

# **Theological and Ethical Differences Between Stanley Hauerwas and Michel de Certeau**

Adjunct Professor Heejun Kim (Namseoul University)

- I. Introduction
- II. Hauerwas's Use of de Certeau's Terminologies
  - 1. What Hauerwas Really Says
  - 2. Speak Truthfully
- III. Theology and Ethics of de Certeau
  - 1. Theology Matters
  - 2. No More Christian Ethics
- IV. An Alternative to Postmodern Christian Ethics
  - 1. Hauerwas and Postmodernism
  - 2. Witnesses Flourishing
- V. Conclusion

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21050/CSE.2023.56.09>

---

• 국 문 초 록 •

---

## 스탠리 하우어워스와 미셸 데 세르토의 신학적, 윤리적 차이점

김희준(남서울대학교 외래교수)

본 논문은 미국의 기독교 윤리학자인 스탠리 하우어워스와 프랑스 철학자인 미셸 데 세르토와의 신학적, 윤리학적 차이점을 살펴본다. 스탠리 하우어워스는 자신의 책, *After Christendom?*, 에서 데 세르토가 '전략과 '전술'의 개념적 차이를 서술한 것을 이용하여 하우어워스 자신을 향한 종파주의자 또는 분리주의자라는 비판을 변호한다. 이에 대해 하우어워스가 단지 데 세르토의 유용한 관념적 서술을 사용한 것을 넘어 하우어워스의 신학적 윤리의 용어 중 하나인 '순례'의 개념을 발전시켰다는 주장이 제기 되었다. 이에 본 논문은 그런 주장은 다소 무리한 해석이라고 주장한다. 이를 뒷받침하기 위해 본 논문은 실제 하우어워스가 데 세르토를 인용한 부분을 살펴볼 것이며, 하우어워스와 데 세르토의 연결고리를 살펴보고 실제 긴밀한 연결이 있는지, 아니면 다른점이 있는지 밝힐 것이다. 포스트모더니즘과 정치적 운동을 직접적으로 지지하는 데 세르토는 하우어워스가 받아들이기에는 신학적, 철학적 결이 다름을 본 논문은 보임으로써, 규범적 학문인 윤리학과 신학을 함에 있어서 서술적인 것이 창의적인 대안이 되기 위해선 반드시 규범적 주장이 제시되어야 함을 짚고, 이 점에 있어서 하우어워스가 데 세르토나 포스트모던 신학과 기독교 윤리학의 범주 보다 훨씬 더 규범적이고 공격적이며 창의적이라는 것을 주장할 것이다.

주제어: 스탠리 하우어워스, 미셸 데 세르토, 교회윤리, 포스트모던 신학, 기독교 윤리

---

## I. Introduction

The prominent Postcolonial philosopher Edward Said affirms that one can understand the original meaning of a concept differently in a different context.<sup>1)</sup> It must be so for the theory or norm to last throughout time and space. But as Şebnem Susam-Sarajeva argues with Said, the translation of the original terminologies is critical to understand the original theory and its meaning produced from the particular context, which is not only space but also time the author lives.<sup>2)</sup> From this understanding, if anyone urges to bring to the Korean context Stanley Hauerwas, who is not only American but Texan, they should choose the right words to translate the original text correctly. To deliver what the original author really means without excuse, you need an ethos to speak the truth.

To speak the truth, one should refrain from collecting some words with preference and creating their own story. Even if we live in geographically and culturally different societies, thanks to today's technologies and globalization, our societies are not that different to change one's original intention. Even though Korea's social, historical, political, and cultural context is different from the United States, the fundamentals never change. No one can collectively use just a term but a different meaning. According to G. E. M. Anscombe, analyzing

---

1) Edward Said, *The Edward Said Reader*, ed. Moustafa Bayoumi and Andrew Rubin (New York: Vintage, 2000), 195-217. This section is about Said's well-known 'Travelling Theory.'

2) Şebnem Susam-Sarajeva, *Theories on the Move: Translation role in the travels of literary theories* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006).

