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To Members of the Association for Communication  
and Theological Education

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

Here is the first "Newsletter" which was requested by participants at the February conference at Yale Divinity School.

Many of you have written letters of encouragement, and quite a few have supplied information which should be helpful to all. Nineteen new people have called or written indicating their interest in the area of communication and theological education, and asking to be added to the mailing list.

Since so many excellent documents have come in, I am sending this as a "packet" of materials rather than trying to compress the information into a single newsletter. This way you can take what is of interest and discard the rest.

Let me know if you find this approach useful. The WACC has kindly provided a small budget to allow for the duplication and mailing of the materials.

The packet includes:

Names and addresses of members of the Association: participants in the February meeting, plus the nineteen who have asked to be put on the mailing list since then.

Two presentations from the February conference:

"Communication Studies and Theological Studies," by Charles M. Wood, which was not then available in quantity.

"What Does Communication Science Say About the Communication of Faith?" by Clifford Christians; this is Cliff's revised version.

Two speeches delivered at a conference on "Ethics and Global Communication," June 21-23, 1992, held at the Church Center for the United Nations, New York:

"A Theological and Ethical Perspective on Global Communication," by Dr. Kim Yong-Bock, President of Hanil Theological Seminary, Korea.

"Ethnic Discourse and the New World Disorder: a Communitarian Perspective," by Dr. Majjid Tehranian, Director of the Matsunaga Institute for Peace, University of Hawaii.

"A Critique on Church Communication," by Andrew Greeley, from the Newsletter of the Asia Region of the World Association for Christian Communication.

"The Real Task of Practical Theology," by Robin W. Lovin, Dean of Drew Theological School, from the Christian Century magazine.

Two new syllabi from Dr. Jeffrey Mahan at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Chicago:

"Studies in Popular Culture: Myth, Religion and Story"

"Media for Ministry and Mission"

Two pages of resources from the Media and Values Winter 1992 issue:

"Watch, Read, Listen: Resources for Follow-up"

"Where To We Go From Here: Resources for Media Literacy"

Let me hear from you if any of these documents are particular useful, or if you find this merely a paper blizzard of little value. If you do not wish to remain on the mailing list, let me know.

And please send me your latest: course outline, a particularly helpful article or speech, a "find" in the area of communication, culture and theological education. Especially, send any names of persons you think might be interested in this area of inquiry: graduate students, colleagues, contacts.

I will try to get the next "edition" of materials out to you after the fall semester, which at Yale means sometime in February 1993.

Suggestions, ideas, or comments regarding next steps? Call me at 203-245-3938, or write to the address above.

Cordially,



William F. Fore  
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Note: If anyone else wishes to receive a full set of the 32 course outlines presented at the conference, they can get a set with index by sending a check to me for \$20. A dozen sets have gone out this summer. This price includes mailing it overseas by sea mail.

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## COMMUNICATION STUDIES AND THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

The title given to this presentation in the published program is "What is the Theological Significance of Teaching Communication?" On the basis of that title, you may be expecting me to deal with the meaning of it all, and to relate the teaching of communication to Life, the Universe, and Everything. However, having read in the "Seoul Manifesto" of the World Association for Christian Communication that "it is the Holy Spirit who enables all communication,"<sup>1</sup> I'm not sure what more there is to say. Indeed, mindful of the Pauline admonition in Ephesians 4:30, I am not sure I would have said that much.<sup>2</sup>

In any case, I have a more modest hope for this presentation--as, I assure you, does Mr. Fore, from whom I have this assignment. I will be talking, not about the theological significance of teaching communication, but about the significance of communication studies for theological studies, and, at least by implication, about the significance of the teaching of communication for theological education. My aim is to help to prepare the way for some fruitful discussion, throughout this consultation, of the nature of and the relationship between these two sets of studies and these two enterprises.

I claim no responsibility, then, for the title that appears in your program. It is probably not necessary to say to this group that I also claim no expertise in the field of communication studies. I hope to learn something about that field through this consultation. My expertise, such as it is, has to do with the notion of theological studies, and what I have to say to you will manifest a certain imbalance on that account. My reflections are in three parts. First, I will summarize very briefly some recent developments in the study of theological study. Second, to illustrate those developments and help us think about their possible implications, I will sketch out my own constructive proposal for the conduct of theological study and theological education. And third, I will pose some questions as to how the relationship between communication studies and theological studies might be conceived in light of these recent developments.

### I.

What knowledge I have of the study of theological study itself arises mainly out of my involvement for nearly ten years now in the "Issues Research Program" of the Association of Theological Schools--a program that has by now brought a good many people in North American theological schools into an ongoing conversation about theological education, and that has resulted in a fair number of publications concerning the aims of theological study and

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1. Communication in Theological Education: The Seoul Manifesto (pamphlet; London: World Association for Christian Communication, n.d.), #6.

2. "Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:29-30).

theological education, the ways these enterprises might be restructured so as better to realize those aims, the contexts in which these enterprises are carried on, the training of people to carry them on, and so forth.<sup>1</sup> In a review of this decade of research, David Kelsey and Barbara Wheeler identify three points at which the reflections it has produced have challenged conventional assumptions about these enterprises, assumptions that have governed our discourse and our practice for a very long time. These points have to do with the goal, the movement, and the structure of theological study.<sup>2</sup>

First, as to the overarching goal or aim of theological education: The conventional view is that the purpose of theological education is to prepare people for what we Methodists used to call "full-time Christian service"--that is, for remunerative employment as pastors, chaplains, directors of religious education, and the like, with the ordained pastor in charge of a congregation more or less as the norm. Theological education is what equips that person to do that job; and if decisions are to be made about the content and conduct of theological education, the criterion by which these decisions are made is that of effective preparation for this kind of work. The terms "theological education," "ministerial education," and "education for church leadership" are thus all pretty well synonymous.

The challenge to this conventional view in the recent work on theological education has not usually taken the form of outright rejection. As Kelsey and Wheeler observe, the critics of the standard assumption are not "opposed to competence in the clergy"<sup>3</sup>; further, they are generally agreed that theological study has something to do with that competence. What they (or we) oppose is the simple identification of theological education with education for church leadership--an identification that implies, on the one hand, that what unifies the various branches or aspects of theological study is their common orientation to that goal, and, on the other hand, that whatever education prepares persons for church leadership is ipso facto theological education. Rather than so identify the two, those of us in the current discussion want to distinguish them.

Now, to distinguish is not necessarily to separate; it can also be to relate. The question of the relationship of theological study to education for ministry or for church leadership is, then, another item on the agenda of this

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1. See W. Clark Gilpin, "Basic Issues in Theological Education: A Selected Bibliography," Theological Education 25 (1989): 115-121, on the literature produced in connection with this program.

2. David H. Kelsey and Barbara G. Wheeler, "Thinking About Theological Education: The Implications of "Issues Research" for Criteria of Faculty Excellence," Theological Education 28 (1991): 11-26.

3. Ibid., p. 17.

research.<sup>1</sup> The answer to that question will depend on what alternative view of the overarching goal of theological education is put forth. While there is something of an emerging consensus on this point, namely, that the goal is the development of a particular kind of competence, there are also some significant differences of judgment as to just what kind, and what it is a competence for.

Second, as to the basic movement of theological education, or the dynamics of the process: Recent writers have challenged the conventional and deeply-rooted notion that theological education is a movement from theory to practice. Indeed, some challenge the very terms in which this issue is normally discussed: "theory" and "practice," the "theoretical" disciplines and the "practical" disciplines, the problem of "applying" theory to practice, of "bridging the gap" between them, or of "integrating" the theoretical and the practical aspects. Here, this research draws upon a variety of resources in contemporary philosophy, psychology, educational study, and other fields, but perhaps most of all upon decades of collective experience with curriculum reviews and faculty discussions in which framing the problem in terms of theory and practice has gotten us exactly nowhere.

What is to take the place of "theory and practice" is, again, a matter of only partial consensus in the recent literature. The consensus, as I read it, is on two points. One is that the theory-to-practice model must be replaced by some model which recognizes the way experience and conduct rightly inform thinking, and not merely the other way around. The other is that, insofar as theological education works, it works not so much by equipping the learner with a new theory, that is, a new body of information, to be applied to practice, as by bringing about a deeper change: by equipping the learner with new ways of perceiving, new abilities, even new dispositions. This applies as much to, say, biblical studies as it does to pastoral care. In consequence, the neat division of curricular areas into the "academic" and the "practical," into those which impart "knowledge," on the one hand, and those which (merely) impart "skills," on the other, is seen as a very dubious affair. Even the distinction between theological education and personal or spiritual formation, important and valid as it is, needs some new sorting out.<sup>2</sup> When it comes to the constructive articulation of these two points of consensus--the development of alternatives to the theory-to-practice model, and the development of a more adequate understanding of theological learning--the current proposals are varied.

Third, as to the structure of theological study: There is a nearly unanimous judgment in the recent literature that the traditional "fourfold curriculum" of biblical, historical, systematic, and practical studies has long outlived whatever rationale it may once have enjoyed, and serves us ill. It persists

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1. For one approach, see Charles M. Wood, "An Invitation to Theological Study," Perkins Journal 42/2-3 (April-July 1989): 1-6, and "Theological Education and Education for Church Leadership," Quarterly Review 10 (1990): 65-81.

2. See Charles M. Wood, "'Spiritual Formation' and 'Theological Education,'" Religious Education 86 (1991): 550-561.

mainly for sociological and political reasons having to do with the traditions of scholarship and of the accreditation of scholarship in the various areas, with the formation of "disciplines" and "professions" in modern culture, with the complex relationships among seminary, university, and church, and with the inertia of ingrained habits of discourse and patterns of association. Its original rationale was largely dependent upon the conventional assumption about the overall aim of theological study (i.e., the preparation of pastoral leadership), and it has also been tied very closely with the conventional assumption about the movement of theological study (i.e., from theory to practice). It is a structure very difficult to shake, even with the best of wills and intentions. When we turn from the observation that the fourfold pattern is problematic to the envisioning of alternatives to it, again we find a variety of proposals, ranging from the rearrangement and reinvigoration of existing disciplines, through their replacement with a different array of disciplines, to the abolition of disciplines altogether (a sort of utopian fantasy, but, like other such fantasies, potentially useful).

## II.

My own book, Vision and Discernment: An Orientation in Theological Study (Scholars Press, 1985), was a fairly early product of the "issues research" program. It offers a some proposals as to how we might conceive of the goal, movement, and structure of theological study and of theological education that I want to outline for you simply to show in a little more specificity how the three challenges just mentioned might be constructively met.

