

The Good yet Missing Innkeeper and the Possibility of Open Ecclesiology

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Abstract

This article discusses the significant roles of the innkeeper and the inn (*pandocheion*) in the parable of the Good Samaritan and how contemporary Christians can use the story to construct an open ecclesiology in the midst of global fear of others. The idea of open ecclesiology requires a rethinking of the classical marks of the church as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic in the light of the new marks: diverse, vulnerable, concrete, and friendly. By tracing the root of *pondok* in Indonesian language back to the Arabic word *funduq* and the Greek word *pandocheion* in the Gospel of Luke, the author demonstrates rich intercultural and interreligious negotiations that encourage Indonesian Christians to reclaim their heritage from their Muslim counterparts. The article concludes with the story of GKI Yasmin as a diaconal and open church that passes-through or crosses-over boundaries amidst violence.

Keywords

ecclesiology – pluralism – otherness – hospitality – Good Samaritan – *pandocheion* – Indonesia – Islam

The Church and Fear of the Other

Given the advent of global fear of strangers, self-immunity and rejection of others seem to be favourite ways of living in a pluralistic society. The faces of strangers are often seen as those of enemies or monsters instead of guests or friends. When we allow fear as a political emotion, especially toward the other, or even use fear as a tool of manipulation to control society, intolerance and

violence become our common language.¹ The central issue for the church living in such a fear-fed, intolerant society is whether the church can offer a counter-cultural message that invites people to turn their self-enclosing fear into risky hospitality toward strangers.² What kind of ecclesiology does the church have to embrace in such a time of crisis: An ecclesiology of fear or an open ecclesiology? I believe it is the call of the church to avoid the temptation of the former and take the risk of the latter.

My proposal of open ecclesiology, however, needs to be articulated carefully. One can use the idea to justify a sort of Christian dominionism, believing that the strangers can be considered 'fully human' insofar as they embrace the Christian faith. Such an idea can easily over-identify the church with the kingdom of God. One of the most important problems in ecclesiology is that of the relationship between the Church and the kingdom of God. Stephen Pickard writes that 'the tendency to over-identify the Church with the kingdom has been a perennial problem in Christianity and has led to all kinds of excess, institutional hubris and sectarian behaviour'.³ Pickard proposes a 'humbler and more open ecclesiology', one that plays a role as 'a sign and anticipation of the coming kingdom'.⁴

For an open ecclesiology to generate a plausible vision of the church as a sign and anticipation of God's kingdom, three equally important criteria must be met. First, the ecclesiological concept must be rooted in the Christian tradition centred on the Triune God; second, it must be familiar to the people in their own cultural contexts; three, it must disturb Christians from passively enjoying their own community, so that they will work for love, justice, and reconciliation outside the walls of the church. In other words, the ecclesiological idea should be traditional, contextual, and missional. The idea of open ecclesiology that I argue for here sees the church as one among many signs of God's kingdom throughout the world. It is open precisely because the kingdom of God to which it witnesses is working even in the non-ecclesial places.

1 This is the main thesis that Martha C. Nussbaum argues for in *The New Religious Intolerance: Overcoming the Politics of Fear in an Anxious Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012).

2 I borrow the term 'risky hospitality' from Septemmy E. Lakawa, 'Risky Hospitality: Mission in the Aftermath of Religious Communal Violence in Indonesia' (Dissertation, Boston University School of Theology, 2011), https://open.bu.edu/bitstream/handle/2144/19495/lakawa_septemmy_thd_2011_00.pdf.

3 Stephen Pickard, *Seeking the Church: An Introduction to Ecclesiology* (London: SCM Press, 2012), p. 21.

4 Ibid.

This paper proposes the biblical concept of *pandocheion* as a sign of the open Church that meets the three above-mentioned criteria. Not only is the term *pandocheion* found in the biblical story of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37), but it is also known in Indonesia as *pondok*, after being imported from the Arabic word *funduq*. Moreover, the symbol of church as *pandocheion* or *pondok* also encourages the community of faith to be missional beyond its comfortable walls. The importance of constructing an open ecclesiology is that we can relate the rich interpretation of *pandocheion* in the Christian tradition to the contextual and interreligious implication of *pondok*. My main argument in this paper is that the idea of *pandocheion* in the Gospel of Luke, which has been translated into the Arabic *funduq* and later into the Indonesian *pondok*, can provide an intercultural and interreligious basis for constructing an open ecclesiology, for both Indonesian churches and larger contexts. I begin by exploring the meaning of *pandocheion* in the story of the Good Samaritan, or the good innkeeper, in the Gospel of Luke. Second, I demonstrate how the translations of *pandocheion* into the Arabic *funduq* and the Indonesian *pondok* provide an imaginative entry for constructing an open ecclesiology. Third, I propose *diaclesia* as a new way of understanding *ecclesia* in the context of open ecclesiology. Finally, I conclude the paper with a story of GKI Yasmin⁵ that has been struggling to be an open church amidst religious violence in Indonesia.

