verbally abused by his accusers and the soldiers around him. He endured all those sufferings in his passion. In the Johannine Gospel, the Sanhedrin (local authority in Palestine) conspired to kill Jesus. Jesus was accused of both civil crime – rebellion - and religious crime – blasphemy – punishable by death. Instead of letting the whole nation suffer, the chief priest decided that only one man -Jesus – should rather suffer. He was made a sacrificial lamb and offered to be slaughtered so that the community would be spared from danger.<sup>17</sup> However, Jesus refused to retaliate against his accusers and plotters. Instead, he forgave them. Hanging on the cross and suffering in that crucifixion, Jesus uttered the words of forgiveness: Father, forgive them of their ignorance. Jesus did not avenge his death but broke the cycle of violence by offering forgiveness. He offered them mercy and compassion. In that act, evil was defeated, and the good prevailed in that act of forgiveness to his persecutors (Girard 1987).

In these instances, the portrayal of the Kingdom of God in the Gospels is ambivalent. In one sense, the Kingdom of God is characterized by love and mercy. Jesus said to his disciples not to imitate the gentiles who lord over others, and they need to serve one another as he did for them. Responding to Pilate in his public trial, Jesus affirmed the Kingdom of God but clarified that his Kingdom is not of this world but another world (Glancy, 2000). In another sense, the Kingdom of God is portrayed in violence and revenge against the enemies. The historical situations of those times were incorporated into the narratives and were made commonplace like slavery and hierarchy in the Kingdom.

## **SOCIAL CRITICISMS**

In the household, the elite was the ruling class in the social hierarchy of the empire or monarchy. The emperor or the king was the central figure of the aristocracy or monarchy assisted by his nobility – the council or the court. In this aristocracy, the elite class dominated the lower classes in society. Aside from the class hierarchy, the aristocracy was also ruled by the male sex (king, emperor), who subordinated the female sex. The man assumes the superior status and sexual privilege while the woman

is consigned to the inferior or minor status in society. Thus, this aristocracy was both elitist and patriarchal. The household was headed and owned by wealthy men.

In social hierarchy, the politics of paternalism (father and child) and patronage (boss and client) operated in aristocracy. *Paternalism* (Latin word *pater* as father) headed his family and ruled the household.<sup>18</sup> The emperor or king was the head or master of the household who provided the needs and protected the members.<sup>19</sup> The people owed their debt to the emperor or king for their protection and provision. In exchange, they needed to serve the emperor or king in the form of services and allegiances to the royal family.<sup>20</sup> The father could be characterized by benevolence in his decision for the best interest of his family. However, this benevolence could interfere with the autonomy of the members of the family and infringe on the exercise of their freedom. The father might treat his family members as mere recipients or beneficiaries of his benevolence. Paternalism was characterized by a dominant attitude of superiority. The father would decide what was best for the household. Due to this vast power, the father could turn into a despotic or authoritarian head or master in the exercise of his privilege. The royal family, as well as the noble class, must only obey the father since he was the superior and they were his subordinate.

By extension, we can also apply this relationship to patronage. *Patronage* (from the Latin word *patronus*) refers to the provision, assurance, and privilege in the form of favors (financial aid as well as appointive office) bestowed on clients. In this relationship, the patron bestows benefits to his chosen clients.<sup>21</sup> The emperor or the king was the patron who bestowed benefits on his loyal servants. In Roman society, the relationship between the patron and the client was hierarchical and mutual. The patron was the protector, sponsor, and benefactor of the client, while the client returned that benefit through his loyalty, subjection, and alliance with his patron. In this relationship, the patron belonged to the superior status while the client belonged to the inferior status. This patronage could breed corruption in the institutions due to the nepotism and impunity it created in that relationship. In this system, the patron held the authority and influence over a less powerful person.<sup>22</sup> In the Roman Empire, for example, the soldiers received benefits from the emperor in exchange for the protection provided to him against any attack or danger (Hebblewhite 2007). Moreover, the kingdom was composed of different offices and officials in the castle or palace. The emperor or king might favor his loyal council or court and bestow some benefits and favors on them.