The goal of theological education is best conceived, in my judgment, as the fostering of an aptitude for theological reflection. In order for that assertion to be at all informative, I need to tell you what I mean by "theological reflection" and what is involved in acquiring and possessing an aptitude for it.

Christian theological reflection (there are other sorts, but I take it that this is the sort that concerns us here) is critical inquiry into the validity of Christian witness. It is the "second-order" activity of examining and making some judgments about a prior, ongoing "first-order" activity, namely, the life and work of the Christian community. (We could also call that first-order activity "the Christian tradition," or "the church's proclamation of the Gospel," or use any of a number of other terms to designate what I will be calling "Christian witness." In any case, the subject-matter of the reflection is some attempt to communicate the gospel, whether in words, actions, architecture, music, or by some other form.) Those judgments may be retrospective (e.g., assessing the past action of some Christian community or individual) or prospective (e.g., trying to determine what one, or one's community, ought to do to carry out the Christian witness, and weighing the merits of various possibilities).

To possess an aptitude for such reflection is both to have an ability for it, and to be disposed to exercise that ability under the appropriate circumstances. Neither the ability nor the disposition by itself is sufficient, which is why theological education must engage both head and heart, must not only teach students how to think theologically but also persuade them that it is a good and needful thing to do so. For most of the students in our theological schools, this means enabling them to understand and to affirm what theological reflection has to do with the vocations in church leadership

for which they are preparing. A large part of the work of theological education is done, or undone, at just that point.

This brings us to the question of the movement of theological study and theological education. If the necessity just mentioned is framed in terms of the application of theological theory to the practice of ministry, theological education will be quite predictably undone. The alternative I would advocate is to think of theological education as a process of reflection, under supervision, on the church's practice: of learning to form judgments by forming judgments, and then having both those judgments and the process by which one arrived at them subjected to examination by someone with a little more competence who can provide some suggestions as to what went wrong and how to do better next time.

This supervised reflection on practice gradually produces and refines a capacity for judgment that operates through a constant movement between two poles, or perhaps two mental modes, that I have called "vision" and "discernment." The first is a capacity for synthesis, for seeing the big picture and making connections; the second is a capacity for analysis, for noticing what is distinctive about a given situation or problem so that it can be addressed in its specificity. Perhaps the most serious gap in most thinking about theological education, at least in the mainline Protestant tradition, is a general neglect of discernment as something that can and must be taught and learned. Our conventional way of talking about moving from "theory"--the big picture--to "practice" embodies and encourages this neglect. The movement of theological education, just like the movement of theological reflection itself, is best conceived as a reciprocal process in which both vision and discernment are used and, in use, constantly strengthened and deepened.

What does this imply for the structure of theological study and learning? First of all, it implies a discarding of the conventional division between theoretical and practical disciplines or areas of the curriculum, or between "knowledge" courses and "skills" courses. Second, it implies a reordering of the disciplinary and curricular structure in a way that will better serve the aim of the endeavor. My own proposal for this (probably nearer to utopian fantasy than to sober expectation) involves a restructuring of theological inquiry and of theological education governed by a consideration of what reflection on the validity of Christian witness involves. As I see it, the question of validity has three components. There is the question of the authenticity of the witness: of whether it really represents what it claims to represent, the gospel of Jesus Christ. There is the question of the truth of the witness: of whether it is, as its proponents say it is, true and worthy of acceptance. And there is the question of whether this witness is (or was, or will be) fittingly enacted--of whether it is being related to the specific situation of proclamation in such a way that the truth and life it represents might actually be heard or felt and accepted. I have gone so far as to project some imaginary theological disciplines corresponding to these three dimensions of theological inquiry; but I doubt that these will catch on anytime soon, and I will not further complicate this sketch by bringing them in. (I console myself with the thought that Schleiermacher's proposal for the reform

of theological study met with no success in his lifetime.)<sup>1</sup>

### III.

The question of the relationship between communication studies and theological studies might be posed this way: Where, if anywhere, do communication studies fit into theological studies? If anything is clear from what I have said so far, it should be the fact that to pose the question in this way is likely to lead to trouble. At least two things are wrong with it. First, it seems to assume that both terms--communication studies and theological studies--represent clear, coherent, agreed-upon concepts. It would be more honest and realistic to recognize that both terms are used in a variety of ways, none of which is commonly accepted as normative, and that these ways may not cohere. Second, this way of posing the question seems to put the burden of proof on communication studies: they have to fit in, to justify themselves somehow within a taken-for-granted arrangement of theological study; they have to vindicate their role there, and that means showing that they either belong within existing theological subdisciplines or constitute one or more new subdisciplines conceived along the lines of existing ones. It would be better to avoid giving that sort of privilege to the theological status quo.

The authors of the Seoul Manifesto "see communication as an increasingly well-defined and distinct field of study" with "an important contribution to make to the doing of theology. It is essentially a multi-disciplinary area, ranging from communication skills and techniques through critical analysis of communication to reflection on the theology and ecclesiastical implications of communication."<sup>2</sup> I confess that the definition and distinctiveness of this field or area of study still eludes me after reading this, and it is at this point that I need some basic instruction from those in the field. To be sure, there are many points in theological study and education, however understood, at which the pertinence of the work of students of communication is clear. In my own scheme--in which, for that matter, theological study as a whole might be viewed as the study of communication--insights and methods that I take to be associated with communication studies are relevant to all three dimensions of theological inquiry: to the quest for authenticity (e.g., in hermeneutics and exegesis), to the investigation of truth (e.g., in logic, rhetoric, philosophy of language), and perhaps most of all to the question of fitting enactment (e.g., as an aspect of cultural analysis relevant to understanding the context, and as reflection on the means of communication of the gospel). When they are so appropriated, these methods, insights, and so forth become part of the process of theological inquiry, just as historical, philosophical, and social-scientific resources more generally are brought into

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1. The formal structure of my threefold scheme is more akin to Barth's than to Schleiermacher's. Barth identifies three main questions theology has to raise about the church's talk about God: Does it derive from Jesus Christ? Does it lead to him? Does it accord with him? For Barth, these are all interdependent components of the one question about the truth, and "Jesus Christ" is the criterion of the truth. See Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics I/1, tr. G. W. Bromiley (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975), pp. 4-5.

2. Seoul Manifesto, #5.

service to theology.

But if communication studies in their various forms are part and parcel of theological studies, another question besides that of the basic definition or demarcation of the field of communication studies arises: What rationale might there be for identifying communication studies as a special field within or related to theological studies? What, if anything, is to be gained by bringing together such varied pursuits under the banner of communication studies?

Let me close by mentioning four possible analogies to communication studies for consideration: religious studies, Near Eastern studies, Hispanic studies, and women's studies. Each is a multi-disciplinary enterprise. Each might be thought to have a significant contribution to make to theological study and teaching, and each has found a place in the life of some theological schools. The rationale for the formation of the field, the sort of role it plays in theological study, and the reasons for its being there, differ in each case. How are communication studies like and unlike these four? Perhaps by exploring some such analogies we can better articulate the potential of communication studies for theology and theological education.

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[for a Consultation on Communication in Theological Education,  
Yale Divinity School, 22 February 1992]

Yale Divinity School  
February 21-23, 1992

"What Does Communication Science Say About  
the Communication of Faith?"

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Descartes' ego cogito towered over the Enlightenment mind. The subject-object dichotomy which it presumed, framed debates over epistemology -- that between the Continental Rationalists and British Empiricists, for example. Political philosophy split off the atomistic self from the social order, and perpetrated the absurdity that an aggregate of individual rights equals the common good.

Reflections on communications followed the same trajectory. John Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding devoted all of book III to communications and established the 18th century boundaries on it. His influential monograph reached the streets and domiciles; it appeared in more editions than the philosophical classics of Bacon, Berkeley, Descartes, Hegel, Hobbes, Kant, Leibniz or Spinoza. As Newton's writings did for the physical world, Locke's Essay also inspired the popular imagination. Mental life is individual, ahistorical, and asocial, declares Book III, and the birthplace of language. To communicate between isolated integers, information enters the public domain, and if pure, "excites in the hearer exactly the same idea that stands in the mind of the speaker." The invisible self, the mind's inner sanctum, self-enclosed and incommunicado, generates meaning for Locke and must be protected from unwarranted intrusion. One aspect of the Enlightenment project, therefore, was to guarantee unfettered communication. But the conundrum of the Lockean tradition is obvious: while seeking to enhance understanding, an abundant flow violently intrudes on that sacred arena of personal meaning which ought to remain opaque in order to preserve one's private hiding place.

Communication also made philosophical headlines with the mathematician Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, who initiated the Enlightenment in Germany. Although he opposed French skepticism, his notion of windowless monads resonated well with Enlightenment individualism as a whole. As he developed his monadology doctrine in Vienna under Prince Eugene, he cast the issues in terms of Cartesian dualism. With the isolation of the cogito and the reduction of all corporeal reality to bare extension, the very possibility of communication as such needed to be established. In a world of pure mind-monads, without windows, no communication occurs at all. According to Leibniz, on the screen of each mind a private film unfolds, as it were, showing the whole world. That these films harmoniously correspond and reflect one another merely underlines their incommunicability; there are parallels,

simulcasts, but with no cross-connections among them.

However, in Leibniz's system, with God as the origin of their being and their mutual harmony, even the monad-minds can communicate, if not on a conscious level then at any rate in their essence and existence. Like up-links to satellites, communication with God connects monads with each other. God is regarded as the universal communicator. It is God who imparts being to all who exist, and as the God of salvation, desires intimate communication with His creatures. As in the Platonic tradition of thought, the finite participates in the infinite and receives the essence communicated by it. With Kant and the German Idealists the universal communicator 'God' is replaced by the unity of the transcendental Ego. There is robust communication within our deepest selves and with God, but in the public sphere, danger and corruption.