Wittgenstein's 'language-game,' that kind of use of the words brings a miscommunication in which the conversation becomes meaningless except just being described.<sup>3)</sup>

There is an argument that only public and urban theology can help to overcome the gap between Hauerwas's theological ethics and the real-world church and Christian life, pointing out Hauerwas's lack of concrete and embodied practice or activity.<sup>4)</sup> To prove this argument, he claims that Hauerwas uses de Certeau's theory of walking, the everyday practice, and adopts his theology. And he goes further to make a rigid connection between de Certeau's idea of walking and Hauerwas's discipleship. He argues that by accepting de Certeau's theology, Hauerwas's theological ethics can be strengthened to overcome the lack of a practical realm.

Thus, in this article, I will argue that while Hauerwas explains Michel de Certeau's useful distinction between strategy and tactic, he never adopts de Certeau's theological or ethical presupposition, which is much closer to postmodernism. In the further sections, I will prove this argument by clarifying Hauerwas's limited use of de Certeau's description with his different understanding of theology and ethics from de Certeau's, based on postmodernism which is closer to Kantian thought.

---

3) G. E. M. Anscombe, *Intention* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 27. Article number 18.

4) Seung Hwan Kim, "A Study on Reflective Walking as Urban Spatial Practice: Focusing on Michel de Certeau and Stanley Hauerwas," *Christian Social Ethics*, 53 (2022): 205-235.

## II. Hauerwas's Use of de Certeau's Terminologies

### 1. What Hauerwas Really Says

In his book, *After Christendom?*, published in 1991, Hauerwas uses de Certeau's helpful distinction between "strategies" and "tactics" to defend a series of critiques toward him as sectarian, fideist, and tribalist.<sup>5)</sup> He introduces to his readers de Certeau's descriptions of strategies and tactics. Hauerwas understands the differences between strategies and tactics,

For example, strategy provides for a triumph of place over time insofar as it allows one to acquire advantages, to prepare for future expansions, ... In sharp contrast to a strategy, according to de Certeau, a tactic is a "calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus. ... Tactic does not have power to plan a general strategy or to view the adversary as a whole. It must operate in isolated actions taking advantage of opportunities without a base where it can build up stockpiles for the next battle. ... As de Certeau notes, the tactic is the art of the weak."<sup>6)</sup>

Hauerwas affirms, "By employing de Certeau's distinction, I think of the church as a tactic, not strategy."<sup>7)</sup> He argues that it is crucial for his critics to understand what he really means when he claims, "Why there is no salvation outside the church."<sup>8)</sup> And suppose they still want

---

5) Stanley Hauerwas, *After Christendom? How the Church is to behave if freedom, justice, and a Christian nation are bad ideas* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 16-18.

6) Hauerwas, *After Christendom?*, 17-18.

7) Hauerwas, *After Christendom?*, 18.

to understand his ethics as sectarian. In that case, it is because they are bound to Constantinian accommodation of the church with the world as the church having a strategy and power to rule the world.<sup>9)</sup>

In his book, *Transforming Fate Into Destiny*, one of the best secondary references to understand Hauerwas's theology and ethics better and more profoundly, Samuel Wells also gives attention to Hauerwas's use of de Certeau's distinction between strategy and tactic.<sup>10)</sup> He evaluates that the Constantinian church with strategy, which Hauerwas argues against, guarantees safety by predicting the future; the control must be needed. Wells explains that Hauerwas could be considered sectarian because he always distinguishes the church from the "others" occupying the space of the church, even in the church.<sup>11)</sup> But by using de Certeau's description of the tactic, according to Wells, Hauerwas can defend his view of the church without withdrawing from the world. Hauerwas argues that the church has no strategy which refers to fundamental nature or principle; instead, by using tactics that refer to skills to follow Christ, the church can live a Christian life imitating Christ.<sup>12)</sup> However, even though Hauerwas uses de Certeau's thought as a good

---

8) Hauerwas, *After Christendom?*, 18, 23-44. Hauerwas uses this sentence as subtitle of the first chapter of this book, "*quia salus extra ecclesiam non est*" or just simply "*extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*" This is believed in the church tradition as what Cyprian of Carthage (210?-258) in the early church era claimed. See Orlando O. Espín, James B. Nickoloff, eds, *An Introductory Dictionary of Theology and Religious Studies* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007), 439.

