III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
OF DATA

INTRODUCTION

The abstracting and indexing process has been undertaken in Part II of this study. Each unit of document which comprises the data in this research is now represented by an abstract and the index term/s. The index term is a topical or thematic representation of each document.

The index term is crucial in this study as its main concern is to identify the dominant themes in Filipino Christological literature from the years 1965 to 2000.

This present section is the analytical phase of the research. It involves the use of a statistical tool called the frequency distribution table. Having assigned index term/s to each document, they are now tallied in the frequency distribution table. As the term “frequency distribution table” implies, it shows the number of times an index term is used to represent the theme of a particular document; it also shows that the index term which has the largest number of tallies is considered the most dominant theme. Table 1 is the summary of the tabulation undertaken to determine the number of times an index term is used; it also shows the rank of the index term. The index term is ranked from highest to lowest with the highest number of tallies considered to be the most dominant theme. It reflects the top ten most dominant themes in Filipino Christological writing included in this study.\textsuperscript{14}

A feature of the frequency distribution table is the historical factor which indicates the number of times a theme emerges in a particular segment of history. This period of history refers to the post-Vatican II

\textsuperscript{14}The complete frequency distribution table showing all the terms used to represent a Christological theme with the corresponding tallies will be presented as Appendix A (p. 156).
era in which a particular Christological reflection was put into writing. At a glance, one can note that much Filipino Christological literature was written in the 1980s and the 1990s, some fifteen years after the close of the Second Vatican Council and extending until the end of the millennium.

### Table 1: Tabular Presentation of Data

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### Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The present section is the analysis and interpretation phase of this research; it aims to answer the various questions as identified in the Statement of the Problem. The main question which this study addresses is: **What are the central themes of Filipino Christological writing in the period from 1965 to the year 2000?** Note that table 1 presents the sixteen (16) themes that are the most dominant ones (out of a total of one hundred eleven themes). Each of these themes has been mentioned a total of ten or more times in the Christological literature surveyed.
TOP FIVE DOMINANT THEMES IN FILIPINO CHRISTOLOGICAL WRITING

At this point, a discussion of the five most dominant themes is undertaken. As each theme is developed, representative authors who have ideas regarding the theme are mentioned with a presentation of their main propositions regarding the topic. This discussion shows how these Christological authors articulate their views and reflect on a particular theme. The five themes to be treated are: 1) Kingdom of God, 2) Resurrection, 3) Methodology, 4) Santo Niño, and 5) Crucifixion.

Kingdom of God

Various authors discuss the theme of the Kingdom of God in their Christological writing; representative writers are C. Abesamis, J. de Mesa, L. Wostyn, J. Fuellenbach, J. Paredes, M. Vano, L. Colla, D. Elwood, P. Magdamo, among others.

C. Abesamis, basing his study on biblical data especially Mark 1:14-15, points to the Kingdom of God as the main subject of Jesus’ preaching. Integral to the person, life, ministry, and mission of Jesus is the proclamation of the Kingdom of God. For Abesamis, Jesus’ proclamation of the Kingdom of God is the one sure historical fact about Jesus.¹⁵ Much of what the Kingdom of God entails as a concrete reality is outlined in the Beatitudes (Luke 6:20ff, Matthew 5:3ff). “The Beatitudes are proclamations or announcements of salvation.”¹⁶ As the Beatitudes contain affirmations about salvation, they also affirm what


¹⁶Abesamis, A Third Look at Jesus, 39.
the Kingdom of God entails in the concrete. Salvation and Kingdom of God are seen by Abesamis as interchangeable.

Jesus' familiarity with the prophet Isaiah influenced his Kingdom proclamation. He quotes the prophet on various occasions like in Matthew 11:2-6 and Luke 4:16-21. In each of these quotations, one can get a glimpse of Jesus' notion of the Kingdom of God. In these passages, Jesus identifies the features of the Kingdom of God which include sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and health to the sick. In summary, the Kingdom of God involves a reversal of the situation of the poor, the sick, and the outcasts of society.

Abesamis proceeds with the discussion of the Kingdom of God in terms of concrete Filipino contexts and situations like that of peasants in a vegetable farm, fisherfolk in a fishing village, indigenous people dislocated by mining activities in their ancestral domain, local folks celebrating a barrio fiesta. By way of example, one can consider the barrio fiesta setting; Abesamis points to the Kingdom of God as a banquet with food. Abundance of food is an essential component. Food means salvation for the hungry.

Abesamis also employs various images like the mother and child, the protest rally, nature in a rural setting, women, nationalist figures, people's organizations, and human rights lawyers. He utilizes these situations and images to stress the point of Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God based on the "Third Look."

The historical certainty of Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God is affirmed by J. de Mesa and L. Wostyn. Such a proclamation is found in Jesus' prophetic words and actions. They explore the prophetic dimension of such a proclamation by tracing the Kingdom of God tradition to the Old Testament offer of salvation as proclaimed by the prophets. Citing Mark 1:15, the two authors recognize the universal character of Jesus' message of the Kingdom of God.

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Jesus’ preaching of the Kingdom of God has a political dimension. It is a political intervention meant to establish a new social order, a social order where dignity is restored to the humanity of those who had been victimized by the oppressive political and religious institutions of his time.

J. de Mesa and L. Wostyn attempt to connect Jesus’ message of the Kingdom of God with the Filipino notion of kagandahang loob ng Diyos (generosity of God) and ginhawa (ease of life, comfort, prosperity) as contained in the Filipino myth of Si Malakas at si Maganda (The Strong and the Beautiful). In this myth, the authors reflect that “Jesus’ experience of the Kingdom of God wholly integrated lakas (strength) and kagandahang-loob (generosity), where one is identical with and inseparable from the other.”\textsuperscript{18} In a unique manner, De Mesa and Wostyn demonstrate how the Filipino mythological tradition is in dialogue with Filipino religious upbringing in pointing out that “for Jesus, the Kingdom of God highlights God’s lordship which suggests lakas (strength), power and dominance. It integrates in the most radical way the notion of kagandahang loob (generosity) which presents God as unconditionally willing the good of human beings.”\textsuperscript{19}

J. Fuellenbach has undertaken extensive discussion of the Kingdom of God. One of his significant affirmations focuses on the crucial link between the Kingdom of God and the person of Jesus.\textsuperscript{20} With Easter as the reference point, the author points out that “before Easter, Jesus was the preacher of the Kingdom of God. After Easter, the object of preaching was Jesus Christ himself.”\textsuperscript{21} He traces the origin of the Kingdom message of Jesus to his Abba experience.\textsuperscript{22}

\textsuperscript{18}De Mesa and Wostyn, Doing Christology, 179.

