

# **Visceral Theology**

Lutheran Seminary Program in the Southeast

Second Semester 2004-05

## **I. Visceral Theology: Crumbs of Historical theology from the perspective of hunger**

Time: Thursdays 2:00-5:00

Room: 260 B

Instructor: Eliseo Pérez-Álvarez ( [eperez@lsps.edu](mailto:eperez@lsps.edu))

Office hours: T, Th 10:00-12:00

## **II. Description:**

Biblical-historical approach to eatables and drinkables and the role they have played in the theological task. The menu includes: Deus edens or the God who eats and feeds; Theology of the cross and bread; Covenant vs. food terrorism; Taste conquest through the Eucharist; Hospitality over gastro-anomy and gastro-mania; Vegetarianism-femininity heresy; transubstantiation or trangenicization; The liturgical-agricultural calendar; Gastronomical spirituality; Culinary predestination; Spicy heavenography; The most exquisite utopia: an open table.

## **III. Objectives:**

By the end of the course, the participants will be able to:

Develop a critical appraisal of the weekly readings, in order to cook new ways of doing theology and pastoral work.

Acquire methodological tools to continue exploring the material implications of a committed pastoral ministry.

Articulate the centrality of food in the Bible with the theological and parish work dimensions.

## **IV. Chronogram:**

February

3 Diagnostic evaluation.?Syllabus negotiation/ semester assignments.

10 Food and hunger in the Hebrew Bible?Breaking Bread (15–35), Juengst.

17 Food and hunger in the New Testament?Book review # 1: Dussel, Enrique. “The Bread of the Eucharistic Celebration as a Sign of Justice in the Community,” in Concilium. 152

(2/1982), 56-65 and Carter, Warren. "Power, Poverty, Food Shortages and Disease: Toward a People's History of Matthew". Manuscript.

24 Early and Pre-Constantinian Church? And You Welcomed Me, (13-57) Oden

March

3 Christendom 4th. – 15th.? And You Welcomed Me, 215-279) Oden

10 The dis-encounter of the three kitchens: Africa, America and Europe

Book review # 2: "Nessan, Craig L. Give Us This Day: A Lutheran Proposal for Ending World Hunger. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003.

17 Spring Break

24 Maundy Thursday

The Reformations 16th.

The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse (200-246), Cunningham-Grell.

31 The Enlightenment 18th.

¡Vivan los tamales! (231-251), Pilcher.

April

7 The Industrial Era 19th.

Book review # 3: Pérez-Álvarez, Eliseo. "We Be Jammin" (First Part).

14 The Green Revolution – The transgenics 20th.

Farmageddon (1-8, 169-196), Kneen.

21 NAFTA, 20th. – 21st. "ALCA and pedagogy for oppression" Petras

28 Feedback, Delivering of grades. "Banquet!"

V. Evaluation:

A. Attendance and alert participation in the working sessions: 20%

B. To write a diary which may include: 40%

1. The hermeneutical circle: acting-reflecting-acting.

2. The critical reflection on several classroom experiences.

3. The articulation of practical though modest, proposals, for pastoral action.
  4. Research on hunger which can be focused on a specific topic within a biblical-historical perspective.
  5. Newspaper cuttings.
  6. Ingredients from the weekly required readings.
  7. Daily short entries (It's a diary; not a diarrhea!)
- C. Three critical reviews: Between 2 and 3 pages each: 40%

## VI. Bibliography:

### A. Required readings:

Carter, Warren. "Power, Poverty, Food Shortages and Disease: Toward a People's History of Matthew" Manuscript.

Cunningham, Andrew – Ole Peter Grell. *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Religion, War, Famine and Death in Reformation Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Dussel, Enrique. "The Bread of the Eucharistic Celebration as a Sign of Justice in the Community," in *Concilium*. 152 (2/1982), 56-65.

Juengst, Sara Covin. *Breaking Bread: The Spiritual Significance of Food*. Louisville, KY: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1992.

Kneen, Brewster. *Farmageddon: Food and the Culture of Biotechnology*. British Columbia, Canada: New Society Publishers, 1999.

Nessan, Craig L. *Give Us This Day: A Lutheran Proposal for Ending World Hunger*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003.

Oden, Amy G. *And You Welcomed Me: A Sourcebook on Hospitality in Early Christianity*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2001.

Pérez-Álvarez, Eliseo. *We Be Jammin: Liberating Discourses from the Land of the Seven Flags*. Mexico/Chicago: El Faro/LSTC, 2002.