9) Hauerwas, *After Christendom?*, 18.

10) Samuel Wells, *Transforming Fate Into Destiny: The Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas* (Cumbria, U.K.: Paternoster, 1998), 115.

11) Wells, *Transforming Fate*, 115.

12) Wells, *Transforming Fate*, 115.

part of the book's introduction, it is not taking charge of the entire book's or the author's foundational theology.

## 2. Speak Truthfully

With William Willimon, Hauerwas published *Resident Alien* in 1989.<sup>13)</sup> One thing I am confused with an assertion that seems to claim that Hauerwas expands or develops his ethics, elaborated in *Resident Aliens*, from de Certeau's tactical concept of "walking" in everyday life.<sup>14)</sup> First, how could Hauerwas in 1989 "expand" de Certeau's philosophical idea of walking, which Hauerwas possibly could have in his mind in 1991, writing *After Christendom?* Secondly, that argument further claims that Hauerwas seems to accept de Certeau's specific practice of walking and promote it in his ethics. But Hauerwas never agrees with any other de Certeau's rationale of walking as a 'pilgrimage.' Does Hauerwas use the term, 'pilgrimage' or 'pilgrimage walking,' as a motive to change the secular world? But Hauerwas always argues that he is not interested in changing the world. He wants the world to see the church and to acknowledge that the world is God's creation.<sup>15)</sup>

---

13) Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989).

14) Seung Hwan Kim, "A Study on Reflective Walking," 220. He asserts that Hauerwas "accepts" the idea of walking, which he explicates with a bit lengthy in the first half of his article with de Certeau.

15) There seems a colossal miscommunication or mistranslation between the original version of *Resident Aliens* and its Korean translation. I suspect that the publishing company or the translator probably translated "journey," which Hauerwas uses a lot in this book, into "Sunlye," that is, pilgrimage in English. In this book, Hauerwas uses the term, "pilgrimage" only once on page 56. "Faith consists in

### III. Theology and Ethics of de Certeau

#### 1. Theology Matters

Even though, in this short paper, I cannot lay out all things to understand Hauerwas's context, one thing is transparent. For Hauerwas, theology matters. He says, "I am a Christian theologian who teaches ethics. ... Yet I prefer to be a theologian. ... I am also an ethicist, but I do not make much of that claim. After all, 'ethicist' is such an ugly word."<sup>16</sup> Interestingly, theology matters, even to de Certeau, claiming, "I am a theologian."<sup>17</sup> Then, we should look at his theology to see if Hauerwas and de Certeau can be compatible. Thus, this article provides a brief but precise feature of de Certeau's theology to understand any similarities or differences between Hauerwas and de Certeau.

---

each of us being a part of a pilgrimage, a stepping out, just like Abraham, just like Sarah." Otherwise, Hauerwas uses the term "journey" to indicate the Christian life. But, because he mentions "Santiago de Compostella" as an example of 'walking,' Kim seems to understand what Hauerwas says 'journey' as 'pilgrimage' in the Korean translation. Or does Kim know the truth but intentionally mingle the two different words into one term, walking? I cannot elaborate on the difference between pilgrimage and journey, especially for Hauerwas, due to the limited space of this article. But Kim fails to speak the truth if he intentionally puts two words having two normative meanings into one description without indication.

16) Stanley Hauerwas, "Christian in the Hands of Flaccid Secularists: Theology and 'Moral Inquiry' in the Modern University," *Ethical Perspectives*, 4/2 (1997): 32-44. See also, Stanley Hauerwas, *The Work of Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015), 273.

17) Frederick C. Bauerschmidt, "The Abrahamic Voyage: Michel de Certeau and Theology," *Modern Theology* 12:1 (Jan. 1996), 1. Cf., Michel de Certeau, "Faire de l'Histoire Problèmes de Méthodes et Problèmes de Sens," *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, 58 (1970), 518.