Even the Enlightenment's romantic wing squeezed communication into these reductionist parameters. Jean Jacques Rousseau is a complicated figure. He refused to be coopted by Descartes' rationalism, Newton's mechanistic cosmology, or Locke's egoistic selves. His noble savage in Emile, at harmony and peace in a state of nature, is the flesh-and-blood opposite of Leibniz's windowless monads. His Social Contract is superior to more static contractarian theories; it champions popular sovereignty while answering Hobbes. Jacques Derrida's Of Grammatology recognizes Rousseau's formidable sophistication. Two-thirds of this semiotics of writing concentrates on Rousseau. For the Enlightenment generally, writing is progress, necessary for complicated civilizations. But Derrida sees in Rousseau an alternative. His Essay on the Origins of Language and Discourse on Inequality seemed to turn conventional understanding on its head. Writing, says Rousseau, entrenches the dominance of reason and easily leads to misconceptions. However, for Derrida, even this revisionism was hampered by Rousseau's crusading self-determination: "I long for a time," he wrote, "when freed from the fetters of the body, I shall be myself, at one with myself, ... when I myself shall suffice for my own happiness." Protecting ourselves from external controls that may demean and impound us prevented Rousseau, in Derrida's view, from recognizing foursquare that writing during the formative 18th century was a tool of exploitation rather than liberation.

This is the transmission model. Knowledge is built-up and communicated brick-by-brick. The communication process between two units is isolated from sender and receiver. The aim is clarity, efficiency in the message. Democratic societies protect it by a sacred First Amendment. We call it the S-R model and go after the in-between, calibrating it empirically, insisting on a feed back loop, and quantifying the noise in the channel. It presumes Descartes' subject-object dualism, and separates off the linkage, puts into mathematical form the message bits and presumes the non-contingency of information in order to facilitate scientific prediction and control.

It is not a model crackling with intelligence, but the atomistic/mechanistic paradigm gives vaunted status to empiricists when formal mass communication research begins in the twentieth century. Studies of political communication, for example, were sparked by concern over manipulation in totalitarian governments with Harold Lasswell founding an

Institute of Propaganda Analysis in 1917. Meanwhile, radio turned into a promoter's dream as it developed during the 1920s. Pepsodent sponsored Amos and Andy, and its sales increased 70 percent the first year. A host of today's prominent products achieved their recognition initially from the newly formed networks: Bayer, Goodrich, Sieberling, Wheaties, Bulova, Eveready, Pepsi-Cola, Firestone, and Texaco. In order to maximize advertising success, official market research received vigorous commercial funding.

These two beginnings -- political and commercial -- eventually spawned different research styles, some casual and others functional, many sociological in scope and several more psychological, debating among themselves the hypodermic needle concept and two-step flow. However, these variations are only nuances of methodology. Mass communications research since its origin 75 years ago has been fundamentally empiricistic and committed to the Stimulus-Response motif as primary model.

The historic achievements in this genre are Shannon and Weaver's information theory in 1948 -- a mathematical model of linear signalling -- and Norbert Wiener's cybernetics, both scientific discoveries born of a post WWII mythology that social problems are susceptible to engineering solutions.

The accomplishments are worth noting. We understand more clearly now the significance of audience demographics. Some differences among the media -- their varying purposes and potential -- have been stipulated. Media messages can be delivered today with greater impact. We speak more informatively about stimulus variables, perception, and attitude change. These ideas and more have advanced our insight. Sociometric scales have forced explicitness, about the way children read the television text, for instance.

A few modest gains are apparent within the Christian community as well. Effects research has helped lead charge against broadcast vices such as violence and obscenity. Students of communications have marketed and packaged that "first class product," the Gospel. Statistics are now available for the media's economy of scale--which devices reach the largest number at lowest cost. Audiences receive increasing attention also; more precise demographics, have expanded our efficiency by gearing medium and message directly to listeners. Communication experts have shown that Christianity tends to tolerate substandard techniques rather than exploiting the latest hardware and inserting committed printers and broadcasters into its operation. The socio-psychological dimension is often invoked also as a technique for improving effectiveness; unless we know where people get touched emotionally, Jim Engel suggests, the harvest will continue to falter. We can now write public relations material for the local church more professionally. We use the transmission view to polish our preaching techniques and improve religious education. We understand empirically how ministers, priests or rabbis are portrayed in primetime entertainment. In fact, there is a vast literature of this sort; Stewart Hoover knows it better than I do and critiques it more powerfully.

In spite of good intentions and Herculean effort, communication witnesses an ever-lengthening agenda of unresolved issues. The received view

has produced an elegant handling of details, but present issues demand a different statement of problems and theoretical inventiveness. The technically rigid left-to-right transportation model appears congenitally inadequate for the broader problems which trouble us now. Equipped with a method, we are producing mountains of information; but we lack a conceptual framework that provides connections and perspective.

The received view is a friendly companion, and has a blue ribbon pedigree reaching deep into Enlightenment heavyweights. But it doesn't pound on seminary or ecclesiastical doors with much authority. As long as the atomistic/mechanistic definition of communication has hegemony, theological education need not take it seriously. It has had bigger fish to fry, than integrating the received view into its curriculum. Cramped into Enlightenment parameters, the transportation model is little more than the crumbs left over by sociology, psychology, economics, and linguistics. Maybe communication's immaturity is responsible for its current disquietude. S-R theory is like giving a hedge clippers to an unemployed family putting their belongings on the street because they've defaulted on their loan. On the negative side, the neutrality model beguiles us into believing media technologies are neutral. Quin Schultze has documented how the mass media's technological power coopts the tele-evangelists' gospel.

### Symbolic Theory

A paradigm shift has occurred in communication studies, as in social science as a whole. Out of inertia or lethargy, the majority of communication scholars have assumed a priestly role as cultic guardians of the received view; they are busy, in Thomas Kuhn's terms, doing normal science. Most research monies still support studies which measure observable behavior, finding in such results the precision they desire. Meanwhile, some scholars seek more elaborate and finely tuned procedures, more complex multivariate scales, faster computer banks, and longer range experiments trusting that improved methods will eliminate previous weaknesses.

A multiplying number, however, sense deeply that communications needs a fresh theoretical foundation and a solid set of intellectual questions. A watershed change to interpretativeness has happened in principle. George Gerbner's Journal of Communication labelled the shift, "Ferment in the Field." Many theorists recognize that a model which happily married political and commercial concerns to the engineering mentality of the prestigious sciences has about fully accomplished its potential. A noted insider, Joseph Klapper himself regrets that after years at the "inexhaustible fount of variables" a systematic description of effects and their predictive applications "becomes the more distant as it is the more vigorously pursued."

Today the received view is breaking up beneath our feet and the protest grows. We recognize that mathematical theories of communication are a human invention and not a body of objective truths as the Enlightenment mistakenly assumed. Though the scientific method made stupendous gains in the natural world generating empirically testable causal explanations, territorialists correctly insist that the mechanistic motif ought not overwhelm the study of society as well. Paul Feyerabend has documented that scientific study is

itself conditioned by belief systems and ideological commitments. Indeed the repudiation of Scientism has been carried forward by a broad range of scholarship from the Frankfurt School to Karl Popper. The epistemological foundation of social science is being reestablished wholesale -- over against Auguste Comte (1798-1859) who founded the new discipline "sociology" on the natural-scientific model.

This conference is convened at an auspicious time, at a *chairs* moment in the history of the field. While the transmission view may have little to recommend it, I believe that a symbolic theory of communication deserves to penetrate deeply into the academic life of seminaries. The interpretive turn is a disinfectant for the moldy conventions which govern ecclesiastical use of the media as well. Interpretive research in the Counter-Enlightenment mode seeks insightful pictures rather than lawlike abstractions through fixed procedures. Parsimonious generalizations are still important, as they have been since William of Ockham, but only those arising from a fully developed introspective capacity, from a poetic resonance with the data as Herbert Blumer calls it. The interpretive turn recovers the fact of human agency, that is, intentions, purposes, and values. Interpretive research, in Clifford Geertz's words, "enlarges the universe of human discourse" and expands the horizons of human existence by making publicly available the manner in which "others have guarded their sheep." Interpretive studies catch hold of the ambulation of history, self-consciously avoiding the assumption that social phenomena are autonomous creations arising by spontaneous combustion.

In communication theory, the Counter-Enlightenment option was established by the Italian philologist Giambattista Vico who refused to be hoist on the Cartesian petard. His philosophy of expressivism is a brilliant achievement, contradicting the dominant doctrine of rational mind. This Professor of Rhetoric at the University of Naples (1699-1741) placed image over concept, language over mathematics, the mythopoetic over facts, fantasia over logic. His highly original theory of imaginative universals was a fundamental assault on the raging tide of his age.

The symbolic motif is nurtured in the 19th century by Wilhelm Dilthey's Erlebnis, Frederick Schleiermacher's Hermeneutik, August Schleier's Comparative Grammar, Jacob Burckhart's Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy (1860), and George Simmel's Problems of Philosophy of History (1892). And it establishes definitive form in an intellectual trajectory from Ferdinand De Saussure's Course in General Linguistics (1916) to Ernst Cassirer's mighty three-volume Philosophy of Symbolic Forms (1925). For Cassirer, symbolization is not merely the hallmark of human cognition; our representational capacity defines us anthropologically. His summary monograph, Cassirer entitles An Essay on Man. He identifies our unique capacity to generate symbolic structures as a radical alternative to animale rationale since classical Greece and biological being of evolutionary naturalism. Arguing that the issues are fundamentally anthropological rather than epistemological per se, Cassirer's creative being is carved out against a reductionism of intellectus and disciplined thinking on the one hand, and a naturalistic neurophysiology and biochemistry on the other.

Animale symbolicum contradicts at its roots the stimulus-response model

in which stimuli are presumed to impact inert receptacles. Cassirer collapses the hoary differences among human symbolic systems. Music, art, philosophical essays, mathematics, religious language, and Bacon's scientific method are placed on a level playing floor. Communication as a symbolic process, James Carey calls the ritual view--rituals being ceremonies or sacraments in which we define meaning and purpose, events of celebration (graduation, weddings, birthdays) and not merely exchanges of information.

Symbol is the critical concept. What atom is to physical science and cell to biology, symbol becomes for communications. Cultures are inter-connections of symbolic forms -- those fundamental units of meaning expressed in words (mention "power" and notice the range of affective responses), gestures (a clenched fist, for example), and graphics (swastikas or a cross burned on the lawn). Realities called "cultures" are inherited and built from symbols which shape our action, identity, thoughts, and sentiment. Communication, therefore, is the creative process of building and reaffirming through symbols, and culture signifies the constructions which result.

Human behavior, in this vision, is symbolic action -- action signifying something, as does phonation in speech, pigment in paintings, sonance in music. Our world is an intricate series of piled-up inference and implication. A twitch of the eye is more than a contracting eyelid and may actually be a mischievous wink or indicate a conspiracy. News reading thus becomes a dramatic act. Readers face, not pure information, but a drama; contending forces are portrayed, nudging one another into patriotism or class antagonisms or resentments or crusading support. Use the verbal symbol "death" and hearers will provide their own range of understanding: cessation of brain waves or heart beat, a disembodied soul meeting God, separation from a human community.