\textsuperscript{19}De Mesa and Wostyn, Doing Christology, 177.


\textsuperscript{21}Fuellenbach, The Kingdom of God, 79.

\textsuperscript{22}Fuellenbach, The Kingdom of God, 84.
Integral to Jesus’ prophetic office is the proclamation of the Kingdom of God as a reality made manifest by his own coming. In terms of what the Kingdom entails in more concrete terms, “the central message of Jesus, the Kingdom of God, did mean the transformation of all human structures in favor of justice and the rights of the poor.”

The proclamation is done with words through the parables and with deeds through symbolic actions.

Colla relates the Kingdom of God to present society by identifying its ideal characteristics in terms of economic equality and social unity. The Kingdom of God is a result of the transformation of human society with all its social, economic, and political institutions. The Kingdom of God is a society where everybody is equal; no one would be rich or poor.

D. Elwood and P. Magdamo recognize the dominance of the Kingdom of God as a theme of Jesus’ preaching. Jesus’ opening statement as he begins his ministry is the announcement of the coming of the Kingdom. Aside from his initial proclamation in Mark 1:15, Jesus made use of parables to portray what the Kingdom of God would be like and this can be found in various places in the Gospels. Entering the Kingdom requires a personal decision on the part of the individual and accepting the Kingdom brings about joy for the person.

Paredes affirms that “the Sermon on the Mount is the solemn moment of the inauguration of the Kingdom and of the convocation of a new Israel.” The Kingdom of God as a movement initiated by Jesus is revolutionary in character because it values the poor and the marginalized, the hungry and the oppressed. It espouses values

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24 Luc Colla, *The Amazing Story of Jesus of Nazareth: A Second Year High School Course in Religion and Value Education* (Baguio City: Religion Department, Saint Louis University, 1984), 25.

contradictory to what the people of Jesus’ time held as necessary and important in their life as the chosen people of God.

Vano understands the Kingdom of God as the work of the Spirit in the life of God’s people. The liberation aspect is inherent in the proclamation of the Kingdom of God.

From the foregoing discussion, there is a wide consensus about the concrete reality of the Kingdom of God as the Kingdom of the poor in the sense that the poor are the central focus of God’s liberating action. Filipino Christological literature resonates with the situation of poverty that the majority of Filipinos experience, and Jesus’ message of the Kingdom of God proves to address the need for liberation. Jesus is close to the Filipino because His message brings hope to a struggling nation.

**Resurrection**

The importance of the discussion on the resurrection of Jesus for Filipinos is recognized by many writers; several will be presented here.

For P. Sevilla, there is a seeming overemphasis in the Filipino devotion to the crucified Jesus. Sevilla points out that “many Filipinos are not yet conscious of the value of the resurrection of Jesus for the Christian faith.” His reflection on the resurrection attempts “to bring out the meaning and significance of the resurrection for Christian discipleship and spirituality.”

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of the resurrection, Sevilla affirms its foundation for Christian faith, Christian hope, and the Christian Church. If the resurrection did not take place, faith in Christ would be irrelevant and useless. Christian hope would not be essential and would be meaningless without the resurrection. The existence of the Church would be baseless if Jesus did not rise from the dead.

Basing himself on the witness of the New Testament, Sevilla asserts that “it is through the experience of the risen Jesus that the Church came to a clear recognition of who he is.”\textsuperscript{29} Considering the theological meaning of the resurrection, Sevilla points out that Jesus’ rising from the dead was first and foremost a foundational liberating initiative of the Father. With the resurrection, Jesus became the source of hope for humankind, a hope for the future salvation.

In the vision of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II), reflection on the risen Christ enables the Church to engage in renewed integral evangelization.\textsuperscript{30}

In her study, Lagunsad seeks “to deepen the understanding of the significance of Jesus’ resurrection for Christian discipleship in the Philippine context in particular.”\textsuperscript{31} She recognizes the relevance of Jon Sobrino’s theology of the resurrection in relation to the Philippine experience of economic deprivation, political oppression and social marginalization. Jon Sobrino himself writes from the context of the Third World. The resurrection means much to Filipinos who long for liberation from poverty and oppression.

\textsuperscript{29}Pedro C. Sevilla, \textit{People’s Faith Is People’s Power: A Filipino Christological Catechism} (Quezon City: Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, 1986), 43.


Together with Jesus’ death on the cross, S. Putzu affirms that “the resurrection of Christ is one of the central truths of the Catholic faith,” underscoring its redemptive significance. After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to his disciples in various instances. Jesus’ apparitions to his disciples are considered to support the empty tomb in proving that Jesus rose from the dead. The apparitions were viewed as personal experiences on the part of the disciples brought about by the objective reality of Jesus rising from the dead.

Inseparable from the cross, C. Abesamis holds the same view of the centrality of Jesus’ resurrection to Christian faith. He begins his discussion with the biblical accounts of the resurrection. Various meanings are attached to the resurrection. First and foremost, the resurrection is viewed as the “Father’s act of vindication” for the death of Jesus. It is an act that runs contrary to what humanity did to Jesus which was to kill him. The resurrection also serves as the foundation of Christian hope for everlasting life. With the resurrection, the Holy Spirit becomes the principle of human life. Because of the resurrection, Jesus is able to gather all creation to himself as the cosmic Christ. The resurrection is meant to preserve the integrity of Jesus’ teaching of the Kingdom of God.

D. Elwood and P. Magdamo consider 1 Cor 15:3-7 as the earliest account of the resurrection. The New Testament accounts of the resurrection center on the empty tomb and Jesus’ appearances after his death on the cross.

Various authors refer to these two components of the biblical accounts in their discussion of the resurrection. An extensive discussion on the subject is presented by J. Smith. His basic premise in the study

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33Salvatore Putzu, “The Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ,” 22.