In the Gospels, *paternalism and patronage* were subtle. God the Father never intervened or interfered with the other Persons of the Trinity. The Father sent the Son and the Holy Spirit into the world and the Church. They obeyed the will of the Father in their mission of redemption and sanctification. In the baptism and transfiguration of Jesus, the Father joyfully spoke and openly affirmed his Son being favored (Mt. 17:2). When Jesus prayed in the garden of Gethsemane before his arrest, he asked the Father to spare him from his impending suffering, but he also surrendered his fate to the will of the Father (Mk. 14:32-42; Mt. 26:36-46, Lk. 22:39-46). Jesus did not break the will of God the Father in the execution of his mission. He is committed to the Kingdom of God, and he is prepared for the consequences of martyrdom. In his mission, Jesus favored not the elite class, such as the Pharisees and the Scribes, but those social outcasts in society. This favor



was evident in the Temple scene. Jesus overturned the tables and scattered the money to make the Temple not just a marketplace but a den of thieves (Mk. 11:15-19; Mt. 21:12-17; Lk. 19:45-48). There was injustice in those transactions due to the exploitation of ordinary people who were buying an offering for the Temple. In short, the money changers and animal sellers robbed the ordinary people of their money. In this case, Jesus was merciful to his ordinary people and was sympathetic to their plight. He preached the good news to the poor and reserved the Kingdom of God to them (Borg and Crossan 2006).

The address “Abba” as Father seems to imply intimacy in the relationship between the Father and Son. But this expression can be an unmerited privilege of the male sex, providing him a justification to claim honor and power. The expression is not unique to Jesus but a common address to the head or master of the house or household. Just like in the Roman Empire or monarchy, the address expressed God's sovereign power and authority. In fact, the emperor or king was also addressed as the son of god (D'Angelo 1992; Reinhartz 1999). When Jesus used that Abba or Father, he then evoked not just the familial but also the imperial and monarchical image of the patriarchal father of the family and master of the empire or monarchy. He did not necessarily provide an alternative or challenge to the prevailing patriarchy. Moreover, the exclusive relationship between the Father and the Son in the Johannine Trinity overshadowed the human kinship of Jesus on earth, living with his family - Joseph and Mary- and relating with his brothers, sisters, and friends among his followers or disciples. This exclusivity removed the historical Jesus from the network of his social relationship with human beings. In effect, Jesus' divinity was highlighted at the expense of his humanity in that representation or portrayal (Campbell, 2007).

Finally, in the Gospels, we see Jesus' dominant attitude toward different groups. In the case of his antagonists, Jesus would confront the Pharisees and Scribes calling or charging them of hypocrisy and sanctimoniousness in their behaviors. He also appreciated members of the elite class, such as the unnamed Roman centurion and the wealthy tax collector Zacchaeus, demonstrating their mercy and justice to ordinary people. However, Jesus demonstrated his love and compassion for ordinary people, such as the sinners, the poor, the sick, the hungry, and the children. He commiserated with them by responding to their needs and affirming their faith. He reserved the Kingdom of God to the vulnerable people as enumerated in his beatitudes (Moltman.1993).

## CONCLUSION

Basically, there can be no equation or identification between the idea of the economy applied to the Trinity and the reality of that economy shown in the world. The anthropomorphic use of the economic model leads us to a problematic portrayal of the Trinity and model of social relationship. This model both explains but also complicates the relationship of the Three Divine Persons in the economy of salvation. The immanent Trinity dwells in the household of heaven, while the economic Trinity lives in the household of the earth. In a way, God the Father dwelt in heaven while the Son and the Holy Spirit were sent for a mission in the world. In this way, the Kingdom primarily belonged to the Father, while the government was shared by the Son and the Holy Spirit. In the Roman Empire and the monarchy, the king or emperor was the

sovereign ruler delegating the government to his representatives. In the same way, God the Father was the sovereign King, while God the Son and God the Holy Spirit were his representatives in the government of the world.<sup>23</sup> The world became a divine household on earth. When Jesus ascended to heaven, he was succeeded by the Holy Spirit. God the Father sent the Holy Spirit, who descended on the community of believers.