The Innkeeper in Luke 10:25–37 and Beyond

The Good Samaritan is a favourite parable for Christians throughout the ages. It is not my primary intention to offer a new interpretation of the parable. My focus is rather on the question of how *pandocheion*, or the inn in the parable, can inspire the churches today to construct their open ecclesiology. However, I first need to note the narrative status of the innkeeper (*pandocheus*) and his *pandocheion* in the parable.

The Narrative Status of the Innkeeper

Jesus tells the parable in answer to the question posed by a lawyer, ‘What must I do to inherit eternal life?’ (v. 25). After telling the story, Jesus asks the lawyer, ‘Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’ Usually, we understand that the three refer to the priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan, as the story seems to tell us so. Consequently,

5 GKI Yasmin is a local congregation of Gereja Kristen Indonesia (GKI) or Indonesian Christian Church, based in Bogor, West Java. I discuss this congregation in the last part of the article.

the innkeeper does not have a specific status on his own. He functions merely as a cameo in the parable. Such a popular interpretation, especially among Protestants, tends to encourage people to act like the Samaritan who helps the wounded, without even mentioning the instrumental role of the innkeeper.

In order to emphasise the narrative status of the innkeeper, I suggest putting the priest and the Levite into the same category, that is, those who do nothing to help the victim. This interpretation is consistent with the adverb 'likewise' (*homoios*) used in verse 32, which indicates that the Levite and the priest are in the same category. Jesus also uses the same explanation of what they do, namely, that they 'passed by on the other side' (*antiparērchomai*). In short, they represent the same type of not being a neighbour. If my interpretation is correct, in addition to the religious persons (the priest and the Levite in the same category) and the Samaritan, the third must then be the innkeeper, who plays a different role than that which the Samaritan demonstrates. Verse 37 expresses the lawyer's ambiguous answer to Jesus' question, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Traditionally, the answer has been interpreted as demonstrating the reluctance of the Jewish lawyer to mention the word 'Samaritan'.⁶ However, the ambiguity could also mean that the lawyer refers to both the Samaritan and the innkeeper, since each actor has been 'the one who showed him mercy'. This interpretation potentially opens a further discussion regarding the different actions of the Samaritan and the innkeeper, while both are recognised as having equally treated the victim with mercy.

Dechomai in the Story and the Gospel of Luke

The good innkeeper seems to have a unique place in the entire story. We do not know how long the victim stays in the inn or what happens after he recovers from his wound. What the storyteller wants to say is that the innkeeper demonstrates a radical hospitality to the victim, even more than what has been demonstrated by the Samaritan. We should not undermine his radical hospitality by contrasting his passion with the money that he receives. The two *denarii* that the Samaritan gives to him (v. 35) have certainly little value compared to all efforts and sacrifices he must make. Moreover, in the parable, the innkeeper also plays a significant role in redeeming the Samaritans who have refused to receive Jesus (*ouk edexanto*) in his journey to Jerusalem (Luke 9:53). In contrast, the inn opens its door to all people and invites them to stay—hence, *pan* (all) and *dechomai* (to receive)—regardless of their social, religious, and cultural backgrounds.

6 For example, Wilfrid J. Harrington, *Reading Luke for the First Time* (New York: Paulist Press, 2015).

The storyteller obviously employs *dechomai* throughout his Gospel to demonstrate the dialectics of rejecting and accepting, hostility and hospitality, *ouk edexanto* and *pandocheion*. It is used for the first time in Luke 2:28, when old pious Simeon takes (*dechomai*) the baby Jesus in his arms. It is symbolically important that the word is used for the last time in the Gospel of Luke when Jesus takes (*dechomai*) a cup of wine and shares it with his disciples (Luke 22:17). Read together, the two verses demonstrate the meaning of *dechomai* as not only receiving Jesus, but also sharing him with others.

Besides these two verses, *dechomai* is also used twenty-three times in the Gospels. For example, before sending off his disciples, Jesus tells them, 'Wherever they do not welcome (*dechomai*) you, as you are leaving that town shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them' (Luke 9:5; cf. 10:8, 10). The same word is used again after his disciples have a dispute about whom is the greatest among them (Luke 9:46–48). Jesus then takes a child and tells the disciples, 'Whoever welcomes (*dechomai*) this child in my name welcomes (*dechomai*) me, and whoever welcomes (*dechomai*) me welcomes (*dechomai*) the one who sent me; for the least among all of you is the greatest' (v. 48). Here, accepting or welcoming others has the same meaning as accepting or welcoming Jesus.