34Abesamis, *A Third Look at Jesus*, 207.
of the resurrection is "to show the credibility and validity of the Easter faith."35 He examined the New Testament witness especially the pre-Pauline tradition in 1 Cor 15:3-7. In this account, Paul relates his encounter with Jesus as the risen Christ. The disciples' experience of the risen Jesus is viewed as "the manifestation by God of the crucified Jesus as the risen Christ or as the self-manifestation of the risen one from out of the sphere of God."36 In his examination of the empty tomb tradition, Smith relates the Gospel tradition. Various theologians hold different positions regarding the historical certainty of the empty tomb tradition. However, from the theological point of view, Smith notes that "the Church has not made an explicit definition concerning whether the empty tomb is an implication of the mystery of Jesus' resurrection."37

J. de Mesa and L. Wostyn refer to the resurrection with categories like "the Christian faith-inspired experience at Easter" or simply the "Easter experience."38 In their work, there is a renewed reference to the resurrection in terms of the appearances of Jesus, the discovery of the empty tomb, and the earliest kerygma about the resurrection in 1 Cor. 15. All these aspects of the resurrection are recounted as experiences by the disciples and of Paul in the case of 1 Cor. 15. With the experience of the risen Jesus comes the understanding of who Jesus is.

De Mesa and Wostyn view the resurrection as having "a theological and historical dimension."39 Peña is more explicit on the historical


38De Mesa and Wostyn, Doing Christology, 196.

39De Mesa and Wostyn, Doing Christology, 196.
aspect of the resurrection as he asserts that "there is a certain historical guarantee that the resurrection event took place because only then can one explain properly how the fearful disciples who abandoned Jesus during his passion and death found fearless courage to risk their lives and confess that Jesus is alive."^{40} Earlier in this section Sevilla's views on the resurrection were noted; Peña also takes notice that "in spite of its utmost importance, the Paschal mystery has been mostly identified with the event of Jesus' passion and death."^{41}

While some authors explore the historical and theological dimensions of the resurrection, Paredes, on his part, adds a third, the ethical dimension. His concern in the ethical aspect of the resurrection is "how to make the faith in the resurrection credible today."^{42}

In the Philippine context, one of the most inculcated elements of Christian faith is the Filipino celebration of the resurrection. Sevilla points out that "Filipinos have developed some beautiful religious celebrations in connection with Easter."^{43} An Easter ritual is popularly known as the salubong (meeting, encounter); Kroeger views this meeting of the risen Jesus and his mother Mary as "a true proclamation in pageantry, drama, and song. It is eminently faithful to the Gospel narratives of the resurrection, which themselves can be understood as 'faith dramas.'"^{44} Such a celebration has evangelistic and catechetical significance.

The historicity of the resurrection event is a major concern for Filipino Christology. Relying on what is considered to be proofs,


^{41}Peña, *Soteriology*, 548.


almost all authors affirm the empty tomb and Jesus’ appearances to his disciples as integral to faith in the resurrection. Filipinos recognize the liberating aspect of the resurrection.

**Methodology**

Doing Christology has become a major topic in Filipino Christological writing. Prominent in this undertaking is the study undertaken by B. Beltran. In a more systematic manner and adopting research methods from the social sciences, he embarked on Christological inquiry. Beltran holds the following:

… a systematic and coherent inquiry into the person and functions of Jesus in the Philippines must ask the following questions:

1. Why should the Filipino believers claim universal significance for the salvation Jesus won on the cross and proclaim him Lord of heaven and earth?

2. How can the Filipino Christian who believes that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of the living God understand and express this belief precisely as a Filipino and as a Christian?

3. How can he or she justify this Christological conviction and its linguistic expression as being in continuity with the faith that comes to us from the apostles?

4. How can the Filipino Christian judge whether the Western concepts and terminologies used to articulate that faith foster or hinder the deeper understanding of the faith in his or her own context?

5. What are the implications of belief in Jesus for individual and social behavior and for one’s attitudes towards structures of power in Philippine society?\(^{45}\)

Having identified the questions to deal with in “doing Christology” in the Philippine setting, Beltran argues that “the task of theology is to mediate the systematic and critical inquiry of Christology with the

understanding of Jesus of the ordinary believers in the Philippines." For him, "if the poor are the privileged bearers of the Gospel, then the Filipino face of Christ can be seen more clearly among the scavengers in the garbage dumps, the peasants in the ricefields, and the workers in the factories." 

Considering the question of methodology, Beltran suggests that one point of departure for Christology in the Philippines is the elaboration of an adequate and appropriate theology of redemption or a soteriology. The Christian understanding of salvation must be explained in the context of the Filipino experience of sin and evil and the longing for liberation in the Philippines. The second step would involve investigating how the original soteriological message was inculturated into the varying cultural situations.

Beltran is explicit in identifying the steps to be undertaken for a more meaningful way of doing Christology in the Philippines considering the context and aspirations of the Filipino people.

In his Christological study, Beltran recognizes that the systematic and empirical investigation into the way people perceive Christ and the influence of this perception on the social system should be done where most of the poor live, the poor whom Christ sought out when he preached the coming of the Kingdom. It is in the city of Manila where the deprivation and untold suffering of countless Filipino believers can be seen in stark contrast with the scandalous opulence of a small percentage of the population.

Abesamis resonates with Beltran in his locus theologicus of doing Christology in the Philippines. He outlines the three ways of looking at Jesus as follows: First Look: As Jesus looks at himself; Second

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Look: As Western theology has looked at Jesus; and, Third Look: As the poor look at Jesus.

Abesamis’ third look at Jesus is closely related with Beltran’s poor as the point of departure and source of data in doing Filipino Christology. Looking at Jesus through the eyes of the poor is for Abesamis “indispensable for rediscovering the original Jesus.”

J. Francisco has made a significant contribution to the method of doing Christology in the Philippines. Reflecting on the person, life, and mission of Jesus, the local Church engages in a theological undertaking. He identifies the “three source books of the theological task”; these are the following:

1. The Book of Life refers to the concrete historical experience in situations today facing the Christian community.

2. The Book of God’s Word refers to Scriptures which contains the foundational revelation of God.

3. The Book of the Church’s history chronicles the historical existence of the Christian community through the ages, especially as it is expressed in the Church’s traditional documents.

Considering the unfolding of Philippine history and the development of Philippine literature that goes with it, Francisco identifies the three images of Christ based on the literary heritage of the Filipinos:

1. In the period of Spanish colonization, Christ is viewed as model.

2. In the period of American occupation, Christ is seen as the foundation of the moral order.

3. After the Second World War, Christ is seen as liberator of society.

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Based on their underlying influence in Philippine society and culture, these images of Christ take on a soteriological value. The Filipino expressions *ginhawa* (ease of life, comfort, prosperity) and *kalayaan* (freedom) are reflective of the Filipino longing for salvation and liberation.