Although the Gospels did not generally subscribe to the aristocracy or monarchy in history, they carried some remnants and traces of the social hierarchy of the elite classes during the history of the Roman Empire and the monarchy that entered into the semantic contents of the Trinity. Placed in the context of aristocracy, the emperor or king is the sovereign ruler of his empire or kingdom. He rules not only his immediate royal family but also the whole of his empire or kingdom. In this case, the sovereign king is God the Father who sent the members of his royal family – Son and Holy Spirit – to obey the will of God the Father in the mission bestowed on them. Using the ranks in the aristocracy in the royal family, the Son is subordinate to his Father. Thus, the Father sent his Son, who, in turn, obeyed Him. Jesus obeyed and executed the will of the Father. The Father was pleased by the Son, and so favored him.<sup>24</sup>

Although the Father and Son are united as one, they are different in the sense that one is the sender (Father), and the other is the sendee (Son). In this sense, this construction may imply an asymmetrical relationship among the Divine Persons of the Trinity because of that sender-sendee relationship. In that construction, the Son is subordinate to the Father by virtue of obedience to His will. In this divine order, the Son cannot reverse the hierarchy; that is, the Son cannot send the Father on a mission. However, the mission of Jesus and the Holy Spirit shows some counter-narratives against the dominant elitist image of the monarchy and aristocracy. Jesus showed his favor not to the elite class but to the ordinary people in society. He attended to the needs of the ordinary people located at the fringes of society and reinstated their dignity and status as children of God by restoring their health and welfare. The Holy Spirit manifests the freedom of movements like air or wind that inspires people to do their ministry and guides them to the path of truth in their faith. In effect, we need to listen and respect each other as we search and deliberate for the approximation, if not the attainment, of truth.<sup>25</sup>

There are also drawbacks to this economic model. We have seen that the economy is dominantly governed by the father or the master of the household, the privilege of the elite class in society, the destructive conquest of territories and peoples, and the oppressive slavery of the colonized people. On the part of the upper classes, the emperor or king applied patronage to the elite for their mutual survival and maintenance of privilege. On the part of the lower classes, the king or the emperor exercises paternalism to the ordinary people by providing them with provisions and protecting their wellbeing. However, this economic model remains caught up in the discourse of social hierarchy. In using this model, the economy still carries imperial and monarchical constructions. The Son and the Holy Spirit obeyed the mission entrusted to them by God the Father. In a patriarchal society, this obedience indicates unity and subordination. The emperor or king remains the sovereign head or master of the empire or kingdom and subordinates the rest under his sovereignty and government.

In the Divine Trinity, the relationship between the Kingdom and government was linked with the mission in the world. The sovereignty of God still operated through the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit since the Persons of the Trinity were united in their love. However, we cannot also purify the social hierarchy embedded or inherent in that economy in its application to the Trinity and to the world. In a way, the economy affected the relationship of the Trinity and bolstered the hierarchy in the Trinity. In the economic Trinity, the Father comparatively appeared to be superior, and the Son and the Holy Spirit seemed to be subordinate. In that case, the relationship of the Three Divine Persons of the Trinity was hierarchically arranged. In the confession of faith, the Divine Trinity is consubstantial and coequal. They are perfectly united and harmonized. In effect, there is no separation between God's sovereignty and God's government in the world. Their actions perfectly coalesced. In the government of the world, concretized in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit, Jesus and the Advocate were sent by the Father (Merwe1 2019). Thus, the immanent Trinity and the economic Trinity were connected with that mission realized in redemption and sanctification.

Jesus, as the image of the invisible God, embodied and manifested the identity of God the Father, proclaiming the Kingdom of God. The Holy Spirit accompanied the Son in his mission. The love and mercy of the Father are demonstrated by the Son, and the freedom and creativity of the Father are articulated by the Holy Spirit. In their mutual actions, the separation of the immanent Trinity and the economic Trinity is blurred and crossed because the Trinity was felt by and shown to the ordinary people. The distant God in heaven is brought to intimacy and proximity to the ordinary people through the sending of the Son and the Holy Spirit and the presenting of the Father to the people by the Son. The justice of God is experienced by the ordinary people through preaching the good news, healing the sick in his ministry, and defending the poor in the Temple scene against the abuses of the elite class of the Sanhedrin. The freedom and creativity of the ordinary people in their different ministries and missions are felt in the outpouring and indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Trinity as God-with-us really pours and dwells among the people in their lives.<sup>26</sup>

## NOTES

1. Agamben joined the debate on political theology initiated by Carl Schmidt and Eric Paterson on the question of the separation between the economic and political spheres or realms. In utilizing economy, Agamben links the economic with the political. For him, they are inseparable (Dean, 2019; McLoughlin 2015; Ratajczak and Zawisza 2015).