While identifying himself as a theologian, de Certeau does not account for what theology is or should be. Especially in his well-known book, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, he barely speaks of God, Jesus, or the church.<sup>18)</sup> Searching for his other writings shows that de Certeau's understanding of theology is obscure and abstract. According to Philipp Rosemann, de Certeau does not deny that Jesus is God, and the incarnation and resurrection were historical events.<sup>19)</sup> But that is not his interest. What he focuses on is that to be a Christian is to follow Jesus's footsteps which should be construed by those living in different times, contexts, and cultures.<sup>20)</sup>

Even though de Certeau seems to believe in the distinctive Christian faith in Jesus, according to Rosemann, he is "a thoroughly postmodern, post-Kantian thinker."<sup>21)</sup> While observing the systems, language, history, space, power, and so on, De Certeau places himself in a position as a superior and omnipotent observer, not a participant; but his over-viewing of the frame cannot be totally free from the world he is against. Bauerschmidt also agrees with Rosemann's argument that de Certeau understands that humans cannot access God's truth or knowledge directly but indirectly through human actions that ultimately indicate that Jesus's events, not only recorded in Scripture but also practiced by

---

18) Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendali (Los Angeles, CA: Berkeley University of California Press, 1984).

19) Philipp W. Rosemann, "Risk of Tradition: With de Certeau toward a Postmodern Catholic Theory," *Journal of Moral Theology*, vol. 10, no. 2 (2021): 98-100.

20) Rosemann, "Risk of Tradition," 95. Cf., Michel de Certeau "How Is Christianity Thinkable Today?" in *The Postmodern God: A Theological Reader*, ed. Graham Ward, *Blackwell Readings in Modern Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 153.

21) Rosemann, "Risk of Tradition," 96.

humans. Thus, Christians must take action, not believe. Believing is not acting, for de Certeau. Believing and confessing their faith is to speak of the words transmitting the faith in which people believe or make people believe in accordance with an old system.

Moreover, for de Certeau, doing theology is replaced by doing cultural things. In his argument, not theology, but culture, more specifically put, cultural behaviors such as “watching a movie” give people a new vision for a new world and future.<sup>22)</sup> In cultural activities, the person becomes an event “authorizing” a distinctive specific mode or form of dialogue; and in it, the person does not have to define a theology or even any other theory nor believe in a set of words.<sup>23)</sup> This event, influenced by Martin Heidegger, for de Certeau, can be time and also being.<sup>24)</sup> It is an existential moment in which Christians and non-Christians alike cannot discern the difference between divine revelation and witness to the revelation.<sup>25)</sup> For instance, given de Certeau’s context, the protest in 1968 in France is his event accumulated by everyday actions to understand and witness the change of the old times and systems, including the church, and the rise of a new future.<sup>26)</sup>

---

22) Rosemann, “Risk of Tradition,” 96-97. Cf., de Certeau, “How Is Christianity Thinkable?” 143.

23) Rosemann, “Risk of Tradition,” 97. Cf., de Certeau, “How Is Christianity Thinkable?” 143.

24) Rosemann, “Risk of Tradition,” 98-99.

25) Rosemann, “Risk of Tradition,” 101.

26) Rosemann, “Risk of Tradition,” 102.

## 2. No More Christian Ethics

Even though de Certeau's theology is a highly performative work narrative oriented, similar to Hauerwas's, any Christian ethic would be impossible for him. He confesses, "Nothing assures any longer that a Christian ethic is possible."<sup>27)</sup> This somewhat striking and candid statement is true to him, for, in his theology analyzed by the culture and social events, Christians cannot define or argue with any issues; they must participate in social engagements without speaking the truth of the gospel.<sup>28)</sup> Whenever they verbally confess their faith and try to be distinctive as Christians among others, they become a power that promotes a God of the old system in which they compete to win the battle against the others. For instance, when Hauerwas describes what the church is, he says, "The church is not just a 'community' but an institution that has budgets, buildings, parking lots, potluck dinners, heated debates about who should be the next pastor, and so on."<sup>29)</sup> In his book, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau also uses everyday activities such as talking, reading, cooking, and walking to describe the art of everyday life, which is tactical and rejects to be defined verbally.<sup>30)</sup> But in that work, he never mentions the Christian faith or church to be faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ. Instead, de Certeau considers the

---

27) Bauerschmidt, "The Abrahamic Voyage," 17. Cf., Michel de Certeau, "La Faiblesse de Croire," *Esprit* (April-May 1977), 310.