Our differing definitions reflect diverse values and social purposes. Humans stitch together worldviews to orient them and provide social cohesion. We take pieces of cloth and demand that they be respected as our national emblem. Bread signifies Jesus' body, water purifies from wickedness, and "dogs" become despicable persons. Although not identical to that which they symbolize, symbols participate in their meaning and power; they share the significance of that to which they point. In addition, they illuminate their referents so as to make them transparent; they permit us to express levels of reality which otherwise remain hidden. These interpretations are the human world, regardless of the objective reality existing beyond them.

Homo sapiens' creative ability works within the limits of God's design as Creator. A symbolic theory of communication thereby assumes that the Creator's greatest legacy is a creative being. We do not merely exist in a vast museum, but are curators of our own. Our environments are not coded genetically (as with animal instinct), but organized symbolically, i.e. open-endedly. Homo sapiens is the only species which cooks its food; no balanced diets are built into the genes. Instincts produce perennially identical beaver dams and ant hills; cultures are developed and imagined, always transcending biological necessity. Humankind enlarges its environment, the porpoise cannot. Humans readily displace both time and space; animals act only when stimuli are in fact present. We possess creative imagination, the

unusual capacity to describe experience, evaluate action and transmit such to public discussion; animals obviously demonstrate none of these.

Actually I am amplifying Genesis 2:19-20. God creates, we are told, and extends that ability to Adam and Eve so they can organize their environment by means of symbols. They ordered and shaped the world in which God placed them. They tilled a garden, rather than roam the plains. Adam classified animals by giving them particular names and in so doing we sense our peculiar identity. He gave form to the rest of God's creation and in the process found no one like himself; God had to provide Eve.

I appropriate here a semiotic definition, which stands in contrast to anthropology where culture refers to entire civilizations as complex wholes, and in contrast to common parlance where culture is identified as refined manners. Most definitions of culture (certainly those fostered by anthropology) are expansive, encompassing under the term virtually all social activity. Culture is thus said to involve technologies, customs, arts, sciences, products, habits, political and social organizations which characterize a people. I find the broad definition inchoate and distinguish culture from political and social structures, from direct efforts to understand nature (such as chemistry, physics, astronomy), and from religious institutions. Culture thus becomes essentially man's communicative activities and refers primarily to the products of the arts and language. The term is best used in Jacob Burckhardt's sense.

H. Richard Niebuhr recognized that language is the marrow of community. Persons are displayed, made accessible, nurtured, and integrated into social units through symbol, myth, and metaphor. Words for him are concrete forms of life, their meaning derives from an interpretive, historical context humans themselves supply. Symbolic forms are social, not "isolated, separate and therefore meaningless sounds." Our constitutive relations as human beings are linguistic.

Niebuhr's linguistic community destroys the Lockean-Leibnitzean-Rousseau dichotomy. Language from his perspective is the matrix of humanity; it is not privately nurtured and made problematic as it enters the public sphere. Niebuhr holds form and content together; concepts are not isolated from their representations. He weaves the social and individual dimensions of language into a unified whole. The symbolic approach to communication ransoms us from Locke's unproductive question, "How can private and isolated minds engage one another?" Through the social nature of language we integrate the message with communal formation.

Therefore, a new communications medium such as satellites cannot merely be viewed as technologically neutral, as an efficient machine transmitting global messages faster at less cost. Clearly Buckminster Fuller's engineering criterion is patently unacceptable -- arguing as he does the virtue of satellite information because the same volume of data can be transmitted by an instrument 1/700 thousandth the weight of the transatlantic cable. Rather the debate should be centered on cultural imperialism. The smaller nations since World War II have sought political independence from colonial powers and economic independence from transnational corporations. Reflecting the

symbolic character of social organization, they now demand cultural independence. I mean cultural imperialism in the sense of control over a country's information, the dominance by an industrial country over the films, television and news -- the popular culture -- of developing countries. This form of colonialism prevents smaller nations from achieving their own identity, from maintaining cultural continuity. Symbolic theory entails our support for a master plan which guarantees access country-by-country, reserving positions for future use, rather than the principle of first-come first-served favorable to the United States, Western Europe, Japan, and historically to the former U.S.S.R.

Construct a recessionist economy in terms of a mechanical calculus -- the GNP and statistical grids on unemployment and productivity. But reporters take this symbolic realm by the throat; they insert into public discourse today's human suffering and meaningless work. Economists are resigned to busywork on the fringes and politics are traumatized. In a panic Bush chases off to New Hampshire and absorbs a sharp punch from the right.

Speak in sanitized language of trade gaps, the balance of payments, automobile prices, and manufacturing policies. The body politic recognizes something important afoot. But represent the issues in human symbols -- the fat, lazy, and incompetent American worker, for example, and there is ideological warfare on our hands.

Or take Foucault: "You label me 'homosexual' and insert me into an oppressive text. I bear the burden, the hatred of this vengeful discourse. I share a common repression with the insane, slaves, criminals, and those on the guillotine."

"Oh Foucault, we love you."

"My persona does not matter. I do not exist meaningfully outside the text."

Our first existential order, in other words, is a symbolic theatre. Symbol theory has been fertile territory -- hermeneutics, the semiotics of Roland Barthes and Umberto Eco, Paul Tillich's extensive work on symbolic language, and Berkhouwer arguing in his Man: The Image of God that the Scriptures do not define human nature, but stipulate an ongoing relation between God and His creatures (e.g. Psalm 8:4) as the foundation of our uniqueness. Narrative discourse gets special treatment in Bill Fore's pathbreaking analysis of the modern media as myth, and in Quentin Schultze's argument that popular culture serves a religious role in constituting our belief systems. Derrida's sliding signifiers, Stuart Hall's ideological system, Heidegger's house of language, Baudrillard's simulacrum, and Bakhtin's dialogical imagination live out of symbolic theory as well.

However, symbolism's anthropological assumptions need clarification, development, greater articulation. Symbol theory entails a strong claim about homosapiens that demands further intellectual scrutiny, theology playing a formative role. The first generation of scholarship has invented the wheel, but we still have an oxcart. In the various debates over symbolic theory, I

defend one that puts the radically human at its epicenter. All symbolic theories are anti-positivistic, but they accent the problem of communication in different ways: meaning, political economy, interpretation-text-hermeneutics, historicity, ideology, power, and so forth. In effect, I place dialogic theory at the center of a series of increasingly narrow concentric circles -- the Counter-Enlightenment, interpretive theory, and human symbolic capacity.

The ancient Greeks first identified--within Western society, at least--the interpretive impulse as a pervasive condition of human existence. They brought the hermeneutical consciousness into focus. The contemporary mind readily recognizes it. Interpretitiveness is presumed among symbolic theorists today; however, it took Aristotle's genius to locate this human ars interpretandi explicitly within philosophical anthropology, as a property of human being. Aristotle found hermeneia (interpretation) worthy of a major treatise by that title, and he outlined a formal theory of communication in his Rhetoric. But, as Gadamer reminds us, in the Nicomachean Ethics interpretation is given its richest meaning. Intellection and interpretation are presumed to differ in this Aristotelean classic on ethics. Hermeneia belongs to the higher and purer operations of the mind, but it is not just theoretical knowledge (episteme), nor is it practical skill (techne) since it concerns more than utility. Making a moral decision, Aristotle argues, entails doing the right thing in a particular circumstance, and to accomplish that successfully demands that we interpret the concrete situation. The moment of discernment requires that we deliberate within ourselves; yet it cannot be confused with logical analysis. In this manner, Aristotle confirmed an orienting process beyond the senses, yet differing from episteme. Hermeneia yields experiential insight born of conscience.

What Aristotle locates in the classical period is primordial, inherent, and fundamental. While he speaks with a Greek cadence, hermeneia concerns a universal modality, a *conditio sine qua non* in our anthropology. Perhaps you prefer body/mind/and spirit. Others have labelled it *psuchee*, the moral imagination, *fantasia*.

Through the hermeneutical modality we experience epiphanal moments suspended outside our person, normative manifestations of compelling force though not grounded *apriori*. We can appropriate everyday reality cognitively, but hermeneia enables us simultaneously to engage a world independent of ourselves. As Thomas Nagel contends in his View from Nowhere, through the interpretive impulse we form an overriding conception of the world with us in it. We are contained within history and do not create ourselves from scratch. Thus humans consider it worthwhile to bring their values and beliefs "under the influence of an impersonal standpoint," even without proof that this more permanent vista is not illusory. An independent reality, experienced phenomenologically, is from nowhere in particular, but we think it "natural to regard life and the world in this way." Thus in describing our concrete situation, we appeal to the impersonal: "the truth is," "my dignity has been violated," "justice demands," "innocent victims," and so forth.

Martin Buber's theory of communication makes the dialogic relation primal in his famous aphorism, "In the beginning is the relation." He intends

that ontologically, as a category of being. This irreducible anthropological phenomenon cannot be decomposed into simpler elements without destroying it. There are not three components, sender-message-receiver, to be dismembered for scientific analysis, nor even separated and reconnected dialectically. The reciprocal bond is an organic whole forming an interpretive unit centered in human hermeneia. All the variables are conjugant relationships, and isolating them is academia's version of Humpty Dumpty. Communications rests in the spirit, in our interpretive capacity -- not in the mind, intellectus, cogito or monads.

Buber categorically rejects all dualisms between self and culture. And Paulo Freire maintains the same dialectical unity with this symmetrical summary: "I cannot exist without a not-I; in turn the not-I depends on that existence." "There is no longer an 'I think' but 'we think,'" he writes. It is the "we think" which establishes the "I think" and not the contrary. This co-participation of Subjects in the act of thinking is communication.... Communication implies a reciprocity which cannot be broken. Hence it is not possible to comprehend thought without its double function, as something which learns and something which communicates.... Communication is characterized by the fact that it is dialogue. It is not the transference of knowledge, but the encounter of subjects in dialogue in search of the significance of the object of knowing and thinking (Education for Critical Consciousness, pp. 137-39).