2. In Trinitarian Theology, there is a division between the immanent (or ontological) Trinity and the economic Trinity. The immanent Trinity pertains to the nature or reality of the Three Divine Persons, while the economic Trinity refers to the history of salvation or the activity of God in the world (Meyer 2016).

3. According to Enrico Beltramini, Agamben's use of the term 'government' implies different senses. These senses contain the following: "(1) government (or governance) as executive power; (2) government as the bipolar system of power

composed of sovereign power and executive power (and in order to avoid confusion, the capital letter (i.e., 'Government' or 'Governance') is used to indicate the second sense; (3) government as the government of people and things (used as a synonym for governmentality). The terms administration, government, management, and economy are used synonymously" (Beltramini 2020, 198).

4. Theologically, there are two dominant Trinitarian models, namely, the *psychological model* espoused by Saint Augustine and Saint Thomas and the *social model* espoused by liberation theology and feminist theology. The psychological model derives its assumptions from the workings of the human mind, such as thinking processes, while the social model derives its assumptions from the functioning of social relationships, such as equality of peoples and respect for differences (Hunt 2005; Boff 1998).

5. We note that neither Greek nor Latin had a corresponding word for modern-day 'family,' which refers to the nuclear family composed of spouses and children. The Latin *familia* must be translated to 'household' or estate rather than 'family' (Leshem 2006, 226).

6. By using the analogy of economy, Agamben construes household management not as knowledge but as practice. In Greek thought, there is a distinction between theory and praxis. Economy belongs to practical management of the household. However, we already have the discipline of economics among the sciences. As it developed, economics was not just a practice but also a theory (Backhouse and Fontaine 2010, 1-16).

7. In Greek thought, there is a distinction between economy (*oikonomia*), which belongs to practice, and chrematistics (*khrematiste*), which is the science of money. Historically, economy is nobler than chrematistics (Toscano 2011).

8. In Greek society, there is a distinction between *oikos*, *agora*, and *polis*. The *oikos* is the household, the *agora* is the market, and the *polis* is the city-state. However, they are all ruled by the male adults in society. Men are the privileged sex in society because they rule the household, the market, and the city-state. Women - wife and daughter - are consigned to the house and subordinated to the husband and the father (Graßhoff and Meyer 2016; Hansen 1998, 306-348).

9. Comparatively, Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben focused their philosophies on the question of power. However, they differ in their genealogies of power. For Foucault, the origin of power is located in a theological-political paradigm, while for Agamben, in a theological-economic paradigm (Beltramini 2020, 201-204).

10. In Greek society, male adults were provided with their daily subsistence by the servants and the slaves so that they could devote some of their time to leisure and study. These male adults are engaged in the public spheres of the *polis*. In the Roman Empire, male adults are also provided with their daily sustenance because they are needed for the maintenance of the empire. Thus, the household was mainly instrumental in advancing the good life of the aristocrats and the nobilities who were expected to devote their lives to philosophy in their private lives and to the empire for their security. In fact, the freemen in the household should be unfettered from household preoccupations so that they have time for philosophical reflection or speculative knowledge (Nortwick 2008, 1-13).

11. In Greek, *aristokratía* comes from two words: *aristos*, which means 'excellent,' and *kratos*, which means 'rule.' Aristocracy is a form of government whereby the elite class rules society. This government believes that the rule of the elite class is the best government. The philosophers, for example, belong to the elite class and can best govern society (see Doyle 1-21)

12. See Edward M. Schoolman. 2016. "Nobility, Aristocracy and Status in Early Medieval," *Ravenna Book: Its Role in Earlier Medieval Change and Exchange* (Schoolman 2016, 221-238).