28) Bauerschmidt, "The Abrahamic Voyage," 16.

29) Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 107.

30) De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, passim.

church as a religious institution in a way Michel Foucault describes the role of institutions that make people believe in a modernity's panoptical system.<sup>31)</sup>

What de Certeau argues about the deviation between believing and doing is very similar to Hauerwas's argument that from the beginning of the primitive church, there was no division between theology and ethics until modernity; Christian faith had always been accompanied by how to live with others. But de Certeau does not stop there but takes further steps to claim that Christianity must not define the universal meanings of language to bring their own place but create an alternative room for others, in which Christians do not refer to the name of Jesus or God. Giving a definition even of practice is giving meaning, and it is a power and strategy of modernity's panoptical system.<sup>32)</sup>

De Certeau wants Christians to follow the path of Jesus, who made room for the others, the weak and weary, by dying on the cross with silence. De Certeau believes Jesus never defined any autonomous meaning to rule the world but taught his disciples how to live silently with others.<sup>33)</sup> The problem is the absence of God, which de Certeau believes we can no longer prove. The presence of others substitutes the absence of God.<sup>34)</sup> In this existence with others, Christians must be silent and even dissipate to make alternative space for others like

---

31) De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, 184-185; Bauerschmidt, "The Abrahamic Voyage," 10.

32) Bauerschmidt, "The Abrahamic Voyage," 16-17.

33) Bauerschmidt, "The Abrahamic Voyage," 11.

34) Bauerschmidt, "The Abrahamic Voyage," 10.

Jesus did on the cross. This is the discipleship de Certeau claims; after Christendom, the disciples are the fragmented individuals having no right to claim they are Christians.<sup>35)</sup>

In his claim that strategies are a way of those having power and a system, and tactics are for the weak, De Certeau's God is not the God in Jesus. Jesus is important only because he is the sign, not the real, that creates space for the weak and represents God in his life with silence on the cross. What de Certeau wants to do is "subvert the designs of the urban planner" that have the power and system.<sup>36)</sup> Even if he is not supposed to make any other theory or define terms, his theory is about the power relationship or authoritarian social structure. Whittington argues, "The quirky manoeuvres of de Certeau's common man" are liable to subvert carefully designed plans."<sup>37)</sup>

## IV. An Alternative to Postmodern Christian Ethics

### 1. Hauerwas and Postmodernism

Hauerwas does not support postmodernism, agreeing with Nicholas Boyle's definition of postmodernism. "Post-Modernism is the pessimism of an obsolescent class – the salaried official intelligentsia – whose fate is closely bound up with that of the declining nation-state."<sup>38)</sup> Even

---

35) Bauerschmidt, "The Abrahamic Voyage," 11, 15, 17-18.

36) Richard Whittington, "Greatness Takes Practice: On Practice Theory's Relevance to 'Great Strategy'," *Strategy Science*, vol. 3, no. 1 (March 2018): 344.

37) Whittington, "Greatness Takes Practice," 347.

