

Joel Agpalo Tejado, *Sambayanihan: How Filipino Pentecostals Build Communities in the Philippines*, foreword by Douglas Petersen (Baguio, Philippines: Computerized Clean Print, Inc., 2011), paperback, xiv + 169 pp., ISBN: 971-95234, PHP 200.00.

Filipino Pentecostals are involved in civic engagement! That the Ilocano and Cordilleran Assemblies of God of Northern Luzon in the Philippines are doing something to build poor rural communities is the central thesis of Joel A. Tejado. It is a misconception that Filipino Pentecostals are not involved with the poor. Using the vernacular as primary title of Tejado's book "*Sambayanihan*" is significant. It has the notion that people are working together shoulder to shoulder not for any expectation of payment but to accomplish something. That something is for the common good of the community. Thus, it is intelligibly expressed in the subtitle of Tejado's volume: *How Filipino Pentecostals Build Communities in the Philippines*. This research brings out a significant framework with a Pentecostal perspective that is incarnational in nature to reach out the rural poor in Northern Luzon. It is apparent in the pages of Tejado's work that he was successful in interpreting the meaning of civic engagement among the Filipino Pentecostals.

Since this work was originally written as a D.Min. project for Asia Pacific Theological Seminary, Douglas Petersen—who supervised the writing process—provides a foreword. He states that "this research represents one of the first (if not the first) endeavors of its kind to probe deeper into the identity, nature, and functions of rural Pentecostal Christians (anywhere), especially the relationship between their religious beliefs, attitudes and practices with social economic, and political dimensions." (vii) The reviewer agrees with Petersen. The field research of Tejado is substantial. Because of poverty in the Ilocano and Cordilleran areas of Northern Luzon, the author sees how "the social capital or civic engagement," which means "social relationships that help people to get along with each other and act more effectively than they could as isolated individuals," is a necessity to the Pentecostal congregations. (12) In addition, Tejado employs "a participatory approach" in his inquiry of the role of the Pentecostal faith in civic engagement.

*Sambayanihan* has seven chapters. The first reflects a typical doctoral work's initial chapter. It gives the research question and the rationale for the writing of this project. Tejado stresses the poverty context of his research. The introduction of the structure of his investigation starts with a narrative of a poor rural family that received

the attention of an Assemblies of God congregation. This poor family came to know Christ and eventually the local church began a social ministry. (1) From the story of the Mateo family, it moves to the colonial past of the Filipinos and the big disparity between the rich and the poor, the corruption in the government, the poverty brought by globalization, exportation of Filipino labor and the exploitation of children. (2-8) These things that Tejedó presents are telling. Hence, the issue and its importance as well as the demography of people for empirical study are well argued. The methodology of the study is “a combination of theoretical, qualitative and quantitative research.” (15) Survey questionnaires and tabulation of data provide the information about the specific churches that are studied. (See appendices on pages 131-150.) The direction of the project is understandable and clearly outlined.

The second chapter is a survey of the writings of social scientists that talk about civic engagement or social capital. Tejedó reviews the theories of Bourdieu, Coleman, Sen, Putnam, Fukuyama as well as the recognition of the American Pentecostals’ initiative on social capital, the NGOs in the Philippines, Catholic works, NCCP, PCEC and the Filipino Evangelicals’ ISAAC in developing people. (20-39) In connection with chapter two, the next chapter is all about the process of research and matters of method. For the reviewer this part is vital. Methodology of research is crucial when one does a doctoral work. Tejedó is clear in demonstrating what he wants to accomplish in his research. He describes and informs the reader concerning the target people and the locations of his investigation, the manner in which the data will be collected and analyzed as well as the use of statistical treatment of the materials gathered in the questionnaires. The author also employed personal interviews with people in the process of his research.

Chapters four and five are the reports of the field research. In the fourth chapter, Tejedó makes a comparison and contrast of the responses of the Ilocano and the Cordilleran Pentecostals to the idea of civic engagement. The result is that “there is no marked difference between the two groups” which means “that Ilocano and Cordilleran Pentecostal church members have the same level of enthusiasm and vigor in engagement in civic and community activities.” (84) In the fifth chapter, the author gives an overview of the development of Ilocano and Cordilleran Pentecostal involvement with social capital. He uses the seven models of civic engagement. By using case studies among the seven selected churches, the models observed by the author develop in a concrete way. Tejedó describes “ecological preservation,”

“political participation,” “*bayanihan* savings and church-based micro financing,” “community participation,” “rehabilitation center for demon-possessed and mentally retarded patients,” “cooperative foundation” and “home for children.” (95-107)

In the next chapter, Tejedo moves from philosophical concept and empirical data to a theological articulation of the Pentecostal practice of social capital. He suggests that “Pentecostal civic engagement must be grounded from what the Bible describes and prescribes about the conditions of the poor.” (110) The author also argues for the notion of creation in terms of the Spirit’s holistic work. (113) The call of God’s people to bless the nations indicates blessing the communities, bringing righteous governance with the anointing of God in political and social action. Accordingly, the Bible is clear that justice for the poor is the focus of Spirit inspired prophets of old. (117) The “participatory practice” in the communities should be a focus for a Spirit filled ministry. Therefore Tejedo concludes in chapter seven that social science approaches could be treated by Pentecostals as “amoral, that is, they are neither evil or wrong.” (121) He points out that his empirical inquiry confirms the Ilocano and Cordilleran Pentecostals that have “a strong deposit of social capital could be a support for the vulnerable people in the society and will increase social cohesion and less social exclusion.” (121)

The original title of Tejedo’s doctoral work is “Developing a Pentecostal Civic Engagement as a Way of Building Poor Communities in the Philippines: A Case of Lowland and Highland Ilocano Pentecostals in Northern Luzon, Philippines (2011).” He also published a synopsis of his D.Min. project with the title “Pentecostal Civic Engagement: How Ilocano Pentecostal Churches Build Poor Communities in the Philippines,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 13/1 (January 2010): 41-64. This article is a microcosm of the larger work that he was completing at that time. In other words, this current book under review is well summarized by Tejedo in his earlier essay. The reviewer recommends the reader to read this article of the author. Reading it is of much help for an overview of *Sambayanihan*. Comparing the different titles, the current title of the book is the most eye catching of the three. It both contextualizes and represents what the book is all about. There is certainly a way to address poverty in rural Philippines. Indeed, Pentecostals are empowered by the Spirit to do *Sambayanihan*!

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