Beltran, as earlier noted, gives the same emphasis on soteriology as key in understanding who Jesus is; this has significant bearing on the longing of the Filipino poor for liberation.

For De Mesa and Wostyn, "our first hermeneutical principle in doing Christology is the conviction that revelation and experience are closely interrelated and are the two sides of the one reality of God being present and revealing Himself to mankind." It involves an "attempt to reconstruct the foundational experience of the disciples with Jesus of Nazareth to ascertain just what was experienced and what was communicated through the experience" as recorded in the New Testament writings. The first-hand experience of the disciples is subjected to a process of interpretation after which one correlates the foundational experience of the disciples with contemporary experiences. The present-day experiences of inequality, suffering, and oppression of the poor in our Philippine situation will make the model of liberation central.

Based on an analysis of the documents of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II), Sevilla presents an outline of its Christology. PCP II Christology begins with a focus on the person of Jesus both as Jesus of history and the Christ of faith. The next stage

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54 De Mesa and Wostyn, *Doing Christology*, 12.

55 De Mesa and Wostyn, *Doing Christology*, 25.

56 De Mesa and Wostyn, *Doing Christology*, 55.

57 De Mesa and Wostyn, *Doing Christology*, 61.
is a discussion of the message and mission of Jesus especially as seen in his teachings regarding the Kingdom of God. The final stage is the more contemporary and pastoral reflection on the Paschal mystery especially as this provides the basis of the Christian’s involvement with the mission of the Church today.\textsuperscript{58}

Christology has clear catechetical dimensions; this catechetical aspect is the subject of discussion by T. Bacani. He sees that Christocentric catechesis has four specific meanings:

1. Catechesis aims to lead persons into intimacy with Christ

2. Christ is the subject taught in catechesis, and everything else is taught only in relation to Christ.

3. Christ is the teacher, the only teacher in catechesis, and a person catechizes only insofar as Christ teaches through him.

4. The catechist must catechize in the way Christ taught, through an unbroken unity of word, work, and life.\textsuperscript{59}

N. Yatco, in his book \textit{Jesus Christ for Today’s Filipino}, presents a method for doing Christology. He is fully conscious of the need for “a Filipino dimension to the portrayal of Christ.”\textsuperscript{60} In his work, he attempts to answer the question “Who is Jesus Christ to adult, educated Filipinos of the eighties?”\textsuperscript{61} In arriving at the Filipino dimension of Jesus Christ, Yatco employs the method of literary analysis by digging deeper in “the Christ presented by Aurelio Tolentino in his

\textsuperscript{58}Sevilla, “Teaching Christology According to the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines,” 3.


\textsuperscript{60}Nicomedes T. Yatco, \textit{Jesus Christ for Today’s Filipino} (Quezon City : New Day Publishers, 1983), 2.

\textsuperscript{61}Yatco, \textit{Jesus Christ for Today’s Filipino}, 2.
Bagong Cristo."

Aside from his concern for what is Filipino, Yatco also discusses a contemporary presentation of Jesus Christ. By way of comparison, he employs the same literary analysis to get a picture of "the Christ presented by Hans Kün in his On Being a Christian."\

In conclusion, one notes that various approaches have been undertaken in the study of Christology in the Philippine setting. The scientific and sociological approach is taken by Beltran. Abesamis uses the biblical approach, while Francisco employs the approach of cultural studies. De Mesa and Wostyn emphasize the role of experience and its relationship to revelation in doing Christology. As analyzed by Sevilla, PCP II focuses on the historical person and mission of Jesus, while Bacani pursues the catechetical approach. Yatco employs literary analysis in presenting the Filipino dimension of Christ.

**Crucifixion**

An important tenet of Filipino religiosity is centered on Jesus' crucifixion; Filipinos meditate deeply on this aspect of Jesus' life especially during Holy Week.

Writing on the topic of Jesus' death, several authors consider the crucifixion as an event in Jesus' life which is historically guaranteed. Authors like C. Abesamis, J. Fuellenbach, and J. de Mesa discuss the historical aspect of the Paschal mystery, particularly the execution of Jesus.

Why was Jesus crucified? Why was he subjected to gruesome suffering and eventually put to death? These questions preoccupied some writers, prompting them to reflect on the reason(s) for Jesus' death. Abesamis identifies some reasons for the death of Jesus; among others, he notes the following:

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1. He put primacy on the human being and human life over and against the accepted tradition and law.

2. He was a rebel against tradition.

3. He was an uncompromising critic of the value-system or ideology of the establishment.

4. He was unabashedly for the poor and stern towards the rich.\textsuperscript{64}

The revelatory dimension of Jesus’ death is explored by Fuellenbach. For him, Jesus’ death “reveals two essential realities: (1) the immensity and incomprehensibleness of God’s love for his creature as compassionate love; and, (2) the cross reveals the utter hopelessness of our human state as sinners who had rejected God’s love.”\textsuperscript{65}

De Mesa and Wostyn discuss the historical circumstance surrounding Jesus’ death. They are explicit in stating that “the execution of Jesus of Nazareth on a cross is a securely established historical fact.”\textsuperscript{66}

Aside from the historical aspect of the crucifixion, various authors highlight the theological significance of Jesus’ death on the cross. They hold that Jesus died for the sins of humanity; Jesus’ crucifixion and death take on a redemptive dimension. Sevilla shares the view that at the center of Christian faith is the proclamation that Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, died on the cross to save humanity from sins. F. Gomez considers the cross in relation to the resurrection as “the center of the divine plan of salvation.”\textsuperscript{67}

Filipino consciousness of the crucifixion reaches its height during Lent and the Holy Week. It is during this time that the last days of Jesus

\textsuperscript{64}Abesamis, \textit{A Third Look at Jesus}, 188. \textsuperscript{65}Fuellenbach, \textit{The Kingdom of God}, 94. \textsuperscript{66}De Mesa and Wostyn, \textit{Doing Christology}, 186. \textsuperscript{67}Felipe Gomez, \textit{The Good Shepherd: Pastoral Approaches to Christology} (Quezon City: Cardinal Bea Institute, Ateneo de Manila University, 1997), 229.
are celebrated with the chanting of the *payon* (the story in verse of the suffering or passion of Christ) the staging of the *cenaculo* (passion play), the re-enactment of the Stations of the Cross, and the meditation on Jesus’ seven last words. All these Lenten activities enable the Filipino to focus and identify with Jesus’ suffering and death on the cross. D. Elwood and P. Magdamo point out that “the Gospel accounts of the crucifixion are preserved in tradition and liturgy” and are especially central to the celebration of the Holy Week.