In Freire's terms, it is our ontological vocation as creative subjects to act upon the world while being critical of it and transforming it to suit our purposes. Freire presumes an explicit anthropology, conceiving humans as existing not only in the world but with it, constructing it but through symbols separating from it in our consciousness: "Consciousness neither precedes the world nor follows it" (Pedagogy of the Oppressed, p. 69). Humans are able to adopt postures ranging from nearly undifferentiated spontaneous response, to a critical attitude which entails a conscious process of intervention, even objectifying themselves through existential experience. As with the dialogic tradition generally, Freire sweeps epistemology into his anthropology. He declares that we have understood reality when we have gotten inside the self-in-relation. He presumes a symbolic paradigm with the radically human as the meaning-center.

### Ideology

If one takes our symbolic character seriously, what happens when verbal symbols are mediated technologically, when there is massive print or electronic intrusion into the I-thouness symbolic domain. Technologizing the word, Walter Ong calls it. Symbolic theory presumes that the history of communications is central to the history of civilization, that social change results from media transformations, that changes in symbolic forms alter the structure of consciousness. The Canadian scholar, Harold Innis, for instance, studied the introduction of papyrus, the printing press, radio, and the telegraph--and documented a bias (tendency, propensity, impulse) regarding space and time. Oral communication systems, he argued, are biased toward time, rendering time continuous while making space discontinuous. Print systems, by contrast, are biased toward space, making geography continuous and

breaking time into distinct units.

Thus from the introduction of cuneiform writing to today's fiber optics, media technologies have attracted considerable attention--scholars in the Innis tradition examining all significant shifts in technological form, identifying from them subsequent alternations in culture and in perception. Within this paradigm of bias in communication systems, the intellectual challenge is to identify the distinguishing properties of particular media technologies such as books, cinema, church sculpture, and satellites. As the physicist steps inside the world of atoms, matter and motion to understand them from the inside, the communications scholar, regarding television or magazines or bumper stickers must work deeply into their dramatic properties in order to know them fundamentally and distinctly as their own.

As a minor premise, Innis argued that one form of communication tends to monopolize our knowledge and render other forms residual rather than all communications media simply existing innocently alongside one another. Elizabeth Eisenstein, for example, documents the overriding significance of symbolic formation in her definitive work on the invention of printing. The printing press establishes the Renaissance and makes the Reformation possible. The printing press reformulates our symbols at a historical watershed, fostering prescriptive truth, decentering papal authority by empowering the home and countryside with vernacular Bibles and Luther's pamphlets. The 9th century Carolingian and 12th century Gothic renaissances were limited and transitory. The preservative power of Gutenberg's invention made the Renaissance permanent and total.

If oral cultures make time stand still and print cultures foster empire and objectivism, the current shift to electronic culture dislocates us from both space and history. It ruptures historical consciousness and pushes us into world citizenship ill-equipped to play that role. Without specific anchors in time, space, or eternity, we are ripe for electronic picking, coopted by mass media images. We are radically disconnected from our historical home in mediating structures. Primary groups -- family, school, church, neighborhoods, and voluntary associations -- lose their resonance. It's Jerzy Kosinski's humanoid named "Chance", "Being There", without a sense of place.

Jacques Ellul (1981) developed the argument that the technological phenomenon is decisive, though not exclusive, in defining twentieth-century culture. As an explanatory element, it plays the part of capital in Marx's interpretation of the nineteenth century. This does not mean that technology has the same function as capital nor that the capitalist system is a thing of the past. It still exists, but capital no longer fulfills the role Marx claimed for it. Whereas work produces value for him, in industrially condensed societies the determining factor is technology. This creates value now and is not peculiar to capitalism. The characters have changed. Society can no longer be divided into capitalists and workers; the phenomenon is completely different and more abstract. Technological systems are now on one side and all humanity is on the other, the former driven by necessity, and the latter, the human demand for freedom. Ellul concludes that the world in which we live must be read, not in terms of political-economic structures, but in terms of technology. While this analysis privileges the industrial order,

even that three-fourths of the world which is not yet technological finds itself defined within technological parameters.

Where previous social orders operated with a triad -- humans/tools/nature -- in technological societies, nature recedes and humans perceive themselves as living in a technical artifice, existing not in nature but in culture.

Man does not any longer live in a natural environment but rather in a milieu composed of the products of his technology.... He can no longer take any significant action without technological intermediation. Technology constitutes an engulfing universe for man, who finds himself in it as in a cocoon. (Ellul, 1978, p. 216)

Our symbolic formations are now technological. In Ellul's framework, communications media represent the meaning-edge of the technological system, the arena where the latter's soul is most clearly exposed. Though exhibiting the structural elements of all technical artifacts, their particular identity as a technology inheres in their function as bearers of symbols. Information technologies thus incarnate the properties of technology while serving as agents for interpreting the meaning of the very phenomenon they embody. Ellul (1969) calls our communication systems the "innermost, and most elusive manifestation" of human technological activity (p. xvii). All artifacts communicate meaning in an important sense, but media instruments carry this role exclusively. As the media sketch out our world, organize our conversations, determine our decisions, and influence our self-identity, they do so with a technological cadence, massaging in our souls a technological rhythm and predisposition.

The Frankfurt School, from Herbert Marcuse to Jurgen Habermas, has demonstrated compellingly that modern technology, far from being neutral, embodies values incompatible with democracy's core values and operational demands. Martin Heidegger's (1977) seminal essay, "What is Technology," establishes in the existentialist mode that a technological society is at odds with human freedom. And Jacques Ellul (1969a) develops these ruminations into a full-scale critique, demonstrating that technology's efficiency breeds a climate of amorality.

In Ellul's view, industrialized civilizations have their own recognizable "Geist" or characteristic consciousness which he calls *la technique*. This ethos of efficiency appears everywhere, fully as important to wheat farmers and napalm companies as to communication engineers searching out a channel capacity of one billion bits per second to replace our present 600,000. "Whatever the diversity of countries and methods, they have one characteristic in common: Concern with effectiveness.... This is the supreme law which must never be forgotten" (p. x). Ellul exhaustively portrays one thesis: We are so beguiled by machine productivity that we almost unconsciously reconstruct all our social institutions on this model.

Society has entered a new moral posture, designed "to bring human behavior into harmony with the technicized world, to set up a new scale of values in terms of '*la technique*'" (Ellul, 1969b, p. 184). Moral values are thus precluded, since *la technique* and judgments about rightness or wrongness

are mutually exclusive. La technique acts tyrannically as "a spiritual guillotine, decapitating other values, depriving them of social power" (Shriver, 1972, p. 537). A civilization engrossed in means eliminates all moral obstructions to its ascendancy, as "in ancient days men put out the eyes of nightingales in order to make them sing better" (Ellul, 1967, p. 75). Moral judgment lies ruined within the ashes of a meansified civilization. An ethic of efficiency replaces moral goods with averages and probabilities mathematically computed.

Certainly, political and business structures are ravaged by the spirit of machineness, but the situation is doubly ruinous with regard to communications. The media are the means to prevent increasing technique "from being felt as too oppressive and to persuade men to submit with good grace" (p. xviii). The devastating invasion of democracy's lifeblood results in people welcoming with enthusiasm the very mechanized constraints which rob them of their freedom. The information system stands powerless with respect to the efficiency motif, but instead subtly adjusts the citizenry to accept it, even to welcome it eagerly. A surfeit of data, far from permitting people to make judgments and form opinions, actually paralyzes them.

Ultimate triumph is sought almost invariably in more streamlined methods, faster computer banks, more complex multivariate scales, and electronic consoles of unlimited news and entertainment. Moral purpose is sacrificed to technological excellence. Thus, once the printing press was invented, a process was set in motion for constantly increasing its capacity, speeding its production, and refining it organizationally. Obeying the same autonomous development, electronics is expanded from Atlantic cable to communication satellites, from seven TV channels to thirty, from specialized companies to multi-national conglomerates. And there is a failure to recognize that this self-augmenting process is alien to moral imperatives. Thus the conundrum: Whatever is gained in transmission is lost in ethics. In the process of fabricating expert mechanical systems, the world is sanitized of moral imperatives.

This is the conundrum in its starkest terms. Global realities demand global communications. The human race cannot be woven together effectively by politics or transnational economics. Information is a social necessity for the modern planetary system; but as the system is expanded, its content thickened, and its transmission speeded up, a normative base is being undermined which is needed now more than ever, given the complexities of a global technological civilization. Society is increasingly trapped in Kurt Vonnegut's conundrum: As he reaches into his repertoire of commitments, wisdom, and intelligence, he comes up emptyhanded precisely at the moment he needed them most (Vonnegut, 1952).

Our symbolic formations are now dominated by technological structures. "We are in touch with nature or the social group by means of communications: television, cinema, telephone or photography. These instruments...form a screen of means around all of us." In Jean Baudrillard's terms, industrial society has become a world of simulated images and intensified sensations. The proliferation of information technologies has shifted modern civilization from production to reproduction, from economic and political institutions to

hyperreality, where "everything becomes immediately transparent, visible, exposed in the raw and inexorable light of communication." All aspects of life, even the most private and sacred, become miniaturized circuits, a realm of terror in which humans exist as "terminals of multiple networks." In what Baudrillard calls "the precession of the simulacra," we create cybernetic models to organize reality, but in actuality a reversal occurs and reality arises from them instead. "The real is produced from miniaturized units, from matrices, memory banks and command modules." We float anchorless in a sea of electronic fantasy images. "The masses have become the black hole into which all meaning simply disappears."

The post-structuralists contend that relationships between signifier and signified are no longer trustworthy. Forms of representation flash through our experience like a remote control grazing cable television. The contemporary age, supercharged with information, has become fragmented by linguistic games. For Jacques Derrida, modern discourse is an arbitrary system of differences, of oppositions and conventions; language is an unending series of significations allowing dogmas and "official political codes" to govern human existence. The contemporary age, supercharged with information, has become fragmented by linguistic games.

It is commonly conceded that the public arena has lost its vitality. Time magazine's recent special issue calls it, "The Fraying of America." "Talk about the public continues, of course, and a definition of public life is smuggled in, but it is not subject to critical scrutiny.... The term has simply gone dead." We are witnessing the dissolution of the public sphere. The industrialized news business has abetted this impoverishment by conceiving the public as "a market united by little more than its demographic profile and a shared propensity to consume news."

I speak generically, systemically, in principial terms. By the grace of God, glimmers of hope remain; interstices in a technical artifice are scattered everywhere. The surfeit of cascading information paralyzes rather than liberates, on the whole, though civic mindedness survives and redemptive media signify the Kingdom. La technique is total but not absolute, definitive but not exclusive.