While *dechomai* occurs many times in the Gospels, *pandocheion* is found only once in the New Testament, that is, in the parable of the Good Samaritan. There are two important points to note here. First, *pandocheion* seems to emphasise the radical welcoming of all (*pan*). As such, the meaning of welcoming and sharing Jesus in *dechomai* now receives its social importance. Second, *pandocheion* functions as the embodiment of radical hospitality through the presence of the inn as an open space and house for all people.

Pandocheion in the Christian Tradition

The significant role of the innkeeper in the parable attracted many church Fathers. Origen and Augustine are two patristic commentators who try to interpret the parable allegorically. Indeed, as Robert H. Stein puts it, the story is the 'most allegorized parable'.⁷ However, these two church fathers have offered different allegories as to whom the Samaritan and the innkeeper refer.⁸ Both

7 Robert H. Stein, *The Method and Message of Jesus' Teachings* (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), p. 45.

8 C. Clifton Black, *Reading Scripture with the Saints* (Cambridge, UK: The Lutterworth Press, 2015), p. 165.

agree that the Samaritan is like Jesus Christ and the inn is like the Church, yet each of them has a different understanding of who the innkeeper is. While Origen understands the innkeeper to be like the angels who are in charge of the Church, Augustine allegorises him as Paul the Apostle.

John Chrysostom, in the fourth-century, talks about *pandocheion* more than any other of the Fathers. Because he grew up in Antioch, Chrysostom probably became very familiar with the practice of *pandocheion* in his own society.⁹ He encourages his people to express their hospitality by opening up their doors for strangers and allowing their houses to be '*pandocheions* for Christ'.¹⁰ Olivia R. Constable, in her extensive work on the practice of housing strangers in the Mediterranean world, suggests that Chrysostom links *pandocheion* to two meanings.¹¹ First, he employs *pandocheion* as a term referring to the Christian charity. Constable mentions the work of Symeon Metaphrastes from the tenth century who told a story of Theodoricos, who heard Chrysostom preaching on *pandocheion* and after 'the saint had spoken, straight away he gathered all of his wealth, except a remainder from which he and his children might live, and gave it to the *pandocheion* of the church as an act of expiation'.¹² Second, Constable also finds out that the saint uses the term to symbolise our temporal and earthly home.¹³

Chrysostom's interpretation of the role of the innkeeper seems to be contrary to that of Bruce W. Longenecker. Longenecker's overall project is to rehabilitate the innkeeper in the story; however, he thinks that Chrysostom removes the innkeeper from the story by replacing the innkeeper with a respectable doctor.¹⁴ Longenecker quotes Chrysostom, 'The Samaritan, seeing a wounded man, unknown, and not at all appertaining to him, both stayed and set him on a beast, and brought him home to the inn, and *hired a physician*, and gave some money, and promised more.'¹⁵ Chrysostom's other writings suggest that Longenecker's conclusion is unacceptable. The quoted statement from Chrysostom that the

9 Olivia R. Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade, and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 25; Catherine Hezser, *Jewish Travel in Antiquity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), p. 96.

10 Olivia R. Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World: Lodging, Trade, and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 25.

11 Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean World*, pp. 25–26.

12 *Ibid.*, p. 26.

13 *Ibid.*

14 Bruce W Longenecker, 'The Story of the Samaritan and the Innkeeper (Luke 10:30–35): A Study in Character Rehabilitation', *Biblical Interpretation* 17.4 (2009), pp. 429–30.

15 *Ibid.*, p. 429 (*Homilies on Matthew* 15, §14).

Samaritan 'hired a physician' does not need to be interpreted as Chrysostom's negative attitude toward the innkeeper. It might be seen differently as his creative and constructive interpretation that the Samaritan has widened his network of compassion beyond his initial partnership with the innkeeper. This possible way of reading Chrysostom's statement seems to be more consistent with Longenecker's own conclusion that that 'such exceptional partnerships testify to the reign of God'.¹⁶

At the Reformation, we find the emergence of a new way of understanding *pandocheion*, especially regarding the relationship between the Samaritan and the innkeeper. Luther and Calvin mock the allegorical approach as done by 'clerical jugglers performing monkey tricks' (Luther) and 'idle fooleries' (Calvin)¹⁷ The two Reformers approach the parable differently. Luther, on the one hand, seems to return to the allegorical method, despite his initial disagreement. However, unlike Origen and Augustine, Luther believes that Jesus is not merely like the Samaritan; Jesus is the true Samaritan. He also suggests that the inn is Christianity, while the innkeeper is an evangelical preacher. Calvin, on the other hand, is more consistent in his rejection of the allegorization of the parable. Calvin's idea is like a preparation for the later interpretation of the parable in modern scholarship, when he argues that one needs to stick to the main point of the parable: 'The general truth conveyed is, that the greatest stranger is our neighbour, because God has bound all men together, for the purpose of assisting each other'.¹⁸ The idea of focusing on one main point only, as demonstrated by Calvin, continues to be dominant in the modern period, especially among those who employ historical criticism.