13. The royal family practiced pre-arranged marriage of spouses. The chosen prince would marry the princess within the rank of the elite classes. Moreover, the royal family would favor the son because he would ascend to the throne as the successor of the king or emperor. Women had only two options: to marry the man in a prearranged marriage or to enter the convent (Grubbs 2002, 16-80).

14. There is a difference in slavery between the medieval aristocracy and the Roman Empire. The medieval monarchy used slaves rather than servants to do menial tasks. The aristocracy of medieval Europe was guarded by the military forces as shown in the residence of the aristocrats in the castle. The Roman Empire experienced relative security and peace within its borders. In the Roman Empire, there was no need for fortification. (Hunt 2018, 1-20).

15. The word 'onto-theology' was popularized by Martin Heidegger in his metaphysics. Onto-theology means the ontology of God and/or the theology of Being. While the term was first used by Immanuel Kant, it was popularized in philosophical parlance by Martin Heidegger. Heidegger used the term to lodge his critique of the whole tradition of 'Western metaphysics' that identifies ontology with theology by equating being with God (Thomson 2000, 297-327).

16. We have to note that in Genesis, God created heaven and earth. In fact, heaven is pluralized (heavens) to refer to the heaven above and the heaven below. In that sense, heaven is also created and therefore limited. Thus, heaven cannot limit God's omnipresence (Michael Welker 1994, 139-140).

17. In the ordinary sense, a sacrificial lamb is offered to be slaughtered, and this image implies a violent action to the victim of the sacrifice. This sacrifice is remembered by the community in worship or liturgy. The sacrificial lamb is continually offered because it recalls the redemption of the community effected by the sacrificial lamb. This image follows a cycle of violence repeatedly reenacted by the community in remembrance of that sacrificial lamb (Gerard 1986).

18. The term "paternalism" appeared in the late 19th century as a critique against the intervention or interference with liberty and autonomy. Paternalism is associated with attitudes of overprotection that infringe on personal freedom and autonomy in the name of benevolence (Desmarais-Tremblay 2017, 1-34).

19. Traditionally, the father of the family is expected to provide for the needs of the family and to protect the members from harm. Due to these roles, men have felt the heavy burdens that they have to bear as fathers of the family. Those roles evince his manhood and masculinity. He would fail as a man or father if he failed to deliver those roles (Kimmel 2005, 3-18).

20. In the Middle Ages, this relationship resulted in feudalism or a feudal system. Feudalism structures society into a relationship between the landowner (the feudal lord) and the feudal fief. The fief is obligated to serve his lord (Crubaugh 2011, 1-40).

21. In the ancient Roman Empire, patronage (*clientela*) was the distinctive relationship between the *patronus* ("patron") and their *cliens* ("client"). In this sense, patronage is a subtle master-slave relationship as well as a patron-client relationship. Thus, the relationship established between them is mutually beneficial to them (Wallace-Hadrill 1990, 63-88).

22. In feudalism, the system established an unequal relationship between the lord and the self. This system was designed to maintain a cheap and subservient labor force, which could minimize production costs and maximize profits by the small elite. There was patronage in feudalism used to maintain rigid class structures that maintained the monopoly and privilege of this elite (Chengdan 2010, 6683-6691).

23. Theologically, economy as a divine government is connected with divine providence. Divine providence holds that God is the creator of heaven and earth. As the creator, God knows the occurrences in heaven and on earth since they are under God's sovereign power. However, divine providence is paired with free will, which brings an uneasy relationship between them (Tavard 2003, 707-718).

24. In the medieval age, there developed a spirituality that considered Jesus as a mother. Metaphorically, the Father loves the mother (Jesus), forming a unity in a family (Bynum 1984, 110-169). Jesus is also referred to as the wisdom (Sophia) of God, and the Sophia of God is present in creation in the Book of Wisdom (Fiorenza, 1994, 1-34).

25. Pope Francis talked about *synodality* as an appropriate description of this deliberation and communion among the members of the church (Wells 2020).

26. In his recent encyclical, Pope Francis wrote about social friendship that would guide our relationship among different churches or religions in the world (Pope Francis 2020).

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