

**GOD'S DIVINE POWER AND MAN'S FREEDOM IN
CHARLES HARTSHORNE'S PROCESS PHILOSOPHY**

A Thesis

Presented to the
Graduate Faculty of the
College of Arts and Sciences
University of San Carlos
Cebu City, Philippines

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
MASTER OF ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY

by

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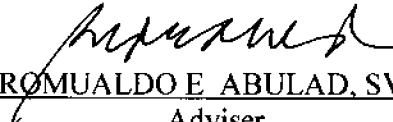
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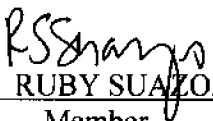
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This Thesis entitled "GOD'S DIVINE POWER AND MAN'S FREEDOM IN CHARLES HARTSHORNE'S PROCESS PHILOSOPHY," prepared and submitted by FERDINAND M MANGIBIN, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS IN PHILOSOPHY, has been examined and is recommended for acceptance and approval for ORAL EXAMINATION

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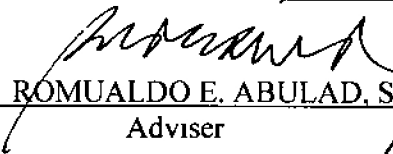

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Comprehensive Examination PASSED March 29-30, 2007

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Date of Oral Examination


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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher wants to express his gratitude to those who contributed for the accomplishment of this study

Foremost to the **Divine Actual Entity**, who lures and inspires the researcher in the process of his becoming. The Divine Entity continues to lead the researcher to follow the path of freedom anchored on the past and future. He had been the "Great Companion and Fellow-Sufferer who understands" in the researcher's limitations.

Tatay ken Inang, whose love creates hope and optimism in the life of the researcher. They stay and remain with him all throughout. *Agyamanak kadakayo!*

Mrs. Concepcion Briones, whose motherly care pushes the researcher to rise up from his past occasion to see the creative lure of the present through God's inspiration for new occasion, *Agyamanak Mama!*

Fr. Bruno Rampazzo, RCJ (Major Superior – Rogationists), whose fatherly love and concern allows the researcher to integrate the "past" and the "lure" of the Divine in order to create novelty in the future. His unbounded support draws the researcher to read life in its most crucial cross-section. He contributes to the many occasions in the concrecence of the actual experience of the researcher. *Grazie Padre!*

Bro. Romualdo Abulad, SVD, Ph.D. (Faculty - University of San Carlos - Cebu), who accompanied the researcher until the end of this study. He had been a good professor and friend, a confidant both in the researcher's personal and academic endeavors. His untiring support and advices were very helpful in his academic and life journey. *Thanks a lot!*

Dr. Franco Altonaga (Faculty – De La Salle University, College of St. Benilde), whose enthusiasm in Process Philosophy inspired the researcher to pursue the same interest. The regular dialogues and encounter with him add to the improvement of the actual experience of the researcher. His contribution adds to "the many to become one" in the researcher's becoming. *Maraming Salamat po!*

Dr. John B. Cobb, Jr. (Faculty, School of Theology of Claremont, and Co-Founder of the *Center for Process Studies* – California, USA), who is like a father to the researcher even though he never meets him personally. He had given the researcher valuable reflections on the topic through internet communication. He exchanges ideas and opinions to the researcher regarding Charles Hartshorne's Process Philosophy. His prompt replies help the researcher in the eventual accomplishment of the study. *Thank you very much!*

Mr. Antonio Diluvio, MA (Chair, Philosophy Department, University of San Carlos), whose fatherly accommodation inspires the researcher to continue his Master's Degree. His wisdom and advices assures the researcher's confidence to finish the study. He facilitates every single details of the researcher's stay in the University. Daghang Salamat!

Fr. Heinz Kulueke, SVD, Ph.D. (Provincial – South Province), whose open mind and understanding and availability inspires the researcher to look at life as an opening to “Being” through creative contemplation and assimilation. Thank you very much!

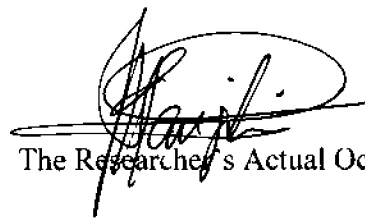
Dr. Ruby Suazo, (Faculty – University of San Carlos), whose friendly advices and comments help the researcher to improve this study. Daghang Salamat.