I propose to combine the allegorical and the historical critical methods in such a way that we can use the advantages found in both methods to construct an imaginative and creative hermeneutical bricolage for our own time. My proposal is similar to that proposed by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger. In 1998, the then Cardinal (later Pope Benedict) called for a new approach to biblical interpretation, which he tentatively called 'Method C', that combined the patristic-medieval exegetical model (Method A) and the modern historical-critical exegetical model (Method B). The hybrid model takes into account the advantages of both previous methods and also avoids the limits in each method.¹⁹

16 Ibid., p. 446.

17 Stein, *Method and Message*, p. 48.

18 John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists: Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle, vol. III (Edinburgh: The Calvin Translation Society, 1846), p. 61.

19 The terms Methods A, B and C are used tentatively by the participants in the round table discussion based on Cardinal Ratzinger's paper, as summarised by Paul T. Stallworth,

Pope Francis follows in the footsteps of his predecessor in using Method C, especially when he reads the parable of the Good Samaritan. In his General Audience on February 26th, 2014, the Pope talked about the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and employs the parable as the biblical support.

There is a biblical icon that expresses, in all its depths, the mystery that shines through the Anointing of the Sick: it is the parable of the ‘Good Samaritan’ in the Gospel of Luke (10:30–35). Each time that we celebrate this sacrament, the Lord Jesus, in the person of the priest, comes close to the one who suffers and is seriously ill or elderly. The parable says that the Good Samaritan takes care of the suffering man by pouring oil and wine on his wounds. Oil makes us think of that which is blessed by the bishop each year at the Holy Thursday Chrism Mass, precisely in view of the Anointing of the Sick. Wine, however, is a sign of Christ’s love and grace, which flow from the gift of his life for us and are expressed in all their richness in the sacramental life of the Church. Finally, the suffering person is entrusted to an innkeeper, so that he might continue to care for him, sparing no expense. Now, who is this innkeeper? It is the Church, the Christian community—it is us—to whom each day the Lord entrusts those who are afflicted in body and spirit, so that we might lavish all of his mercy and salvation upon them without measure.²⁰

Here Pope Francis attempts to combine allegorical and historical-critical exegeses. The main point that he maintains is that the parable talks about ‘The Lord Jesus [who] comes close to the one who suffers and is seriously ill or elderly’. Then, he suggests an allegorical interpretation by using the parallel between the story and the sacrament. Oil and wine in the parable are like the oil used for the anointing and wine used in the Eucharist; the Samaritan is like Jesus Christ, whose ‘love and grace ... flow from the gift of his life for us and are expressed in all their richness in the sacramental life of the Church’; finally, the innkeeper is like ‘the Church, the Christian community’.

This interpretation is different to what has been popularly understood about the parable, especially among Protestants, which focuses more on the moral duty of Christians to act like the Good Samaritan. In contrast to this common interpretation, the Pope’s idea links the Samaritan more closely to Jesus Christ and the inn or the innkeeper to the Church. This idea, I believe, makes more sense if we consider the spatial dimension of both the inn and the Church. The nature of the inn as *pandocheion*, or house for all, can easily help

‘The Story of an Encounter’, *Biblical Interpretation in Crisis*, ed. Richard J. Neuhaus (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989).

20 Pope Francis, ‘General Audience’, February 26, 2014, https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140226_udienza-generale.html.

us construct an open ecclesiology that sees the Church as a welcoming space for everyone, to which I move now.

An Open Ecclesiology of *Pondok*

From Pandocheion through Funduq to Pondok

In this section, I track the portability of the Greek word *pandocheion* to see how it is received cross-culturally in Bahasa Indonesia, which is the Indonesian language. The word *pandocheion* has been translated from the Greek to the Arabic as *funduq*, before being translated into Bahasa Indonesia as *pondok*. Constable argues that there is an obvious linguistic link between *pandocheion* and *funduq*:

Funduqs, which appear in Arabic texts by the ninth century, were among a number of institutions adopted and adapted from an earlier Greek model. These hostels shared many functional characteristics with *pandocheions*, as well as a cognate name, but they also evolved their own identity. The *funduq* would continue to change over time, shifting to suit the needs of period and place, yet preserving continuities in name and many basic features.²¹

In proving that *funduq* is the Arabic translation of the Greek word *pandocheion*, Constable shows that there is no known use of *funduq* before the ninth century. Yet the story of the Good Samaritan from a ninth-century Arabic manuscript of the gospel of Luke uses the word *funduq* for the inn (*pandocheion*).

The arrival of Islam in Indonesia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries also brought the Islamic ideas of education and social practices. Nurcholis Madjid is of the opinion that Muslim merchants, who spread Islam to the archipelago, opened hostels or *funduqs* to accommodate their economic activities.²² Gradually, the role of the *funduqs* changed so that they functioned not only as hostels but also as places where travellers discussed and learned about religious matters. The local people then translated *funduq* into *pondok* so that local people could pronounce it more easily.