Petras, James. "ALCA and pedagogy for oppression" <http://www.rebellion> 26-10-04

Piclcher, Jeffrey M. *Qué vivan los tamales!: Food and the Making of Mexican Identity*. Premier Book Marketing, 1998.

### B. Web Sites

- <http://www.caritasofaustin.org/>
- <http://www.elca.org/hunger>
- <http://www.bread.org>
- <http://www.cloc>
- <http://www.fian>
- <http://www.foodfirst.org>
- <http://www.grain>
- <http://www.rebellion>
- <http://www.worldhunger.org>
- <http://www.sosalliance.org>

### C. Movies

- *The Princess Diaries* ( England: Walt Disney, 2003)
- *Sugar Cane Alley* (Martinique: Euzhan Palcy, 107 min. 1985)

- Beyond Borders ( USA: Paramount Study, 2003)
- Huelepega; la ley de la calle (Venezuela)
- La última cena (Cuba: Tomás Gutiérrez Alea )
- Fiddler on the Roof (Russia: CBS Fox, Norman Jewison, 169 min. 1971)
- Soul Food ( USA: 20th. Century Fox, 114 min. 1997)
- Women on Top ( USA: 20th. Century Fox, Fina Tórrres, 108 min. 2000)
- Like Water for Chocolate (México: Alfonso Arau, 1987)
- Buffalo 66 (USA: Gallo-Vincent, 1997)
- Tortilla Soup (USA: Héctor Elizondo)
- Mostly Martha ( Germany: Sandra Nettlebeck, 106 min. 2002)
- Fools Rush In ( USA: Columbia Tristar Studios)
- What's Cooking? ( USA: Galaxi Angel, 2001)
- Babette's Feast (Denmark: The Danish Film Institute, Gabriel Axel, 120 min. 1988)
- Rodrigo D. No Future (Colombia)
- Pixote (Brasil)
- Eating (USA)
- Super Zise Me (USA)
- Los Olvidados (The Young and the Damned) , (México: Luis Buñuel, 80 min. 1950).
- The Natural History of the Chiken (USA)
- El Norte (México)

## Bibliography

### 1. Food and hunger in the Hebrew Bible

- Appler, Deborah A. "From Queen to Cuisine: Food Imagery in the Jezebel Narrative," In *Semeia: Food and Drink in the Biblical Worlds*. 86 (1999): 55-71.
- Borowski, Oded. *Daily Life in Biblical Times*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.
- ———, *Agriculture in Iron Age Israel*. Boston MA: American School of Oriental Research, 2002.
- Brothwell, D. R. - P. Brothwell. *Food in Antiquity: A Survey of the Diet of Early People*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.
- Feeley-Harnik, Gillian. *The Lord's Table: the Meaning of Food in Early Judaism and Christianity*, Washington and London: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1981.
- McKinlay, Judith E. *Gendering Wisdom The Host: Biblical Invitation to Eat and Drink*. Sheffield, UK: Academic Press, 1996.

### 2. Food and hunger in the New Testament

- Carter, Warren. *New Proclamation, Year A 2000*. Marshall D. Johnson (ed). Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002.
- ———, *Matthew and Empire: Initial Explorations*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001.
- ———, *Matthew and the Margins: A Socio-Political and Religious Reading*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000.
- Corley, Kathleen. *Private Women Public Meals: Social Conflict in the Synoptic Tradition*. Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993.
- Gowers, Emily. *The Loaded Table: Representations of Food in Roman Literature*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993.