I overstylize the symbolic stage in order to cut against our innocence about the technological sublime. Communicating the faith engages in ideological struggle and the prophetic word is always emancipatory in character. Irretrievably and congenitally symbols are embedded in sound. Oral-life is our common property, language spoken and heard God's gift exclusively to the human species. Oral communication creates presence (gegenwart); acoustical symbols are the epoxy through which I-Thouness adheres.

And a radical posture means convivial tools -- dialogic; limited in extent, size, scale and power; open-ended with users; widely available and accessible; democratized media, low capital, serving people movements. WACC is committed to the backyard revolution, to citizen activism, and properly so. You heard it in Mike Traber's eloquence last night. People-based development from below, using participatory rather than large-scale technologies for

harmonizing this irreducible composite, the communications phenomenon.

Oral culture and convivial tools -- the social organism made whole, because symbolic forms and the moral imagination resonate dialogically.

KPFA-FM in Berkeley is the oldest community radio station in the United States. Its purpose is left wing alternative news. Feminist thinkers, immigrant voices, antinuclear protests, Chicanos, labor unions, and socialists depend on KPFA-FM for their oppositional politics. In her study of this broadcast enterprise -- though intending to focus on economics and ideology -- Nina Eliasoph drew this startling conclusion: "If tomorrow the government offered unconditional funding to all news organs, with no editorial caveats, the news content would probably not change as dramatically as the ownership theories imply. Dominant worldviews would still probably prevail." A large percentage of KPFA's audience is politically active and well informed. But this research indicated that if the audience's basic conceptual categories are blurred, reporting becomes unintelligible. Eliasoph concludes: "Oppositional news only makes sense when the audience already has some inkling of a theory with which to interpret the scattered daily crises. The problem is not [with the] news; the problem is that there is little else in the empty American public sphere."

KPFA is witnessing first hand what Gramsci meant by ideological hegemony. A hegemonic class absorbs the value systems of other social groups into its own. Previous ideological terrain is transformed when a common worldview emerges as the "unifying principle for a new collective will" (Mouffe, 1979, p. 191). Whereas coercion may be the province of the State apparatus, hegemony in civil society is an ongoing and historically contingent process of containment, of mobilizing diverse ideological elements into a coherent discourse and common set of practices. The road to hegemony is creating consensus, coopting rival hegemonic principles and colonizing the popular consciousness into a controlling worldview. The ideology that wins the war of position becomes exercised through all available apparatuses: schools, churches, the media, art and architecture, the legal system, economic activity, and even the name of the streets (Mouffe, 1971, p. 187). The hegemony of a particular historical bloc occurs when there is intellectual and moral unity on the fundamental questions that drive the struggle, thus creating the dominance of "a fundamental social group over a series of subordinate groups" and constituting an organic popular unity for the life of the state as a whole (Gramsci, 1971, p. 182).

### Worldview Transformation

Into a world of ideological struggle, we are called to communicate a Christian worldview, into a symbolic realm where technological efficiency has hegemony. Within the clamor for pluralism as escape from today's seamless immanentistic domain, multiple ethnic cultures are the typical reference point; in Randolph Bourne's classic description, pluralism refers to the richly woven fabric of native cultures--a federation of various races in contrast to an insipid, melting-pot assimilation of subcultures "into a tasteless, colorless fluid of uniformity." But given the linguistic character of *communitas*, a more sophisticated pluralism means confessional diversity,

pluralistic cultures disavowing state religion and guaranteeing that an array of ideologies, philosophies of life, and beliefs survives.

In any case, we can now respond fruitfully to Bill's question about communication theory and communicating faith. I conclude that what might be called worldview pluralism is the axis of communicating the gospel.

Thinking is presuppositional, thus our social vision will always be value-driven. "To demand 'neutral discourse' in public life...should be recognized as a way of coercing people to speak publicly in someone else's language and thus never to be true to their own." In fact, since Gramsci we should realize that even political action is actually a manifestation of our worldviews, and that only in worldviews is there human consciousness. Through worldviews humans are organized into social blocs, and conversely, worldviews are never individually generated but express communal life. Eliminating worldviews under the guise of a nondescript consensus is phony. Since worldviews are inescapable, the only salient issue is whether the ultimate commitments they reflect are life-affirming or not. Communicating a theistic worldview is not an odd or eccentric activity, but a means of replacing the centerless, privatistic species which dominate at present. Obviously I mean communicating a Kingdom vision, not narrow appeals to repent.

Because we hold our worldviews within a socio-political arena, we have a responsibility to make public the course we favor and to demonstrate the way it advances our common citizenship. Among contending paradigms, some meet the community test but many do not, some demonstrate a transformative intent and others do not. Certainly uncompromising authoritarian claims are threatening to a democracy, but the real enemy is an empty, shallow, unfed pluralism which neglects or trivializes serious social issues and those of moral substance. The opposite of "milk-toast civility" is not public nastiness; principled pluralism strengthens debate rather than stifling it. Contrary to "G. K. Chesterton's wisecrack that tolerance is the virtue of people who do not believe anything...tolerance is only a virtue in people who do believe something." Freedom of conscience is meaningless jargon except to those with a developed conscience themselves. Worldview pluralism thus serves as an antidote to what Stanley Hauerwas calls the dark void lurking at the heart of individualistic liberalism.

Worldviews are pretheoretical, consisting of "interpretive schemes, moral maxims, and collections of traditional wisdom." They are culturally shared outlooks on life, a set of basic beliefs about human destiny. And often they are most clearly communicated in the public arena through religious language. H. Richard Niebuhr, for example, challenges us to recover and refashion religious word-forms in order to amplify our deepest humanness. Typically, the root-metaphors which shape our worldviews must be manifested in sacred symbols in order for values, feeling, and history to be recast toward integrity. As religious words -- ordinarily in the first person -- open up the divine-human relationship, our symbolic visions of life are nurtured toward ideological transformation.

But communicating worldviews does not simply mean that we ought to see more ecclesiastical news in the press. Certainly reporting on religion,

institutionally and sociologically, merits upgrading in quantity and scope. However, entering worldview narratives into the public arena is more enigmatic than that. The challenge is to disclose the dimension of ultimacy in ordinary experience. Martin Luther King is not only a black leader, but a religious hero as well. Symbols are the constituent units of language that connect the two orders by making the invisible perceptible and by opening up reality to the deepest levels of the soul. Symbols illuminate their referents so as to make them transparent; they permit us to express levels of reality which otherwise remain hidden.

When our orientation is shifted from the received view to symbolic theory, our ecclesiastical mission is fundamentally reoriented. In this reformulation, our goal is ideological transformation, empowering others to a critical consciousness as they encounter a worldview ordered by biblical symbols.

The received view defines a communicator's goal as informing its readership and audience; the enlightenment function it is commonly called. Assuming that humans are rational animals, we advance society's interests by feeding our individual capacity to reason and make decision. In the transportation model, we enable people to discover truth, we present evidence on which decisions can be based, we provide a bounteous fare which the public molds into a coherent body of knowledge. The received view characteristically supposes that the day's raw intelligence is democracy's lifeline; and those engaged in religious matters are propagandists, either a threat or irrelevant, depending on levels of aggressiveness.

However, from the perspective of symbolic theory, the enlightenment function is too static and narrow, a half-truth at best. Communication's goal is not a luminous cranium, but surefootedness. The aim is not orthodoxy per se but orthopraxy, that is, not merely correct doctrine but proper action. Concepts do not live in splendid isolation, and to the degree we presume so, they are co-opted by powerful interests to benefit themselves. Getting one's head straight does not automatically generate intelligent social action. Though cast in his own idiom, Marx raised the enduring question: how can we not merely understand the world but change it? Action which is ill-formed becomes futile and self-defeating; the point is that information atrophies unless it vivifies human needs. The church's mission is not intelligence but worldview formation, to reconstitute worldviews them and bring ideological transformation back into existence.

Inserting a theistic worldview into the symbolic domain entails at least three aspects: reconstituting geography, history, and transcendence. Given that our mass-mediated information age dislocates us globally, disrupts our historical consciousness, and flattens the transcendental, a prophetic witness demands radical alternatives in our symbolic width, depth, and height.

First, a worldview seeking ideological transformation emphasizes universal human solidarity. The framing of our human identity must be rooted in the inescapable claims human beings have on one another, commitments which cannot be renounced except at the cost of our humanity." As Helmut Peukert states it, our minimum goal must be

...a world in which human beings can find ways of living together which enable every individual to work out his or her own lifestyle based on recognition and respect of others, and to do so ultimately in a universal perspective not confined to small groups or nations.... Universal solidarity is thus the basic principle of ethics and can be shown to be the normative core of all human communication.

An emphasis on universal humanness is one way to avoid the distributive fallacy, and it shades Christian exclusivism. All prophetic voices struggle against the same problematic -- the distributive fallacy of assuming that one strategic human position in the social structure represents the whole. What guarantees within our normative claims that the revolutionary working class, or a persecuted minority, or religious sects -- by a faulty logic of substitution -- are not made universal?

It is Jurgen Habermas' extraordinary contribution to critical theory to confront the distributive fallacy while continuing to insist on an emancipatory goal. He unapologetically endorses the Frankfurt tradition, but he seeks to prevent the distasteful revolution designed and imposed by a cadre of well-intentioned elites. He appeals to universal pragmatics and an ideal speech situation for putting under judgment all systems of power - violent or benign -- which pronounce their own self-styled revolution. Instead of asking in the Kantian tradition what individual moral agents claim as universal maxims for all, Habermas asks what norms would members of an ideal communication community agree as representing their mutual interests. The Christian worldview likewise confronts the distributive fallacy head on, but rather than taking Habermas' rationalist turn, the constant trump of all elitism is universal human solidarity.

Second, what view of history emerges when the Christian worldview is communicated in today's ideological theatre? How does it treat historical consciousness? If television is the medium, does the historical tempo on the screen match the biblical one? Television technology makes the living moment brilliant; to be redemptive, the vividly immediate cannot contradict the elaborate realities of purposive history. However, with the exception of soap operas, occasional mini-series, or made-for-television movies, each episode on television is typically self-contained. "Little House on the Prairie," "The Waltons," and "Bonanza" rested somewhere in a historical period, yet their structural pattern was an enclosed hour and not the perplexing arena of space-time history. Television tends to insulate audiences from history and create a texture commensurate with its own electronic dynamics. In Ellul's terminology, television creates a punctilliar canvas, whose momentary flashes and kamikaze dives into our temporality do not engage the hegemonic ideology. Religious programming, from pulpit to variety and talk shows, is usually no exception.