Nowadays, *pondok* is used primarily to refer to the Islamic classical boarding school system, called *pondok pesantren*, where the students (*santris*) learn

²¹ Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, p. 40.

²² Nurcholis Madjid, *Indonesia Kita* (Jakarta: Gramedia, Universitas Paramadina & Perkumpulan Membangun Kembali Indonesia, 2004), pp. 13–14.

Islam from the teachers (*kiais*).²³ There are now more than 28,000 *pondok pesantren*, or Islamic boarding schools, throughout Indonesia, which generally combine religious and secular teachings.²⁴ The word *pondok* is, therefore, a loan-word from the Arabic (*funduq*), which is itself a loan-word from the Greek (*pandocheion*).²⁵ Moreover, Madjid also argues that the translation of *funduq* into *pondok* is also the result of a religious encounter between the Islamic idea of *funduq* and the Hindu educational model of *pandepokan* that had existed long before the arrival of Islam in Indonesia. Although the practice of *pondok pesantren* has been focused more on education, I believe that the original meaning of *pondok-funduq-pandocheion* as an open place for all is still maintained. The Indonesian word *pondok* thus testifies to the intercultural and interreligious encounters and negotiations, which conserve the idea of opening a space for the other. In short, the fundamental idea of openness as reflected in the biblical *pandocheion*, the Arabic *funduq*, and the Indonesian *pondok* must become significant source for Indonesian churches to contextually construct their open ecclesiology.

The Church as Pondok

Indonesian Christians are invited to reclaim *pandocheion* as their heritage, which they now have through the idea and practice of *pondok*. On the one hand, for long the Indonesian churches have forgotten such a treasure and, instead, practise a closed way of being the Church. Such a self-enclosing ecclesiology makes Indonesian Christians, like Christians in other places around the globe, feel safer and more comfortable in the midst of global political fear of strangers. It is commonly known that the churches in Indonesia, especially those located in the urban contexts and those living in the religiously intolerant areas, tend to maintain their communities by minimizing their social interactions with non-Christians. The irony thus occurs when they claim to be blessings for the world while at the same time isolating themselves from broader publics.²⁶ On the other hand, it is the Muslim communities through

23 For a general explanation of *pondok pesantren* in Indonesia, see Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *The Pesantren Tradition: The Role of the Kyai in the Maintenance of Traditional Islam in Java* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University, 1999), pp. 25–29.

24 Salahuddin Wahid, 'How can "pesantren" contribute to national education?', *The Jakarta Post*, October 22, 2016.

25 In my online conversation with Ulil Abshar Abdalla, an Indonesian Muslim scholar, who was also an alumnus of several *pondok pesantrens* in Java, he confirms that the Arabic word *funduq* is a loan word from the Greek *pandocheion* (November 8th, 2017).

26 I often told my seminarian students to find a *pondok* or a mosque whenever they need to stay overnight in another town. They will be openly welcomed without being questioned.

their *pondok pesantrens* that have conserved the idea of *funduq* as the open place for all people.²⁷ If Indonesian Christians want to reclaim their heritage of following Jesus' teaching about being an open house for all, they must unlearn the false practice of being a closed community and relearn the practice of *pondok* from their Muslim friends.²⁸ In other words, they cannot (re)construct their open ecclesiology by themselves, without getting into hospitable relationship with their Muslim counterparts. The compassionate partnership between the Samaritan and the innkeeper can offer a deep insight into Muslim-Christian friendship in Indonesia to engage with their common problems as open communities.

If our Muslim friends in Indonesia play a significant role in the construction of Christian understanding of the open church, then how do we maintain the traditional belief that the Church's identity is given by God through Christ in the power of the Spirit? Here Christians must deal with the classical issue of ideal or blueprint ecclesiology versus concrete ecclesiology. Nicholas M. Healy maintains that those who take the idealist or blueprint approach understand the church based on certain ideals of what the church is. Healy argues that the proponents of idealist ecclesiology

display to some degree a tendency to concentrate their efforts upon setting forth more or less complete descriptions of what the perfect church should look like. They present blueprints of what the church should ideally become. This is due in part to the method of models and the twofold construal, for the images and concepts used to model the church are almost always terms of perfection.²⁹

I also told them that the churches usually close and lock their doors and the security guards of the church building will scrutinize them thoroughly, let alone allowing them to stay overnight at the church. This will be one of many practices of a 'closed church'.

27 There are many *pondok pesantrens* in Indonesia that welcome non-Muslims to stay and learn from the communities. My students from Jakarta Theological Seminary, for example, have been sent to live in some *pesantrens* for several months and they return as more open-minded Christians after such a life-changing experience.