- Heil, John Paul. *The Meal Scenes in Luke-Acts: An Audience-Oriented Approach*. Atlanta: SBL, 1999.
  - Hollar, Larry (ed). *Hunger for the World: Lectionary Reflections on Food and Justice Year A*. Collegville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2004.
  - Pérez Álvarez, Eliseo. *We Be Jammin: Liberating Discourses from the Land of the Seven Flags*. México, D.F. - Chicago: El Faro/Basilea/CCGM/LSTC, 2002.
  - ———, "Deus edens; Jesús, las parábolas y la mesa," en *Enseñaba por parábolas... Estudio del género «parábola» en la Biblia. Homenaje a Plutarco Bonilla Acosta*. Edesio Sánchez Cetina, (ed). Miami: Sociedades Bíblicas Unidas, 2004.
  - ———, "¿Quién dice la gente que soy yo?; identidad y comida" en *Alternarivas para un mundo justo, Globalización y pobreza; Perspectivas bíblicas*. Rene Kruger – Horacio Mesones (eds). Ginebra/Buenos Aires: ISEDET - FUMEC (Universal Federation of Christian Students), MEC (Movimiento Estudiantil Cristiano), 2004.
  - ———, "The Gastronomical Conquest: Morsels of Christian Thought and History from the Perspective of Hunger" en *Talita Cum! The Grace of Solidarity in a Globalized World*. Mario Deglilio-Bellemare – Gabriela Miranda Gacia (eds). Ginebra: WSCF Publications, 2004.
  - Willis, Wendell Lee. *Idol Meat in Corinth: The Pauline Argument in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004.
3. Early and Pre-Constantinian Church
- Garnsey, Peter. *Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World: Responses to Risk and Crisis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
  - Oden, Amy G. *And You Welcomed Me: A Sourcebook on Hospitality in Early Christianity*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2001.
  - Sonnenfeld, Albert (ed.). *Food: A Culinary History from Antiquity to the Present*. New York: Penguin Books, 2000.
  - Walker, Harian (ed.) *Food on the Move: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 1996*. Devon, UK: Prospect Books, 1997.
  - Webb, Stephen H. *Good Eating: The Christian Practice of Everyday Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2001.
4. Christendom IV – XV
- Bode, Willi. *European Gastronomy: The History of Man's Food and Eating Customs*. Londond: Grub Street, 2000.
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  - Walker Bynum, Caroline. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
5. The des-encounter of the three kitchens: Africa, America and Europe
- Bolívar Aróstegui, Natalia. *Mitos y leyendas de la comida afrocubana*. San Juan, PR: Plaza Mayor, 2000.
  - Coe, Sophie D. *Las primeras cocinas de América*. México, DF: FCE, 2004.
  - Fujigaki, Esperanza. *La agricultura, siglos XVI al XX*. Mexico, DF: UNAM/ Oceano, 2004.
  - Mintz, Sidney W. *Tasting Food, Tasting Freedom: Excursions into Eating, Culture, and*

the Past. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996.

- Villapoll, Nitzá, “Hábitos alimentarios africanos en América Latina” en África en América Latina. Manuel Moreno Fragnals (ed). México, D.F.: Siglo XXI, 1996.

#### 6. The Reformations XVI

- Bonanno, Alessandro et. al. From Columbus to ConAgra: The Globalization of Agriculture and Food. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1994.

- Cunningham, Andrew – Ole Peter Grell. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: Religion, War, Famine and Death in Reformation Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

- Díaz, Lorenzo. La cocina del barroco; la gastronomía del Siglo de Oro en Lope, Cervantes y Quevedo. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 2003.

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- Wallerstein, Immanuel. The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century. New York/ San Francisco/ London: Academic Press, 1974.

#### 7. The Enlightenment XVIII

- Jones, Evan. American Food: The Gastronomical Story. New York: Vintage Books, 1981.

- Onfray, Michel. El vientre de los filósofos; crítica de la razón dietética. Gipuzkoa: R&B, 1996.

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#### 8. The Industrial Era XIX

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#### 9. The Green Revolution

- Bennett, Jon and Susan George. The Hunger Machine: The Politics of Food. Oxford: Polity Press, 1987.

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10. The transgenics XX
- Bell, David/ Gill Valentine. Consuming Geographies: We Are Where We Eat. London/ New York: Routledge, 1997.
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  - Torres Torres, Felipe and Yolanda Trápaga Delfín. La alimentación de los mexicanos en la alborada del tercer milenio. México, DF: Porrúa/ UNAM, 2001.
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- Cakenaka, Masao. God is Rice: Asian Culture and Christian Faith. Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1986.
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- , Pan, casa, Palabra; la iglesia en Marcos, Salamanca, España: Sígueme, 1998.
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- B. Theology of the cross and bread
- Aguirre, Rafael. La mesa compartida; estudios del NT desde las ciencias sociales. Santander: Sal Terrae, 1994.
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- Grassi, Joseph A. Broken Bread and Broken Bodies: The Lord's Supper and World Hunger. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1985.
- McCuen, Marnie J. (ed.). Famine & Fat: Readings on Poverty, Wealth, and Food Security. Hudson, WI: Gary & McCuen Publications, 2000.
- C. Covenant vs. food terrorism
- Eisinger, Peter K. Toward an End to Hunger in America. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1998.
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Young, E.M. *World Hunger*. London/ New York: Routledge, 1997.