As Protestant reformer John Calvin put it, God is constantly vigilant, efficacious, operative, continually engaged, and edging history toward a climax. Presumably the God of faith controls history in his providence; thus, however obscurely seen, nothing is aimless or circular, or curved in upon itself, or unremittingly destructive. In the theistic worldview, things do not merely happen; they are brought about and shaped by the God who resides at

the center of a meaningful universe. Programs that purge the narrowness of modern humankind's ahistorical understanding of itself, rightly and provocatively, open the movement of time to a fresh and sometimes chilling view. They introduce more complexity into our speech about morality by seeing human fallenness as both judged and overcome. NBC's nine-and-a-half-hour docudrama, "Holocaust," re-enacted a historic event through the story of two German families from 1935 to 1945. The enormous complexity of the moral issues was inevitably trivialized, but as docudrama "Holocaust" raised the consciousness of millions about the dangers of anti-Semitism by embedding its own event-character within the flow of history. It moved beyond mere candor to enrich our symbolic frame. "Roots" also combined historical circumstances with dramatic intensity, in spite of predictable plots and stereotyped characters. The apocalypticism of "The Day After" tended to weaken at times its redemptive impact; however, it nudged it seventy million viewers away from hysteria or indifference, and thus toward heightened awareness about their own fate in history.

Thirdly, the technologized word does not easily communicate the non-material. Electronic and visual media tend to equate truth with immediate sensory impressions and remove ultimates from life. Some dramatic styles in television regularly assert self-transcendence. A few high-quality movies such as "Gaslight" and excellent adventures of the "Columbo" type puzzle and intrigue for the moment. Thus popular entertainment, in spite of occasional forays into mystery and science fiction, remains fully anchored in the sensate. What Levi Strauss calls the narrative's deep structure is fundamentally non-transcendent. And critics typically insist that film as a medium is hospitable only to realism. By immersing us in life's action and color, visual media are usually thought intractable to the non-material.

However, in spite of the visual media's bias against an ineffable realm, Paul Schrader marshalls convincing evidence in his Transcendental Style in Film that video art can express transcendence. By appropriate symbols, we can be nudged toward the invisible through the visible itself. Another reality is established alongside sense reality. A world can open up which refuses to be constrained within ordinary patterns of explanation. Three producers -- Ozu, Bresson, Dreyer -- demonstrate that film can render "perceptible to an audience the presence of something superior to man." By a complicated three-step style, Schrader argues, these popular artists from Japan, France, and Denmark achieve their aim: outlining first, a meticulous representation of everyday life; introducing next, a disparity, a hint that such realism does not fulfill; then, thirdly, freezing a view which transcends everything, not resolving the disunity but demonstrating grace received. In this last phase, another reality image is established alongside sense reality. We are nudged toward the invisible through the visible itself. A world opens which cannot be fitted into ordinary patterns of explanation. Schrader's triple-sided aesthetics summarizes some of my concerns in this essay and provides a healthy intellectual framework for criticizing popular culture.

A theistic worldview demands even more of the mass media than artistic realism and soul-searching disjunction. Like Schrader's three examples, do we encounter the transcendent? Is another amphitheater depicted which does not simply dissolve the disunity, but supersedes and fulfills it? In Ozu's Late

Spring an exquisite vase symbolizes a realm of universal perfection. The charred cross in Bresson's Joan of Arc uses a religious emblem to represent salvation gained. Michael's serenity though imprisoned in Pickpocket breaks the mind away from logical categories and leads to wordless insight into another reality. Fontaine and Jost recede dramatically into a universal life form in A Man Escaped. Enough suggestions of miracle occur in such films to declare that we are not captive to ourselves or history.

Representing the ideational remains a seriously underdeveloped expressive mode, and our decades of neglect will not be surmounted easily. Those of us committed to communicating faith will vigorously experiment with the electronic media to bring these technological forms to their symbolic capacity.

And some models do exist, which are not necessarily ideal, but illustrate in a limited sense what worldview programming needs. 2001, for instance, symbolizes the supernatural realm through a tall mysterious obelisk that will not disappear in spite of human progress. The cross in the film's last shots -- formed of monolith and moons above Jupiter -- indicates that the spiritual and phenomenal can be conjoined but must forever remain distinguished.

But Mary Tyler Moore's ABC special, "The Incredible Dream," represents an even more ambitious attempt to stretch visual media beyond the edge of finite sensibility. British innovator Jack Good makes an impressive attempt to knit together honestly humankind's history. The judgment phase stands out decisively also: dark skies, the human species driven from paradise, Sodom and Gomorrah, the flood, mushroom clouds, and a ponderous narration: "All flesh was corrupted." But a transcendent allusion appears prominently, too. I am not referring to Mary's appearance in heaven -- complete with white tie and tails, leading a tapdancing chorus in "Hallelujah." Nor do I mean that powerful scene where she sings before a stained glass window, her arms outstretched as in crucifixion. Both scenes hint at an independent scene of action beyond the immediate, but neither illuminates transcendence as powerfully as the hand emerging from that ancient source of all life, the sea. Fashioned as though from foam rubber, the white hand wafts Ben Vereen, Moore, and the Manhattan Transfer to shore while Mary sings, "Morning Has Broken." To someone interested in more than realism, this television special represents an ambitious example of transcendental style.

### Conclusion

It is imperative to remind ourselves that communication is a region of interests, that its peculiar role is holistic, organic, and integrative rather than isolationist and specialized. From this viewpoint, rather than scholastic attention to a discrete subject matter, communication study synthesizes in a comprehensive perspective the diverse aspects of human expressiveness and articulates them in terms of a coherent totality. The efforts to develop communication into a self-sustaining speciality with empirical autonomy, I believe, terminally weaken it; certainly it is out of sync with academia's rage toward blurring the genres. As Cassirer, Williams, Habermas et al. have made clear, communication is the epicenter of cultural

formation and we reconstruct an intellectual trajectory around that axis in terms of symbol, ritual, representational systems, cultural change, signification, and ideology; but none of these extensions per se replaces the communicative center.

Symbolic communication theory, compellingly taught, serves a permeating, an integrative role in seminary education. It accentuates biblical anthropology, puts liturgy-counseling-theology-and preaching on a level playing floor, sharpens the church-kingdom relationship, situates evangelism and missions more wholesomely within worldview formation, provides a rationale for critical consciousness as the goal of religious education. Meanwhile, symbolic theory gives ecclesiastical mediating structures a mighty vision of their prophetic role in cultural transformation, freeing them from bondage to a print monopoly of knowledge, and invigorating them with electronic and visual literacy instead.

Today's harbingers of transmission continue full-time: the Bell Labs perfecting fiber optics, Pentagon scientists coordinating the spectacular machines of Desert Storm, J. Walter Thompson selling soap and the Whitehouse, MIT's Media Lab streamlining digital information technologies. Those of us who anchor communications in the humanities, understand the potential of recovering the mystery of symbolic formation in those multiplex settings where a biblical worldview is examined, nurtured, and communicated.

It should be obvious that we face a dilemma of sorts, a conundrum, if we push a communications paradigm center stage. How is it logically possible that humans who are themselves constituted by communication could fully explain the process by which they are enabled to do the explaining? It is an old paradox in new clothes: Can a theory of something contain itself? There are not people and language, but one is inextricable from the other; the one manifests the other. As we come to grips with the communication process, therefore, we comprehend human being. And until we touch our essence, its infinity and finitude, the mysteries of the communicative bond cannot be grasped. Meanwhile, as Lee Thayer reminds us, it is likely we have a scrambler in the brain which will protect us from ever knowing our humanness pure. As we push more deeply into communication and therefore human nature, our mind may reject any naked intrusion. If so the problems will never be answered theoretically, but must be constantly invigorated as history demands it.

Any attempt at resolution, of course, begs important questions; still our kind of begging makes a difference. Since social institutions and ideas are nowhere independent of the manner and mode of their communication, the only valid concern is whether the process serves to maintain us as we ought to be and not as we should avoid. To explain communications is necessarily to posit an anthropology. And any such attribution, no matter how unintended, carries with it a moral responsibility, since our nature is conditioned by our beliefs regarding it. In all this--as communication theorists or in theological reflection on communicative action--we cannot escape our complicity.

# A Theological and Ethical Perspectives on Global Communication

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Encounter between the West civilization and the Eastern /Southern civilizations have been that of encroachment and corrosion of civilization, disintegration of identity and community, and domination and suppression of values, especially during the last 2 centuries. At the end of 20th century, the people in the whole world are facing at an axial transition in civilizational terms on a global scale.

## INTENSIFYING GLOBAL CULTURAL STRUGGLE!

The context in which we are speaking about communication is a "cultural war" between the power and the people, waged through political propaganda, commercial advertisement, and information technology. This cultural war takes place on both national and global levels, assuming the form of ideological or propaganda war. Sometimes it works to domesticate the minds and desires of consumers, inducing them to buy things that are produced; this is to control and conquer the market. The educational system acts to establish hegemony over the minds of students in the name of socialization. Traditional cultural process and religious institutions are also mobilized to serve the cause of the powers. But the most important aspect of this cultural war is manifested in the modern mass communication media such as newspapers, wire services, radio and television.

The ideological battles between the two super powers have been fought through political propaganda against each other (communism vs capitalism), through ideological inculcation in formal and non-formal education systems, through public media and information processes and often through religious institutions and practices. Now this ideological war seems to be over; but power conflicts, violent or otherwise, will continue to involve semi-ideological battles for legitimacy and support. The communist societies have complete control over the process of political propaganda, but its effectiveness is regarded doubtful in recent years. Societies where a liberal press is allowed have a facade of freedom of speech, but the powers control the media and education in highly effective ways in these societies. Dictatorships around the world have sought to control the speech, thought, feeling and perception of the people. Today this process of control by power is done through hi-tech communication and information media; this communication technology is intensive and therefore brutally effective.

The economic life of the people is very much affected by communication and information in three basic ways. The struggle for decisions on economic policies involves fundamental cultural struggle in terms of economic philosophies and economic objectives such as economic growth and economic distribution. The most direct way in which the economic life of the people is swayed is

through commercial advertisements in the communication media. The media is the chief culprit in consumerism, which corrodes the minds of the people with enticements to cheap materialism and economic hedonism.

Moreover, information has become a commodity and service in economic transactions, for information is both power and resource. The information and communication network constitutes the webwork of people's economic and socio-cultural life as well; and the powers create, expand, and sustain this network of information and communication on a global scale.