28 A very interesting study has been conducted by Retnowati on the social network created by several *pondok pesantrens* in East Java and GKJW (Greja Kristen Jawi Wetan, East Java Christian Churches), which demonstrates the process of mutual learning between both parties. See Retnowati, 'Jaringan Sosial Gereja Kristen Jawi Wetan (GKJW) dengan Pondok Pesantren di Malang Jawa Timur,' *Analisa* 20.1 (June 2013), pp. 37–49.

29 *Ibid.*, p. 36.

On the contrary, concrete ecclesiology focuses more on agency rather than being. Healy maintains that concrete ecclesiology has an identity [that] is constituted by action. That identity is thoroughly theological, for it is constituted by the activity of the Holy Spirit, without which it cannot exist. But it is also constituted by the activity of its members as they live out their lives of discipleship. It is therefore not enough to discuss our ecclesial activity solely in terms of its dependent relation upon the work of the Holy Spirit.³⁰

Healy explicitly gives room for the work of the Holy Spirit in creating a concrete church. Theologically, we must say that a local and concrete church embodies the living Christ in its particular context through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The answer to the opposition between idealist and concrete ecclesiologies is not by choosing either one of them. Rather, each local church must realise its calling to enter a constant double struggle with its own contexts and what it believes. In Healy's words, 'The identity of the concrete church is not simply given; it is constructed and ever reconstructed by the grace-enabled activities of its members as they embody the church's practices, beliefs and valuations.'³¹ Sometimes, the result of such a double struggle is a construction of a new image of the church. A theologian in the concrete church is like a cook who cooks for the whole village by using any ingredient available at hand.³² In this context, the church as *pondok* is a good example of such a double struggle. It emerges from the imaginative construction of what the Indonesian churches concretely deal within their Muslim counterparts as well as their reading of the story of the Good Samaritan (or the good innkeeper) in the Gospel of Luke.

The question now is whether we can harmonise the new image of *pondok* as concrete church with the classical *notae ecclesiae*, or marks of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church. My proposal is that, instead of evaluating a particular church against the four ideal marks of the church, we should evaluate critically the idea of the marks of the church itself.³³ Using the metaphor

30 Ibid., pp. 25–29.

31 Ibid., p. 5.

32 The image of a theologian as a cook in a village is borrowed from Clemens Sedmak, *Doing Local Theology: A Guide for Artisans of a New Humanity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), p. 19.

33 My proposal to some extent echoes Charles van Engen, *God's Missionary People: Rethinking the Purpose of the Local Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991), p. 74: 'Each new suggestion must be a concrete, testable, and visible means of recognizing the presence of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic community of Jesus Christ today.' Van Engen also quotes Moltmann's new set of marks of the church that corresponds to the classical *notae*: 'we find that Christianity's new answer to the altered situation in the

of DNA, Howard A. Snyder and Daniel V. Runyan argue that the four classical marks of the church are incomplete.³⁴ The marks do not describe the church in its fullness as reflected in the Scriptures. More than being merely incomplete, however, I believe the four marks of the church also reflect the tendency of the church to be assimilated into the Roman Empire. The formulation of the marks in AD 381, at the First Council of Constantinople, occurred 68 years after the Edict of Milan, when Christianity was established as the religion of the Empire. Moreover, Snyder and Runyan see that the four classical marks only refer to the church as an organised institution. Therefore, we need to see other marks of the church as an organic movement. They propose four other marks that correlate perfectly with the classical marks. They are: diverse, charismatic, local, and prophetic.³⁵

Although I agree with Snyder's and Runyan's new marks, I propose a different set of *notae ecclesiae*. The church as *pondok*, on the one hand, belongs to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. On the other hand, the church as *pondok* is also diverse, vulnerable, concrete, and friendly. These new four marks of the church in no way replace the classical *notae*. Rather, they complement the *notae* so that the church can be present in more incarnational and embodied ways in its given situation. In other words, the new marks encourage us to seek an open ecclesiology in our own contexts.

First, the church is always simultaneously one and diverse. The ecclesial dialectic of the one and the many is rooted in the Triune God of communion, who is one and three. The diversity of the church encourages us to celebrate the life and ministry of each local church in its own struggle with the surrounding world as well as in communion with the one Church. The 2013 document of *The Church: Towards a Common Vision* of the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches (WCC) states:

Culture, language and shared history all enter into the very fabric of the local church. At the same time, the Christian community in each place shares with all the other local communities all that is essential to the life of communion. Each local church contains within it the fullness

world was: (i) a missionary church; (ii) the will to ecumenical fellowship between the churches; (iii) the discovery of the universality of the Kingdom of God; and (iv) the lay apostleship': Jürgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit: A Contribution to Messianic Ecclesiology*, trans. M. Kohl (London: SCM Press, 1977), p. 9.

34 Howard A. Snyder and Daniel V. Runyan, *Decoding the Church: Mapping the DNA of Christ's Body* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011).

35 *Ibid.*, p. 23.

of what it is to be the Church. It is wholly Church, but not the whole Church. (§31).