From the Muslim point of view, S. Carzedda presents the assertion of Dr. Kamel Hussein regarding “the meaning and intention of the crucifixion.” Hussein notes: “The cross for the Qur’an is seen as a deed of rejection, in which men/women registered their verdict against the life and personality of Jesus.” In their belief about Jesus’ crucifixion, “modern Muslims are beginning to see the redemptive value of Jesus’ suffering, although denying the idea of atonement. Their emphasis is more upon Jesus’ willingness to suffer, rather than upon the actual crucifixion itself.”

The religious dimensions and the cultural aspects merge in the Filipino celebration of Jesus’ crucifixion. The dialogue between religion and culture in the Filipino way of reflecting on Jesus’ death on the cross assumes varied expressions both in liturgy and in drama/pageantry.

**Santo Niño**

There is a strong consensus among authors in their recognition of the indisputable popularity of the *Santo Niño* (Holy Child) as one among many of the Filipino images of Christ. R. Tenazas recounts

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the history of the devotion to the Holy Child beginning from the time when the image was first brought from Spain and presented as a gift to the rulers of Cebu.

The Santo Niño is the child Christ. Since the early times when the Santo Niño was introduced in the country, miracles had been attributed to the statue. Such reported miraculous events spurred all the more the spread of the devotion to the Holy Child. Having recourse to the Holy Child in times of calamities and personal difficulties, Filipinos look up to Him as a generous benefactor.

On a psychological note, Quisumbing affirms that “it is not difficult to see how the devotion to the Señor Santo Niño became intricately woven into the fabric of life itself, in times of dangers and challenges, needs and problems, trials and successes.”

The Filipino psyche accommodates the Santo Niño as it relates well with the trusting character of the child in the Filipino.

Furthermore, Quisumbing draws the conclusions that:

religious myths, legends, and miracle stories assured the continuity of faith and devotion, increased trust in the Holy Child, reinforced good behavior and genuine intentions, aroused concern in the common welfare, presented solutions to the problems of survival, strengthened the people’s resistance to danger and to a hostile environment, united the group physically and morally.

In brief, the positive impact of the Santo Niño on the life of the Filipino faithful serves as a type of psychological reinforcement and this results in increased devotion to Him.

L. Mercado affirms the strong psychological impact of the Santo Niño when he refers to the popularity of the Santo Niño “because the

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faithful believe that he is powerful in answering the petitions of the faithful." The psychological effect of such a devotion dominated Filipino culture as it gained expression through festivals such as the sinulog (a festival characterized by ritual dancing in honor of the Holy Child) in Cebu, the ati-atihan (a festival in celebration of the feast of the Holy Child) in Kalibo, Aklan and the dinagyang (an annual socio-cultural-religious event associated with the Holy Child) in Iloilo.

Considering that close ties are characteristic of Filipino families, Sevilla attributes the popularity of the Santo Niño to the extent that "it stirs up something that is significant in the Filipino soul. Deep in the heart of the Filipino is a childlike attachment to his family, to his father and mother, to his brothers and sisters."  

Tenazas traces the origins of the devotion to the Holy Child. Quisumbing, Mercado and Sevilla attempt to explain how such a devotion appeals to the Filipino psyche. The discussion on the humanity of Jesus begins with the appeal of the Christ-child to the Filipino. Elwood and Magdamo emphasize the significance of the Christ-child "as we see him from the perspective of the man of Nazareth at work in the carpenter shop."

Filipinos address the Santo Niño as Señor which means Lord. For Beltran, "it expresses the position of power in heaven held by the risen and exalted Christ." He also notes that "the Christ-child, as a symbol of innocence, can liberate us from our deceitfulness. Devotion to his image can recall the child-like sense of wonder and mystery."

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The *Santo Niño* portrayed as holding a globe surmounted by a cross serves to remind Filipinos that all Christians share in the sufferings of Christ.

The discussion of the *Santo Niño* in Filipino Christological writing has deep psychological underpinnings that serve as a reinforcement to the religious and devotional practices it encompasses.

In conclusion, one observes that this section has discussed the top five dominant themes in Filipino Christological writing, which are (a) Kingdom of God, (b) Resurrection, (c) Methodology, (d) Crucifixion, and (e) *Santo Niño*. Representative authors were cited with their ideas and how they have elaborated particular themes in the Christology they are writing.

**Other Issues Related to Filipino Christological Writing**

The other concerns which this study wishes to address are the following: (1) factors which prompted the emergence of Filipino Christological themes, (2) resources employed in the development of Filipino Christological themes, and (3) characteristics of Filipino Christology. The findings of this study in relation to these other concerns deserve an adequate discussion.

Recalling the discussion of the significance of this study found in Part I, one notes that a key driving force for this research centers on the idea of "taking stock" of Filipino Christological literature in terms of how it reflects the maturity of Filipino faith in Jesus Christ. As mentioned earlier, these Christological writings do not emerge out of a vacuum. Christological writers in the Philippines articulate their ideas about Jesus Christ as influenced by several factors. They also make use of certain tools and resources in their writing. Thus, these Christological writings have something to say about the characteristics of Filipino Christology. These issues are discussed in the succeeding pages.
FACTORS PROMPTING THE EMERGENCE OF FILIPINO CHRISTOLOGICAL THEMES

The emergence of a Filipino Christology is a result of certain factors which affect life in the Philippines as a whole. This author identifies four influential factors: (1) the situation of economic poverty; (2) the experience of political oppression; (3) social marginalization; and (4) Filipino religious upbringing.

Situation of Economic Poverty

One cannot deny the situation of poverty most Filipinos face. Dehumanizing is just one of the adjectives used to describe such poverty. How does this situation of dehumanizing poverty affect the development of Filipino Christology? How does the image of Jesus held by poor people influence Filipino faith and the understanding of the life and mission of Jesus?