Fr. Rodolfo Patiag, Jr. RCJ and Fr. Rene Ramirez, RCJ, whose company comforts the researcher in his most crucial moment of his study and religious journey. Thank you!

The Rogationist Senior Seminarians **Emil, Felix, Jacinto, Anthony, and Bayani** for their good company, prayers, and inspiring presence. Maraming Salamat!

Ma'am Myrna (Secretary, Philosophy Department, University of San Carlos), whose availability and generosity allows the researcher for an easy access to the Master's Program. Daghang Salamat!

Ma'am Cherry Jardin (Secretary, Graduate Studies, CAS, University of San Carlos), who wisely facilitates the researcher's entrance to the university and sometime provides a way out from every difficulty he encounters in the University. She helps facilitates in the smooth accomplishment of this study. Daghang Salamat!



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**whose total value resides in the
Eternal memory of God**

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rationale of the Study

Hosea is the prophet in the *Old Testament* who emphasizes more than any other God's love for his people Israel. Through him God says, "I will allure her, I will lead her into the desert and speak to her heart"¹ "I drew (her) with human cords, with bands of love"² Both Christians and Jews envision a relationship between God and man, a covenantal relationship that involves an active and dynamic bond between the divine and the non-divine. God lures and draws man to himself while man responds.

In this dynamic rapport between him and God, is man free to respond or not? When God calls man to communion with him, can man reject or refuse this call? Does God demand a definite response from man? Is man's response a matter of coercion?

That man is by nature free, is a usual contention. In fact,

All men seem to be at least experientially aware of freedom in choice. The experience is so primary, in fact, that it is difficult to conceive oneself operating as if there were no freedom at all. Data from literature, history, and personal communication present manifold testimony not only to freedom, but to the ambiguity, the deliberation, the irrevocability, and even the terror of it. It has often been maintained that this universal experience of freedom provides the greatest proof for its own existence.³

But are we really free human beings? If we are aware that there is God watching, calling, alluring, and drawing us, are we still free to act? What is freedom all about? Do

¹ Hosea 2:16, (*The New American Bible*, New York: Catholic Publishers, 1971)

² Hosea 11:4

³ Manuel Dy, Jr. *Philosophy of Man: Selected Readings* (Manila: Goodwill Trading Company, 1986), 157

we merely feel like free persons? Or are we irresistibly subject to the divine power of God?

Many issues about human freedom have been dealt with in relation to God's divine power. Both religion and philosophy address these issues in different ways. Here is an example from history.

In philosophy and theology the debate on freedom has been long and sometimes bitter. Fr. Padovano says that it is a 'philosophical problem which theologians have debated for centuries'. To mention a bit from history, there were the Dominicans and the Jesuits of the sixteenth century, both Spanish orders, both in the best graces of Rome, the center of Roman Catholicism. The Dominicans called the Jesuits "Pelagians," and the Jesuits for their part called the Dominicans "Calvinists." In other words, the Dominicans accused the Jesuits of teaching that eternal salvation is possible through the free acts of the will alone without the aid of divine grace – the heresy of Pelagianism. On the other hand, the Jesuits accused the Dominicans of teaching that salvation is by divine predestination, therefore denying the freedom of the will, as in Calvinism.⁴

Here is an issue of reason and faith so significant to both religion and philosophy that it requires deep effort and reflective insight for one to arrive at an approximate solution.

Making a concise summary of the problem, Padovano says, 'we are free and God is Lord'. It was the acceptance of this doctrine that the Dominicans and the Jesuits were in perfect accord. And for that, Rome was pleased. The disagreement was in the mechanics of explanation, the *how* of human freedom under divine absolute sovereignty.⁵

The question is, whether any real and definite solution to this concern can ever be given. Is there a logical, consistent, and adequate explanation possible?

⁴ Florentino H. Hornedo, *The Power To Be: A Phenomenology of Freedom*, (Manila: USI Publishing House, 2000), 4.

⁵ Hornedo, *The Power To Be*, 4 [Emphasis is Hornedo's].