The diversity of the church requires an acknowledgement of the uniqueness of each local church. The story of the partnership between the Samaritan and the innkeeper inspires us to think of the beauty of diversity that creates spaces for common good.

Second, the church is both holy and vulnerable.³⁶ The church can easily drift away from the world to keep its holiness intact. Immunity can thus become another name for holiness. This is the worst sin the church can commit. The image of church as *pondok* emerges from a willingness to reject the sin of immunity from the world. The church is a vulnerable community precisely because it opens the doors to all, especially those who are sinned-against and wounded. The story of the good innkeeper tells us how vulnerable the innkeeper is at the moment that he or she declares his or her space to be a *pandocheion*, a house for all.

Catholicity and concreteness are the third dialectic marks of the church. The concreteness of the church refers primarily to the fact that people from a local church believe in the Triune God by living their faith in contextual and embodied ways. This concrete mark of the church seems to reflect the incarnational nature of the church centred on Jesus Christ. It also demonstrates the nature of the church as a place where the face-to-face encounter takes place. Thus, not only does locality become the marker of legitimate diversity of the church; it also opens up a possibility for each local church to be a site of concrete encounter with the other. In this sense, locality is commendable insofar as each local church is faithful to its identity as an open church, just as the innkeeper demonstrates the meaning of his *pandocheion* by opening up his house for the wounded victim.

Finally, friendliness as the fourth mark of the church complements its apostolic (and prophetic, according to Snyder and Runyan) nature. While apostolicity can turn the church into a rigid hierarchy, and its prophet character can diminish the church's togetherness with its society, friendliness celebrates the church's participation in the world with all other creatures. When the Samaritan takes the wounded stranger to the innkeeper, both treat him as a friend

36 This dialectic is inspired by Robert Thompson's 'necessary irony' that sees the church as 'Christ's holy/sick body': Robert Thompson, 'The Church as Christ's Holy/Sick Body: The Church as Necessary Irony', *Generous Ecclesiology: Church, World and the Kingdom of God*, ed. Julie Gittoes, Brutus Green, and James Heard (London: SCM Press, 2013), pp. 139–54.

and guest. The two demonstrate the practice of hospitality or befriending a stranger.

The open ecclesiology of *pondok* does not only demonstrate the classical marks of the church (one, holy, catholic, and apostolic); it also embodies the new marks (diverse, vulnerable, concrete, and friendly). In the context of this open ecclesiology, the concreteness of local churches becomes the primary mark that implies the necessity of real diversity. Both marks demonstrate the openness of the churches by being faithfully present in their societies through their vulnerable and friendly attitudes toward the other.³⁷ If the classical marks have characterised the general meaning of the church as *ecclesia*, how can the new marks contribute to the discourse constructively and imaginatively? In the next section, I propose the idea of *diaclesia* to complement the classical *ecclesia* and how *diaclesia* is beautifully demonstrated in a concrete church in Indonesia, GKI Yasmin.

The Church as a Diaclesial Community

The story of the Good Samaritan and the good innkeeper is one of healing. Yet the healing would never happen if the ones who see the wounded stranger with mercy do not overcome their own fear. Compassion will be powerless if it is encapsulated by fear. 'There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear', says 1 John. In the midst of the growing culture and politics of fear, the open church has to overcome its fear of strangers by learning to pass through and cross over its self-imposed boundaries. It is at the margin of their circle of safety that the people of an open church meet and embrace the wounded other.

I coin the term *diaclesia* not in order to replace *ecclesia*, but to liberate it from its tendency to 'pass by on the other side', just as the Levite and the priest do when they see the wounded victim. *Diaclesia* is another name for a passing-through or crossing-over *ecclesia*; the church that goes beyond all boundaries. Thus, *diaclesia* and *ecclesia* must go together. The church is not merely a

37 I borrow the term 'faithful presence' from James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). Hunter makes his case for the 'faithful presence' model of the church against other three models: purity-from, defensive-against, and relevant-to. I believe that the church's vulnerability and friendliness can never exist fully in the other three models.

community that is called out *from* and *to* the wounded world—*ek-klesia*.³⁸ The church is a *dia-clesia* in the sense that it is a community that crosses over or passes through all barriers. A rigid *ecclesia* could demonstrate superiority in relation to people from other faiths. In contrast, *diaclesia* offers a risky openness that passes through all boundaries and meets religious others. *Diaclesia* approaches, welcomes, and invites the wounded and sinned-against to cross over their own traumatic situation. A non-diaclesial *ecclesia* will easily turn us into escapists, which makes us ignorant of those who suffer. On the contrary, a non-ecclesial *diaclesia* could be dangerous by diminishing its very identity as Christ's people who are not of the world.