38) Stanley Hauerwas, *A Better Hope: Resources for a Church Confronting Capitalism, Democracy, and Postmodernity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2000), 35. Cf., Nicholas

though he considers postmodernism's challenge against modernism and its Enlightenment origin as "a good thing,"<sup>39)</sup> Hauerwas says, "Modernity, and its bastard offspring, postmodernity, are but reflections of the Christian attempt to make God a god available without the mediation of the church."<sup>40)</sup> He points out two facts: one is that postmodernism is still a product of capitalism as a means or tool to sustain the current system of the world, and the other is that those postmodern thinkers strive to identify themselves as the freemen from capitalism, but they are not.<sup>41)</sup> Teaching a culturally innovative course in a university and writing an obscure theory that comforts individuals cannot free those intelligentsia from the market. And Hauerwas affirms, "The difficulty in describing the loss of the unified self by postmodernists is their failure to see that such a self is the result of social and economic developments."<sup>42)</sup>

From this understanding of Hauerwas's perspective of postmodernism, the walking of de Certeau is nothing but just living without meaning and cherishing Christians to be fragmented individuals hoping for the existential encounter from time to time. There is no confession or Christian faith, and no truthful speech of the witness is allowed. I am not sure if that is what the current Christian theologians, who devote themselves to cultural dialogue, want to invent for the future of theol-

---

Boyle, *Who Are We Now? Christian Humanism and the Global Market from Hegel to Heaney* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 318.

39) Hauerwas, *A Better Hope*, 37.

40) Hauerwas, *A Better Hope*, 38.

41) Hauerwas, *A Better Hope*, 40-41.

42) Hauerwas, *A Better Hope*, 40.

ogy to serve the church. But insofar as they chase a new, cultural, cutting-edge, pragmatic, indifferent, agnostically individualistic thing to analyze and warm the human soul, there already exists in the name of Foucaultian, Existentialist, or, at best, Richard Niebuhr's Christ and Culture. They are all different names but the same phenomenon.

## 2. Witnesses Flourishing

Hauerwas argues that Christian theologians who dive into a dialogue with culture lack a normative form of theology or ethics. Regarding the New Culture movement in the 1970s in the US and a group of theologians rushing into constructing a dialogue with the culture without hesitation, Hauerwas worries, "Theology is a normative discipline."<sup>43</sup> It means theology should deal with a set of norms or rules of what constitutes human life by which people can test, observe, and judge their related subjects. And it includes ethics, philosophies, logic, politics, etc.<sup>44</sup> It does not mean that Hauerwas agrees with those in this discipline. But at least there is a way of doing theology or ethics to set up the

---

43) Stanley Hauerwas, "Theology and the New American Culture: A Problematic Relationship," *Review of Politics*, vol. 34, no. 4 (October 1972), 71. Interestingly, the New Left who led a New Culture movement in 1970s in the US led the the protests in France in 1968, which affected de Certeau. See Cynthia Kaufman, *Ideas for Action: Relevant Theory for Radical Change* (Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2003); Grant Farred, "Endgame Identity? Mapping the New Left Roots of Identity Politics," *New Literary History*, vol. 31, no. 4 (2000): 627-48.

44) John W. Robb, "In Defense of Ethics as a Normative Discipline," *Religious Education*, vol. 72, no. 4 (Jul-Aug 1977), 373-382; Stanley Hauerwas, "Abortion and Normative Ethics: A Critical Appraisal of Calahan and Grisez," *Cross Currents*, vol. 21, no.4 (Fall 1971): 399-414.

logic to construct one's own argument. The article about the relationship between de Certeau and Hauerwas does not follow this rule but only gives a descriptive and impressionistic account of ideas. As "a normative discipline," Hauerwas says, "[T]he first job of the ethicist is to state the position he thinks closer to the truth, regardless of whether men adhere to it or not."<sup>45)</sup> That is a way in which one finds an alternative to their ethical problems. "Otherwise the right or wrong of any act would be determined simply by common opinion."<sup>46)</sup>

For Hauerwas, Christians are people living in a different time and a community of the Holy Spirit. Space is always filled with people living in history, perceiving and living different times and stories. So what kind of time does Hauerwas's theological ethics mean about the church's colonial existence in the world? It is an eschatological and apocalyptic time.<sup>47)</sup> Adding to Hauerwas's use of de Certeau's distinction, Wells argues that Hauerwas is not arguing about separate or different space between the church and the others, but about "a different time," derived from "the eschatological" notion of time.<sup>48)</sup> Thus, it is not about which space or fortress the church or the other takes as their place to take advantage and determine the future, but about which time, and therefore, which life the church is living out their stories and convictions.