D. Taste conquest through the Eucharist

Aguilar Sánchez, Carlo G. (ed.) *Los (mal) tratados de libre comercio*. San José, Costa Rica: DEI, 2003.

Belasco, Warren and Philip Scranton. *Food Nations: Selling Taste in Consumer Societies*. New York/ London: Routledge, 2002.

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E. Hospitality over gastro-anomy and gastro-mania

Aiken, William and Hugh La Follette. *World Hunger and Moral Obligation*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1977.

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F. Vegetarianism-femininity heresy

Adams, Carol J. *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*. New York: Continuum, 2000.

Beard, James. *Delights and Prejudices*: Philadelphia: Running Press, 2001.

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G. Transubstantiation or transgenicization

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End Press, 2000.

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H. The liturgical-agricultural calendar

Arbelos, Carlos. *Gastronomía de las tres culturas; recetas y relatos de los siglos XIII y XVI*. Granada: Caja Granada, 2004.

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J. Culinary predestination

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K. Spicy heavenography

Bonder, Nilton. *The Kabbalah of Food: Conscious Eating, for Physical, Emotional, and Spiritual Health*. Boston/ London: Shambhala, 1998.

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L. The most exquisite utopia: an open table.

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M. Eat, Drink and be merry, that tomorrow we will diet!

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- O. *Ecce Panis: Ontology and Food*
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- P. *Ethiquete*
- Amat, Jean-Marie and Jean-Didier Vincent. *Una nueva fisiología del gusto*. Barcelona: RBA Libros, 2003.
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- Watson, James L. *Golden Arches East: McDonald's in East Asia*. Standford, CA: Standford University Press, 1997.
- Food and hunger in the Hebrew Bible
- Amos 8. 4-7
  - Isaiah 65.21-22

- Micah 2.1-2
- Joel 1. 4-13, 18
- 2 Kings 6. 26-30
- Lamentations 2. 4, 10, 20.

Bible imperative: Deuteronomy 15.4 “Not one of your people will be poor”

Berith: Psalm 111.5

Essence of wine: Psalm 104. 13-15

Re-distribution of wealth: The Sabbath Ex. 31.17

The Sabbatical Year Lv. 25. 2-7

The Jubilee Lv. 25. 23-24

To Eat and to Be

We know that hunger is mortal. And if we know that,

does it make any sense to waste time arguing

whether the soul is immortal?

Camilo Torres (1929-1966)

Lecture 05/22/1965

A philosophical dictum states: *Primum vivere, deinde philosophari* (first we live, and then we philosophize). Kierkegaard underscored: *Livet kan kun forstås baglæns, men det må leves forlæns* (life has to be understood backwards but it must be lived forwards). From the perspective of the table, what matters is: *Primum est edere, deinde philosophari* (first we eat, and then we philosophize). Berthold Brecht (1898-1956) put it this way: *Erst kommt das Fressen, dann die Moral* (Grub first, then ethics).

Heidegger raised the ontological question: “why are there things instead of nothing?” But Brazilian theologian Vitor Westhelle links ontology with food: “why there are things instead of food on my table?” Last century still a polite salutation among Chinese peasants was: “Have you eaten?”

Feurbach was right in asserting: *Der Mensch ist was er ißt*, we are what we eat, nonetheless, he took for granted everybody had access to food. Jesus is telling us: “We are not, unless we eat.” He articulated the table with the ontological horizon. There’s a continuity between our being and our eating. Francis of Assisi rightly said: “my sister hen, my brother wheat.”

To Christ the fulfilling of His Father’s will was food; and to us infants, who milk the Word of the heavens, Christ Himself is food. Hence seeking is called sucking; for those infants who seek the Word, the Father’s nipples of the love of humankind supply milk.

- Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogos* 1.6. 46.1

Without food, there is no life. When starving people eat food, they experience God “in every grain.” They “know” and “taste” God when they chew each grain. Food makes them alive. The greatest love of God for the starving people is food. When the grain from the earth sustains their life, they discover the meaning of the phrase, “For God so loves this world that He gives His beloved Son.” When God gives them food through other concerned human beings, God gives them God’s “beloved Son,” Jesus Christ.

- Cheng Jun Kyung

“One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dine well.”?- Virginia Wolf A Room of One’s Own

Only one thing matters on earth: the revolution which well provide food for the entire world.”