Abesamis is explicit in his method of doing Christology in terms of the role of the poor in it. His "Third Look at Jesus" originates from a perspective and understanding of the person of Jesus through the eyes of the poor struggling for liberation. The Kingdom of God is one which has a bias for the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized being more blessed than others. The Filipino devotion to Jesus crucified relates very well with the suffering Filipinos are experiencing. Such suffering is viewed as a way of sharing in the suffering of Jesus on the cross while looking forward to the resurrection and the experience of ginhawa (ease of life, comfort, prosperity) in life. The resurrection of Jesus appeals to the Filipino desire for liberation from the undesirable situations they suffer. The Filipino devotion to the Santo Niño is intense as Filipinos turn to him in times of need, disaster, and personal distress. As Jesus' mission is to save humanity from sin and all forms of evil, this thinking becomes very real in the Filipino struggle for liberation from all forms of oppression. The optimism and resiliency

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78 Abesamis, A Third Look at Jesus, 2.
in the Filipino are known phenomena; thus the holding on to certain devotions to the *Hesus Nazareno* and the *Santo Niño* remain strong, colorful, and intense.

Beltran’s method of doing Christology starts with the poor and the situation of poverty as significant context in molding the Filipino understanding of Jesus. The Filipino notion of Jesus is what the scavenger, the ordinary farmer, and the factory worker understand him to be. Doing Filipino Christology should attempt to articulate why Jesus is the answer to the deepest needs and concerns of Filipinos. This approach can reveal the value of Jesus’ salvific work as God’s action of reconciling the world to himself without reducing the idea of salvation to the narrow concerns of the limited Filipino experience.\(^\text{79}\)

Abesamis and Beltran reinforce each other in recognizing the significance of the situation of poverty as influencing the Filipino understanding of the person, life and mission of Jesus.

**Experience of Political Oppression**

Various forms of political oppression, particularly during the Marcos Martial Law regime (1972-1986), were experienced as oppressive for freedom-loving Filipinos who in past centuries have been subject to foreign aggression, rule, and domination. Political oppression in the country has come in various forms which included human rights abuses and government control of the media. To a great extent, this oppression aggravated the situation of economic deprivation Filipinos have suffered.

This situation resonates with what N. Yatco would consider the context for the writings of Aurelio Tolentino, a Filipino playwright in the late 1800s who died in 1915.

> Writing at a time of heightened national consciousness, Tolentino raised issues that were alive in his own time and even much more so today. Take, for example, the sociopolitical dimension of the Christian faith,

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liberation from oppression, and concern for the recognition of basic human rights all over the world and in the Philippines in particular.\textsuperscript{80}

Yatco saw the similarity of context between Tolentino’s times and the turbulent period in Philippine history in which he was writing in 1983 (the Marcos Martial Law period extended from 1972 until 1986).

The milieu gave rise to “Christ-figures,” Filipinos dead or alive who “represent Christ” for the ordinary Filipino. These Christ-figures serve as symbols of hope for an oppressed people. They are even seen to perform the saving task of Jesus as they dedicated their lives to be one with the masses in their struggle for liberation to the point of laying down their very own lives so that freedom would be achieved.

Literary and historical studies have been employed to show how certain “Christ-figures” came into existence. A particular study undertaken by N. Yatco presents a particular dimension in the Filipino image of Christ based on a play written by Aurelio Tolentino, \textit{Bagong Cristo}.\textsuperscript{81} The main character of the play is a Christ-figure who performs an important role for the liberation of ordinary people against the oppressive schemes of the capitalists of his time. In another study by L. Mercado, he identified prominent historical figures who were viewed to assume the role of Christ as religious leaders and became heads of various locally-formed religious sects.\textsuperscript{82} As religious leaders, they exercise influence among their followers as they convey messages of salvation.

\textbf{Social Marginalization}

Another factor which is at the basis of the emergence of Filipino

\textsuperscript{80}Yatco, \textit{Jesus Christ for Today’s Filipino}, 7.

\textsuperscript{81}Yatco, \textit{Jesus Christ for Today’s Filipino}, 2.

Christological themes is social marginalization, the result of economic impoverishment and political oppression. The experience of social marginalization for a majority of the Filipinos is a reality one can discern even in the religious sphere. The wealthy and those in positions of authority in Philippine society often seem to be those with close connections to religious authorities. The poor are both economically deprived and socially marginalized. Filipino Christological writing presents an image of Christ who demonstrates a preferential option for the poor. The various Christ-figures presented in different Filipino literary pieces are always on the side of the oppressed, the laborers, the marginalized.

L. Hechanova immersed himself in a pastoral situation he would refer to as the “social-pastoral field.”\(^{83}\) This so-called socio-pastoral field refers to the *locus* of marginalization, the slums of the cities and the barrios in the rural areas. His pastoral experience in this concrete context of social marginalization enriched his theological reflection on the “image of Christ that is called for today.”\(^{84}\)

C. Arevalo points out that “Christ himself came as one of the poor.”\(^{85}\) It was the poor and marginalized whom Jesus sought to be with, to eat with, to talk with. The mission of the Church to preach the Good News to the poor and the marginalized is based on Jesus’ own mission of solidarity and preferential option for them.

**Filipino Religious Upbringing**

An obvious fact of Filipino life is religious upbringing. Even before the discovery of the Philippines by the Spaniards, a religious culture existed among Filipinos. The natural inclination to worship a deity is

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\(^{83}\) Hechanova, “The Christ of Liberation Theology, 45.

\(^{84}\) Hechanova, “The Christ of Liberation Theology, 45.

part and parcel of the Filipino psyche. Before Filipinos knew Jesus Christ, they had sacred sites in the mountains where they worshipped what they perceived as a Supreme Being found among giant trees. Worship services were presided over by a local priest or priestess called "babaylan" and they involved such rituals as the killing of animals as an offering. In times of sickness and calamity, Filipinos learned to offer prayers and sacrifice animals to attain health and protection. Such religiosity can be described as animistic.

To a great extent, this religious upbringing influenced the way Jesus as the Christian God came to be worshipped and revered. When the Spaniards arrived in the island of Cebu in early 1520s, one of the first encounters of the natives of Cebu with Christianity was through the image of the Santo Niño (Holy Child) given as a gift to the wife of Rajah Humabon after the queen's baptism.86 This event marked the beginning of the long history of the Filipino devotion to the Santo Niño. A series of legendary and miraculous events followed which contributed to the growth of the popularity of the devotion to the Holy Child. As Filipinos affirm the divinity of Jesus, it is common knowledge how Filipinos would wipe the crucifix or any statue of Jesus with their handkerchiefs as a way of touching the divine when they pray for healing in times of sickness, protection in times of calamity and danger. The Filipino devotion to the Santo Niño (Holy Child) and the Jesus Nazareno (Jesus the Nazarene) may be considered syncretistic as they contain elements and ways by which Filipinos worship their pre-Christian gods.