After investigating de Certeau's writings, Bauerschmidt concludes, "I

---

45) Hauerwas, "Abortion and Normative Ethics," 401.

46) Hauerwas, "Abortion and Normative Ethics," 401.

47) Wells, *Transforming Fate*, 142.

48) Wells, *Transforming Fate*, 116.



believe that one can give a more positive assessment of that possibility than de Certeau finally does.”<sup>49)</sup> I believe that is Stanley Hauerwas. Although he never analyzes de Certeau’s theology, Hauerwas can give the Christians living and surviving in postmodernism a rigid and hopeful suggestion that is a truthful witness to Jesus Christ. Hauerwas always argues that the church and the Christians are to be witnesses to God in Jesus. By being a truthful witness to Christ, Hauerwas means that you should be a church speaking the truth. And it can be interpreted in diverse ways in various contexts, as in the introduction. Critiques of Hauerwas might ask, “Which church or witness is Hauerwas depicting?” Hauerwas provides some examples as witnesses exemplified in his writings. One recent case appears in his book, *Approaching the End*.<sup>50)</sup> It is a brief story about Maison Shalom orphanage in Burundi, founded by Maggy Barankitse. After the severe and brutal ethnic violence and homicide between Hutus and Tutsis, children from both ethnic groups were left without parents. Maggy Barankitse did not just walk but started to raise four Hutu children and three Tutsis children without discrimination. Nowadays, the orphanage has become a haven for more than 10,000 children. As an embodiment of the truth, she ‘speaks’ the truth, saying, “love has made me crazy.”<sup>51)</sup> Hauerwas affirms that a true witness is a martyr throughout the church’s history, not because they are killed, but because they speak the truth.

---

49) Bauerschmidt, “Abrahamic Voyage,” 18.

50) Stanley Hauerwas, *Approaching the End: Eschatological Reflections on Church, Politics, and Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013), 56-57.

51) Hauerwas, *Approaching the End*, 56. Cf., Emmanuel Katongole, *The Sacrifice of Africa: A Political Theology for Africa* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 193.

## V. Conclusion

There needs to be better communication between Hauerwas and his critiques throughout the years. In Korea, it needs more to clarify what Hauerwas actually has said. I understand that thinkers like de Certeau seem to provide what Hauerwas might lack, that is, the interrelationship of humans with God or, simply, transcendence. But the claim that he expands his ethics on the basis of de Certeau's concept of tactic is suspicious and must be reconsidered, for Hauerwas does neither embrace nor even endorse any other theology or philosophy of de Certeau except his helpful distinction between strategy and tactic. To argue with this claim and provide a possible alternative, this article has provided three layers of argument. First, Hauerwas simply uses de Certeau's description of strategy and tactic without using the norms of de Certeau. He adds his theology to de Certeau's description. Second, de Certeau is a postmodernist and uses the same Kantian framework that universalizes everyday practice, his theory seems to be against the Constantinian church, though. Third, Hauerwas is not a friend of postmodernism in which one should choose a side, but encourages one to be a truthful witness to Christ by speaking the truth. In that task, "Christians can not only survive, but even flourish."<sup>52)</sup>

---

52) Hauerwas, *A Better Hope*, 46.