The church as a diaclesial community always implies an in-between space that simultaneously separates and connects ourselves and others. We are called to fill in the in-between space with whatever important to us. If we fill it in with our fear of others, the space will become even wider. On the contrary, we are called to fill it in with our love and compassion. Thus, the very identity of the Church is not found at the centre of all its activities; rather, it is discovered at the margins, to which its Lord has gone. As the writer of Hebrews says, 'Therefore Jesus also suffered outside the city gate in order to sanctify the people by his own blood. Let us then go to him outside the camp and bear the abuse he endured' (Heb 13:12–13).

The story of the good innkeeper is also a story of partnership and friendship. The friendship between the Samaritan and the innkeeper occurs in a vulnerable atmosphere since both have to open their own lives to embrace the stranger. This is exactly the meaning of *pandocheion* or *pondok*. The inn thus becomes the site of grace, precisely because it is the place where a vulnerable friendship becomes concrete and embodied through the healing of the victim. The interreligious portability of the term *pandocheion* to *pondok* gives us a deep insight as to how to become a diaclesial community. I will now conclude with a concrete example of what this means by telling the story of GKI Yasmin.

38 To be sure, the actual usage of the word *ekklesia* in the New Testament has nothing to do with the popular understanding of the word as 'called out' (*ek + kaleo*). Its basic meaning is simply 'assembly' or 'gathering'. However, the popular understanding of the church as the 'called-out community' has been so predominant that it has encouraged many church leaders to imagine the church within a dichotomous view of the church vis-à-vis the world. See Everett Ferguson, *The Church of Christ: A Biblical Ecclesiology for Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), p. 130.

GKI Yasmin (Gereja Kristen Indonesia Yasmin or Yasmin Indonesian Christian Church)³⁹ is a Reformed local church in Bogor, West Java, which has obtained a legal permit to construct its church building from the local government. After the construction was done in 2008, under the pressure of several local groups of radical Muslims, the mayor of Bogor revoked the permit and sealed the building off from use by the congregation. Since then, the congregation has held its worship every Sunday on the street, in front of the sealed building, besieged by hundreds of radical Muslims who mock and threaten the worshipping community. Meanwhile, the judicial process continued until the Supreme Court granted the congregation a permit to reopen and use the church building. But the mayor of Bogor once again revoked the permit because of his fear of threat coming from the Muslim radical groups. Then, in January 2012, the GKI Yasmin congregation decided to stop worshipping in front of the building. Instead, it worshipped alternate Sundays in the houses of the church members, while on the other two Sundays they worshipped in a park opposite the presidential palace. The practice continues today.

There are two interesting elements in the story of 'the congregation in the wilderness' (Acts 7:38). First, since the beginning of the tragedy, the congregation has been accompanied faithfully by several groups of moderate Muslims. These friends have guarded the wounded Christian community every time they have held their service on the street or in front of the presidential palace. Both the GKI Yasmin officials and the leaders of the moderate Muslim groups have fought for the religious freedom of GKI Yasmin. Secondly, since February 2012, another congregation from a Lutheran tradition (HKBP Filadelfia), whose church building was also sealed, has joined the service in front of the presidential palace. The ecumenical nature of the service has become more evident through the presence of local Christian leaders from across denominations, who have led worship or expressed their support of the two congregations.

GKI Yasmin is an example of an diaclesial open church that I have proposed throughout this paper. The traumatic experience of GKI Yasmin has nurtured the congregation to cross over all boundaries that hinder it from being a friendly

39 In terms of the polity of the Indonesian Christian Church, it is incorrect to call 'GKI Yasmin' as though it were a self-reliant local congregation. Formally, it is a branch of another local congregation in Bogor (GKI Pengadilan). However, using the lens of concrete ecclesiology, I believe that it is theologically correct to call it 'GKI Yasmin'. For a longer and accurate portrait of GKI Yasmin's problem see Hans A. Harmakaputra, 'Radical Love and Forgiveness as Foundation of Reconciliation: A Theological Imagination for GKI Yasmin Case in Indonesia', *Violence, Religion, Peacemaking*, ed. Douglas Irvin-Erickson and Peter C. Phan, *Interreligious Studies in Theory and Practice* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), pp. 97–106.

church. They have opened up their service for everyone who passes by in front of the palace, making it an open-air *pandocheion*. Thus, the presence of the community without the walls gives another meaning to *pandocheion*, in the sense of a home for wounded people without necessarily requiring a physical building.

Moreover, the service itself is both a protest against the deliberate neglect by the Indonesian government and an expression of solidarity towards all other minority groups in Indonesia. GKI Yasmin congregants' endurance in confronting all unfortunate situations and violent threats has proven that fear cannot win over love and compassion. GKI Yasmin is living proof that an open ecclesiology of *pandocheion* or *pondok* is a practical possibility just as much as it is a theological concept that needs further exploration. In the presence of GKI Yasmin the missing innkeeper is present as an open site of diaclesial diversity that is simultaneously concrete, vulnerable, and friendly.