D. Miranda refers to "Jesus as bearer of the Spirit and hence bearer of the holy."87 This notion of Jesus is in a way related to the Filipino understanding of the divine during the pre-historic times

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which continues to have an impact on contemporary popular Filipino religiosity, perspective, and devotion to Jesus Christ.

**Resources Employed in the Development of Filipino Christological Themes**

Filipino Christological writing would not have been possible without the use of several resources for theological reflection. Six items were identified and briefly elaborated. They are as follows: (1) biblical resources, (2) Church teachings, (3) literary and cultural resources, (4) Filipino religious symbolism, (5) signs of the times, and (6) international works of theology. These various tools employed in doing Christology in the Philippines show the richness of resources at the basis of a meaningful way of presenting the person of Christ as understood by Filipinos.

**Biblical Resources**

Filipino Christological writers have drawn much from biblical resources in their reflection on the person and work of Jesus Christ. The New Testament is considered to be the primary source of information regarding Jesus Christ. One can note the extensive use of New Testament data in the Christological writings of many authors.

P. Sevilla is a major Christological writer of the 1970s and 1980s. In his Christological writings, he develops certain Christological themes by starting with data from the Bible, especially the New Testament. The foundation and starting point of his Christology is the New Testament. He asserts that the New Testament is the source and basis of our knowledge of Jesus Christ.\(^88\)

Another example of how the Bible influenced Christological writing in the Philippines is the book *Christ in the Philippine Context* co-

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authored by Douglas J. Elwood and Patricia L. Magdamo. Their study of the life and mission of Jesus is significantly rooted in the theological truths contained in the Bible.\textsuperscript{89}

C. Abesamis, in his \textit{A Third Look at Jesus}, discusses the Kingdom of God, a major theme in Filipino Christological writing. Kingdom of God by itself is a biblical theme. In his methodology, he is explicit in stating that "the Third Look is a tool for biblical interpretation"\textsuperscript{90} among other tools. In another discussion on the Kingdom of God, J. Fuellenbach refers to the Synoptic Gospels especially the passage on the Kingdom of God in Mk. 1:14-15, Mt. 4:17 and Lk. 4:43. For him, these passages on the Kingdom of God are the most historically warranted, a theme dominating Jesus’ whole preaching.\textsuperscript{91}

The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines has drawn a Christology with special focus on the public life and works of Jesus as recounted in the Gospels and other New Testament writings. Christians are to “retell the story” (PCP II 36) of Jesus as encountered in the New Testament.

\textbf{Church Teachings}

Important Christological literature in the Philippines discusses the teaching of the Church regarding the person, life, and mission of Jesus. This dogmatic approach seeks to be loyal to the tradition; it discusses the development of Christological doctrines as they have been articulated through the centuries. P. Sevilla is explicit in presenting a Christology that is faithful to the teachings of the Church, deeply rooted in both Scripture and Tradition.\textsuperscript{92} He presents the Christology of the Fathers of the Church as well as the classical scholastic Christology.

\textsuperscript{89}Elwood and Magdamo, \textit{Christ in Philippine Context}, 24.

\textsuperscript{90}Abesamis, \textit{A Third Look at Jesus}, 3.

\textsuperscript{91}Fuellenbach, \textit{The Kingdom of God}, xiv.

\textsuperscript{92}Sevilla, \textit{Si Jesus na Taga-Nazareth}, 2.
In *The Christology of the Inarticulate*, Beltran grapples with the issue of Church teaching about Jesus and what ordinary Filipinos like the scavengers of Smokey Mountain in Tondo, Manila understand about Jesus. The issue of Church teaching as a resource for the Christological writing of Beltran involves his concern about bridging the gap between the popular understanding of Jesus and the dogmatic pronouncements of the Church.

**Literary and Cultural Resources**

In the Filipino literary heritage, one finds an abundance of references to religious subjects which include, among others, works with Jesus Christ as the subject.

The most popular among these would be the *pasyon* (the story of the suffering or passion of Christ) as integral to the history of Filipino poetry. The *pasyon* is based on the 1814 *Casaysayan nang Pasion Mahal ni Jesucristong Panginoon Natin* (Account of the Sacred Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ). It has been the subject of literary and historical studies as well as theological investigation being a piece of religious literature aimed “to communicate Christian doctrines in a meaningful way.”

Filipino theater includes the Holy Week staging the *cenaculo* (passion play). There are other dramatic presentations like the *salubong* (meeting, encounter) and the “way of the cross.”

Getting into serious cultural studies enables one to gain insight

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into the deep impact of the so-called religious, and to be specific, Christological consciousness of the Filipino. In one of his essays, J. Francisco made an exposition of the various images of Christ as present in Filipino literature and showed how they differed depending on a particular stage of Philippine history.96

Filipino Religious Symbolism

The symbolic informs the Filipino soul in its various aspects, including the religious. Symbols are employed to express one’s faith and understanding in Jesus Christ.

The cross, the Christmas lantern, the manger, the candle, the scapular, among other symbols, represent the Filipino closeness and devotion to Jesus Christ. These are highly noticeable when one observes people in churches during the various celebrations highlighted in the liturgical calendar. The crucifix and other images of Jesus enthroned in an altar is a common feature of a Filipino household. During Christmas time, lanterns are hung and families put up the manger in their living rooms as part of the Christmas tradition of celebrating the birth of Jesus. People lighting candles before the image of Jesus hung on a cross in churches is a common sight. It is also observable how people use their handkerchiefs to wipe religious images like that of Jesus the Nazarene. These are popular expressions of the Filipinos’ devotion to Jesus Christ.

Signs of the Times

The contemporary experience of Christians (Filipinos included) constitutes the “signs of the times.” Following Vatican II, Christians can link contemporary events with faith and the Christ event. The 1986 EDSA revolution remained peaceful because of the prayers of people who flocked to the scene, bringing with them images of Our

Lady and of our Lord Jesus Christ. The various Filipino experiences of oppression and the struggle for liberation are often connected with Jesus’ own struggle against the oppressive structures of power during his time.