## Bibliography

- Anscombe, G. E. M. *Intention*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957.
- Bauerschmidt, Frederick C. "The Abrahamic Voyage: Michel de Certeau and Theology," *Modern Theology*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Jan. 1996): 1-26.
- De Certeau, Michel. "How Is Christianity Thinkable Today?" in *The Postmodern God: A Theological Reader*, ed. Graham Ward. *Blackwell Readings in Modern Theology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1997, 142-155.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Trans. Steven Rendali. Los Angeles, CA: Berkeley University of California Press, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "La Faiblesse de Croire," *Esprit* (April-May 1977): 231-245.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Faire de l'Histoire Problèmes de Méthodes et Problèmes de Sens." *Recherches de Science Religieuse*, Vol. 58 (1970): 481-520.
- Espín, Orlando O. and James B. Nickoloff, eds. *An Introductory Dictionary of Theology and Religious Studies*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007.
- Farred, Grant. "Endgame Identity? Mapping the New Left Roots of Identity Politics." *New Literary History*, Vol. 31, No. 4 (2000): 627-48.
- Hauerwas, Stanley. *Approaching the End: Eschatological Reflections on Church, Politics, and Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A Better Hope: Resources for a Church Confronting Capitalism, Democracy, and Postmodernity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2000.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Christian in the Hands of Flaccid Secularists: Theology and 'Moral Inquiry' in the Modern University," *Ethical Perspectives*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (1997): 32-44.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *After Christendom? How the Church is to behave if freedom, justice, and a Christian nation are bad ideas*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Theology and the New American Culture: A Problematic Relationship." *Review of Politics*, Vol. 34, No. 4 (October 1972): 71-90.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Abortion and Normative Ethics: A Critical Appraisal of Calahan and Grisez." *Cross Currents*, Vol. 21, No.4 (Fall 1971): 399-414.
- Katongole, Emmanuel. *The Sacrifice of Africa: A Political Theology for Africa*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011.
- Kaufman, Cynthia. *Ideas for Action: Relevant Theory for Radical Change*. Cambridge, MA: South End Press, 2003.
- Kim, Seung Hwan, "A Study on Reflective Walking as Urban Spatial Practice: Focusing on Michel de Certeau and Stanley Hauerwas," *Christian Social Ethics*, 53 (2022): 205-235.
- Robb, John W. "In Defense of Ethics as a Normative Discipline." *Religious Education*, Vol. 72, No. 4 (Jul-Aug 1977), 373-382.
- Rosemann, Philipp W. "Risk of Tradition: With de Certeau toward a Postmodern Catholic Theory." *Journal of Moral Theology*, Vol. 10, No. 2 (2021): 90-118.
- Said, Edward. *The Edward Said Reader*, ed. Moustafa Bayoumi and Andrew Rubin. New York: Vintage, 2000.
- Susam-Sarajeva, Şebnem. *Theories on the Move: Translation role in the travels of literary theories*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006.
- Ward, Graham, ed. *Blackwell Readings in Modern Theology*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1997.
- Wells, Samuel. *Transforming Fate Into Destiny: The Theological Ethics of Stanley Hauerwas*. Cumbria, U.K.: Paternoster, 1998.
- Whittington, Richard. "Greatness Takes Practice: On Practice Theory's Relevance to 'Great Strategy'." *Strategy Science*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (March 2018): 343-351.

논문투고일: 2023년 06월 30일

심사개시일: 2023년 07월 16일

게재확정일: 2023년 08월 13일

---

• ABSTRACT •

---

## Theological and Ethical Differences Between Stanley Hauerwas and Michel de Certeau

Adjunct Professor Heejun Kim(Namseoul University)

This paper examines the theological and ethical differences between Stanley Hauerwas, an American Christian ethicist, and Michel de Certeau, a French philosopher. Hauerwas defends himself against the criticism of being sectarian by using de Certeau's conceptual distinction between "strategy" and "tactic" in his book, *After Christendom?* However, it has been argued that Hauerwas goes beyond merely employing de Certeau's functional description and develops the concept of "pilgrimage" for his ethics. This paper contends that such an argument is somewhat problematic. To support this claim, the paper examines actual instances where Hauerwas cites de Certeau and explores the connections and differences between Hauerwas and de Certeau, seeking to determine whether there is indeed a close connection or notable distinctions. By demonstrating that de Certeau, who directly supports postmodernism and political movements, differs theologically and philosophically from Hauerwas, the paper highlights the necessity of normative claims in ethical and theological discourse and suggests that descriptive approaches must be accompanied by normative assertions to serve as creative alternatives. Consequently, it argues that Hauerwas is significantly more normative, public, and creative than de Certeau or postmodern theology and Christian ethics.

**Key words:** Stanley Hauerwas, Michel de Certeau, Church Ethic, Postmodern Theology, Christian Ethics

---