- Simone Weil (1909-43)

The Reformations 16th, 17th Centuries

Thomas Muntzer (1489-1525)

As Thomas Muntzer has said, "If you do not want the bitter Christ you will eat yourself to death on honey." Or, to put it another way, there comes a time in all our lives when "Smile, God loves you" just doesn't hack it anymore”

Albert Durer (1471-1528)

“while they stand ready to take the fateful bite of that forbidden fruit, a cat waits at their feet, poised to pounce upon the unsuspecting mouse. Her capacity for murderous violence –and that of all living creatures- is about to unleashed by human sin” (Pagels, Elaine. Adam, Eve and the Serpent, 148).

Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556)

Spiritual Exercises (SE 210-217) “reach a level of moderation” he pursued “what is most appropriate for his physical sustenance” (SE 213)

“that one’s whole mind should not be intent on what is being consumed; and nor should the consumer be put under pressure by his appetite but instead should be his own master”. (SE 214-216)

“afeter eating or having dinner or at other times when you are not hungry, choose what you will eat at your next meal. . . a quantity that is fitting to eat” (SE 217). (Cortina, 29-30).

Benedict of Palermo, “The Little Black Saint” (1526-1589)

Illiterate laybrother, cook, son of African slaves, a Franciscan. Patron of African-Americans in USA. He was represented carrying Jesus and with a small cauldron.

Martin de Porres (1579-1639)

Peruvian mulatoo. Nurse, cook and laybrother of the Dominican order.

Represented as feeding a dog, cat and mouse while telling them: “eat my brothers and don’t fight”

Cromwell, Oliver (1559-1658)

Seized the very rare fertile land of Ireland for the English landowners. Cereals grew poorly. Potato was the solution to solve hunger. British didn’t care because potato was not listed in the Bible, it was food of conquered people, they were not familiar with eating tubers, potato was associated with leprosy and promiscuity, it belong to an inferior race, it was a threat to civilization. (Pollan, 2002, 198 ff)

Cortina-Ignasi Carreras, Adela. *I Buy. . . Therefore I am*. Barcelona: Cristianisme i Justícia Booklets, 2004.

Pollan, Michael. *The Botany of Desire: A Pant-Eye view of the world*, New York: Random House, 2002.

Enlightenment

Malthus, Thomas Robert (1766-1834). His logic consisted in asserting two main people’s impulses: food and sex. Therefore, famine prevent demographic exploitation. Potato then is immoral because by alleviating hunger breaks the balance of human population: “the indolent and turbulent habits of the lower Irish can never be corrected while the potato system enables them to increase so much beyond the regular demand for labour” (Pollan, 2002, 204)

Gastro-anomie

The family that eats together... might prefer not to”

“A full time house wife who lives with her family at Minneapolis says that each one of the members of her family is in charge of their own nutritional needs since she stopped planning and preparing their meals three years ago. David, a 13-year-old, survives based on a diet of cereal, milk, peanut butter, raisins, frozen pizza, orange juice, McDonald’s hamburgers, french fries, and milk shakes. Some times I’m sure he will be converted into a pizza, but his height is 6 feet. And he is a vigorous athlete”. Delzell says that her family could’ve organized to eat together “with a long term planning, sacrificing individual interests, a complex juggling of schedules, or if needed, by force. But everything we got when we made an attempt was a strong resentment on the children’s part, a major pressure for my husband and frustration for me. The change in our life style means that we get more time to share together –even though it is not at meal time- and we are more relaxed.” (Linda E. Delzell, “The family that eats together... might prefer not to”, Ms, 8:56-57, 1980)

Emile Durkheim *The Division of Labour in Society* (1893). Anomie: a condition of deregulation that was accumulating society. A state where norms are confused. The break down of norms.

Claude Fischler “Gastronomie et gastro-anomie” 1979.

Anti-cooking

Feminist

Charlotte Anna Perkins Gilman (1860-1935) Hartford Connecticut.

Socialist

Edward Bellamy (1850-97) Looking Backward 1887.

1. Camilo Torres, *Cristianismo y revolución*, Mexico City: Era, 1970.
2. I thank René Krüger for this quotation.
3. Josué de Castro, *The Geography of Hunger*, Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1952, 141.
4. Cheng Jun Kyung, quoted by Elisabeth Schussler Fiorenza, *Jesus' Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet: Critical Issues in Feminist Theology*, New York: Continuum, 1995, 127.