B. Beltran relates the 1986 EDSA revolution to the question of who Jesus is and the social order that has bred injustice and corruption.\(^{97}\) He is also concerned with “the relationship of Church teaching about Jesus with the intellectual, ethical and ideological issues Filipinos have to face after the February Revolution.”\(^ {98}\) In his writings about who Jesus is for Filipinos, P. Sevilla also asks the relevance of Jesus Christ in the day to day life of the Filipinos, their struggles and their hopes.\(^ {99}\)

**International Works of Theology**

Many Filipino theologians integrate the insight of international works of theology as a major source in their Christological writing. In addition, many Filipino theologians have advanced degrees in theology from theological faculties in Europe and the United States. Having been exposed to such an environment, they have gained wider perspectives and experiences because of their access to diverse theological literature and encounter with cultures other than Filipino. In a word, their theological upbringing has influenced their way of understanding who Jesus is and this is expressed in their theological writing.

In his article *Christ, the One Savior of the World*\(^ {100}\), D. Huang cites authors like William P. Loewe, Joseph Ratzinger, Hans Küng, Jacques Dupuis, and Paul Knitter, among others. An international author’s

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work significantly influences Christological writing in the case of M. Lagunsad in her study of Jesus’ resurrection in the light of Jon Sobrino’s *Christology at the Crossroads*. A major influence in *Doing Christology: The Re- Appropriation of a Tradition* by José M. de Mesa and Lode L. Wostyn is the Dutch theologian Edward Schillebeeckx, among others.

**Characteristics of Filipino Christology**

Based on a further analysis of the dominant themes of Filipino Christological writing as well as the original documents themselves, one can deduce several characteristics of Filipino Christology. Four specific themes are noted. They are as follows: (1) Christology from below, (2) Inculturated Christology, (3) Biblical Christology, and (4) Pastoral Christology.

**Christology from below**

Christology from below is “the kind of Christology developed from an examination of Christ’s human history, especially as it is presented in the Synoptic Gospels.” Themes pertaining to Jesus’ earthly life, ministry, and historicity dominate the discussion in Filipino Christological literature. The most dominant theme is the Kingdom of God which is the subject of Jesus’ preaching as in the works of C. Abesamis and J. Fuellenbach. Jesus’ crucifixion is considered a

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101 Lagunsad, “Sobrino, the Resurrection, and Discipleship in the Philippine Context,” 54.


105 John Fuellenbach. *The Kingdom of God: The Central Message of Jesus’ Teachings*
historical event resulting from his political differences with the elite in society during his time. Jesus' resurrection is examined with its historical certainty as a major topic of debate among experts especially in the article by J. Smith.\textsuperscript{106}

The Second Plenary Council of the Philippines, one can observe, emphasizes a mode of discipleship in and understanding of Jesus Christ that is based on His person and human history. The Christ Christians ought to follow is the Christ who once lived on this earth, who spent time with his family in Nazareth, who preached the Good News of the Kingdom of God, who gathered a group of disciples, who shared meals with sinners and outcasts, who healed the sick and the blind, and who had special preference for the poor. PCP II also recognizes the continuing presence of Christ in the everyday affairs of the world today (PCP II, no. 35).

\textit{Inculturated Christology}

Inculturation is "a new term for the old obligation to contextualize and indigenize the Christian message and way of life in the various cultures and peoples of our world."\textsuperscript{107} This definition of inculturation implies elements and methods of contextualization and indigenization employed in the development of Filipino Christology.

Authors of Filipino Christological literature utilize key elements of Filipino culture in their exposition of the Filipino understanding of Jesus Christ. Christ has invaded the Filipino literary landscape significantly enough to be the subject of Filipino poetry, drama, legends, and myths. Historico-theological, cultural and literary studies, such as the one undertaken by J. Francisco, N. Yatco, and L. Mercado


\textsuperscript{107}O'Collins and Farruga, \textit{A Concise Dictionary of Theology}, 118.
point to the emergence of Christ-figures as expressions of a religious upbringing which was a product of missionary work since the Spanish era. Various periods of Philippine history produced literary output which depicts Christ-figures.

The payon, the salubong, and other local festivals are expressions of faith in Jesus Christ which make use of poetry and drama, elements of Filipino culture making use of a religious subject.

With the use of Filipino cultural elements, Jesus' person and message is portrayed and transmitted.

**Biblical Christology**

If biblical theology is "any theology that bases itself primarily on the Scriptures,"¹⁰⁸ one can note that Filipino authors writing about Jesus Christ do not neglect the primary source of information on the person and life of Christ which is the New Testament. Major works in Filipino Christological literature make extensive use of biblical references. C. Abesamis, P. Sevilla, D. Elwood and P. Magdamo, among others, primarily make use of the New Testament as the starting point in their presentation of Jesus.

**Pastoral Christology**

Pastoral Christology is one that is rooted in the pastoral experience of a theologian or any servant of God. It addresses a particular pastoral concern. The Christological reflection of L. Hechanova is a product of his immersion in a "socio-pastoral situation" or a "pastoral field." If there is such a Christology from below, F. Gomez asserts that it should give expression to a pastoral practice from below. The formation of basic Christian community (BCC) leaders include modules on specific aspects of the life Christ. Work on BCC formation is an important pastoral thrust of the Church in the Philippines.

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SUMMARY

The main thrust of this section has been to identify the dominant themes of Filipino Christological literature and present an exposition of key theological affirmations held by a sample of authors regarding Jesus, his life and his mission. From the books and articles included in the annotated bibliography presented in Part II, one hundred eleven (111) themes are identified. This section discusses the top five major themes in Filipino Christological writing. These five themes are: (1) Kingdom of God, (2) Resurrection, (3) Methodology, (4) Santo Niño, and (5) Crucifixion.

Other points for analysis in this section are the following issues: (1) factors which prompted the emergence of Filipino Christological themes, (2) resources employed in the development of Filipino Christological themes, and (3) characteristics of Filipino Christology.

Considering the factors which prompted the emergence of Filipino Christological themes, four influential factors are identified. They are as follows: (1) the situation of economic poverty, (2) the experience of political oppression, (3) social marginalization, and (4) Filipino religious upbringing.

Of the resources employed in the development of Filipino Christological themes, six are prominent. They are the following: (1) biblical resources, (2) Church teachings, (3) literary resources, (4) Filipino religious symbolism, (5) signs of the times, and (6) international works of theology.

This study also identified the characteristics of Filipino Christology. The four specific themes are as follows: (1) Christology from below, (2) inculturated Christology, (3) biblical Christology, and (4) pastoral Christology.