There are three inter-related networks that operate on a global scale. The political and military intelligence and information network of the governments, the economic network of information of transnational corporate powers; and the religious-cultural networks of world religions have powerful influence over information and communication in global dimensions.

The term "international information and communication order" is a misnomer which does not reflect the reality of the present communication and information process nationally and internationally, although the McBride report has clearly shown the nature of the international information and communication order as dominated by the powerful. The process of information and communication is not merely the objective order of society and community; it also penetrates into the mind and brain of the human person, into the perceptual apparatus of the body, and into the heart and soul of the whole human being. The information and communication process pervades the human self. The battleground is the sense, consciousness, mind, heart and spirit of the human person as well as the community.

We would like to discuss three inter-related issues in dealing with our subject. The first is communication and information in relation to the people as subject of history and in relation to the power that dominates the people. The second issue is a theological reflection on communication. Third is the issue of fundamental principles that will guide the practice of communication and information action.

In all these considerations, we are proposing to look at the victimization of the people by the communication order on all levels of individuals, local communities, national communities, cultures and civilizations. It is the victimized people who have truthful grasp of the reality of the past and present communication order.

#### THE PEOPLE AS THE SUBJECT OF HISTORY AND THEREFORE OF COMMUNICATION

We are accustomed to analyzing the situation of the communication and information order without explicit reference to the people and to power, making it neutral in political terms. Communication and information is of the people, by the people and for the

people. This means that the people are the subject of information and communication. When information and communication are dominated by the powers-that-be, the people as the subject of information and communication are violated.

The most original form of communication is the telling and hearing of stories in the community of the people. The story is the form of communication in which the teller and hearer are subjects, not objects. Communication is the sharing of stories of the people among themselves. The cumulation and interweaving of such stories forms cultures of the people and their communities. No other forms of communication can replace this original mode; other forms of communication can only supplement the original form.

In the original story of the people, all the powers and authorities take the position of antagonist, for the people are in the position of protagonist. The people are subjects of the story in terms of content as well as in communication. The traditional religious and cultural stories of the people are prime examples of their original story. The story of the Hebrews in the Exodus and its counterparts or equivalents in Asian religions are concrete manifestations of the original story of the people. For this reason, the religio-cultural stories are co-opted by the powerful and are twisted into authoritarian stories in which the people are turned into objects of subjugation.

#### COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION DOMINATED BY THE POWERS-THAT-BE

The McBride Report disclosed the domination of the International Communication and Information Order by the western media, which are cultural manifestations of the western powers. The breakdown of the socialist states has shown a dimension and process of their subversion by the western media; and the Gulf War is one example in which war and peace have been effected through the media by the Western powers.

The globalization of communication and information has become technetronics-intensive through hi-media technology on all levels. Symbols, images and pictures in full color, simultaneously translated languages, and scenarios and sequences of events are instantly transmitted to the people, who are turned into the victims of this global communication onslaught. Technetronics-intensive communication and information involves the global network of value-adding process with increasing acceleration in intensity and speed. Such a global network of communication increasingly encircles the life of the people; it envelops their perceptions and understanding, and it finally invades the innermost chamber of consciousness, the minds and hearts of the people, deeply affecting their spirit as well as their life.

The most important consequence of this communication and information revolution being carried out through hi-tech development is the subjugation of the spirit, mind, will, heart, passion and even desire of the people to the dictates of the dominant powers,

near and remote. Human subjectivity, which is the engine of human life, is the final territory being conquered through cultural processes of communication and information. Western development of modern science and technology in the past has excluded the human subject from the epistemological world; and now its advancement allows the powers to dominate human subjectivity to domesticate life itself.

Such domination is manifested in political and ideological control and manipulation, domestically and internationally. It involves the total planning and control of the market. Such a capacity to subjugate human subjectivity on a mass scale is used to manage social, political and military conflicts on domestic and international levels. This becomes the case due to symbiotic power relations between the public media and the political powers, in which the people's participation is prevented. Such power relations are complex and difficult to discern. But government propaganda, the use of the media for the implementation of political power and policy and election campaigns are clear manifestations of such a symbiosis.

The domination by western political power, especially the U.S, and the West-dominated international communication order with its dominant network of information industry, wire services, satellite communication and so on, makes a powerful impact upon the peoples in Asia, by interlocking with the Asian national communication media and by subverting these on political, economic and cultural levels.

The economic powers such as giant transnational corporations use the public media to dominate and control the market, to create arbitrary needs among consumers causing a deep sense of deprivation, and to cover up the ugly image of the corporate powers. There is no marketing without the media; and the advertisement of products and services creates false and unsound economic propaganda, often providing false information and images about the products and services. This process distorts sound economic values, fostering "cheap and pragmatic materialism". The media serves corporate powers' techno-structures to carry out the total planning strategy of profit-maximization by controlling marketing as well as production. Without such subservient media, the corporate strategy of total planning would not be possible. The people as workers and consumers are molded according to the plan of the economic powers in and through the media; the people have lost their subjecthood in production as well as in the market; they have become victims of the distorted information imposed on them, and have an inverted self-image implanted in their consciousness, by the media.

In the same way the transnational corporate structures have pervaded all the Asian societies to subjugate economic selfhood, not only in economic political terms, but also in cultural terms through their economic propagandistic advertisements. This has destroyed the health and wholesome vision of economic life of the Asian people.

The Asian national media, under the influence of the Western domination of the global information and communication order, have corroded and subverted Asian cultural values and Asian styles of life with the Western values and life styles. Particularly the Asian cultural identity has been suppressed among the Asian nations and peoples. Religious and cultural heritages are disparaged as pre- or anti-modern (meaning anti-Western); the languages, symbols and images are suppressed and replaced by the Western ones. This process causes profound cultural dissatisfaction among the people, even to the point of unhealthy national and cultural romanticism and nostalgia. The people's uprootedness is caused by the mass media, which receive heavy doses of Western cultural injections in the present international information and communication order. Such cultural corrosion and subversion and even "genocide" are a tragic part of the cultural subjugation of the people through the global media dominated by the Western powers, and this is inevitable, given the inherent character of the present global order of information and communication which excludes participation of the people, their dialogues and interactions.

#### "NECESSARY ILLUSION" OF FREE PRESS / MYTH OF PLURALISM

At the demise of socialist dictatorships and authoritarian powers freedom is much celebrated; and there is a prevailing sense of history that liberal democracy has finally won. There is a celebration that the people under totalitarian and authoritarian dictatorships have become free subjects.

People who are connected with the Western liberal media believe that a free press can be free of domination and control by the powerful, be it political, military or economic. The Western media is regarded as free of control and domination by others; and it is true that there is a certain degree of such freedom from the dominant powers, in so far as the media itself is a power that has a capacity to balance other sectors of powers.

However, the fact that the Western media is a dominant power is implied in its capacity to balance other political, military and economic sectors of the dominant powers. So long as the Western media is a sector of the dominant power constellations of the Western powers, it serves the interests of the Western powers as it balances other sectors of the same power constellation. Thus, the belief that the Western media is free is an illusion, which is a necessary self-justification in the liberal society. The Western media cannot balance the government, the military and economic powers in absolute terms, but only in relative terms to the extent that the power of the Western media is secured. This is particularly the case in the United States. Objectivity, balance, and truthfulness of information is always claimed as the final measure of free and fair media, but the terms of reference are culturally and ideologically Western power-oriented.

The power of the Western media violates the rights of the people

in their own society; and often the people have no means to redress these violations. It also violates the cultural and ethnic rights of the people in the world. It promotes the Western racial, cultural and religious values against racial, cultural and religious heritages of the people of the world.

Disinformation and misinformation, partial truths and small lies, and sheer ignorance and prejudice are mingled and spread in the process of communication and information in various ways in different situations. These phenomena are directed against the oppositional forces of the people in both liberal societies and dictatorial societies, in their conduct of international policies as well as in domestic affairs. The whole process serves the power interests of the powerful.

When the Western media criticized the dictatorial powers in the third world for their violation of human rights and dictatorial control of the media, this was regarded by these powers as hypocritical behavior, infringement of national sovereignty or interference in the internal affairs.

In recent years, certain democratic reforms are being promoted in the third world by the Western powers so that these powers themselves can make direct intervention through investment and trade by TNC's, through political pressure in such cases as human rights, and especially through the Western media. Introduction of "liberal democratic reforms" opens the third and second world societies for more direct penetration of those societies by the Western media as well as by the Western market forces. Thus the Western media of communication and information become instruments of "low intensity strategy" in the arena of "cultural domination and war".

The communication and information media construct a strange world out of arbitrary and superficial combinations of colors, images and languages that are simplified and separated from reality. The perceptual world thus created has no relation to the real world; it is rather in opposition to the actual world. But this strange new world of illusion occupies the minds and hearts of the people everywhere.

In this way the peoples in Asia are victims of the powers militarily, politically, socially, economically and culturally; and international media networks constitute an integral dimension of the victimization process, as the cultural power of domination that victimizes the people culturally.

Post-modernist trends and cultural pluralism seems to undermine the cultural struggles of the people for authentic identity, humane community and liberating cultural and life-enhancing civilization. Overcoming of the Teutonic captivity, that is dominant in the Western civilization, is not merely post-modernistic fragmentation and confusing pluralism; but it should mean a new and whole network of interconnectedness for a full and whole life on earth.

## AN ILLUSTRATION - Stereotyping the People's Movements, including the Ecumenical Movement.

One of the outstanding examples of the low-intensity strategy through the media against the people and their communities, when they struggle against the powers, is the case of stereotyping of the ecumenical movement as an enemy of the powers. In a similar way the political and social movements of the people are depicted and stereotyped as enemies. Often leaders of the peoples' movements are attacked and tried in the media, before and outside of the juridical process. Racial and ethnic as well as religious communities are often targets of media attack and media manipulation.

People of low social class or status are stereotyped as second-class humans in religious and cultural terms as well as in socio-economic terms. Low and outcaste people are perpetually condemned to such reinforced traditional stereotypes, their human dignity and subjecthood mutilated by society.

The stories of the people in Asia, past and present, are full of old and new stereotypes, for example, women as non-persons, inferior beings and sex objects. The Chinese are Charlie Chans; Koreans are Chosenjins (to the Japanese); the Vietnamese are Gooks, and so on. More modern stereotypes include the Asian people as "esthetic, contemplative and intuitive," meaning incapable of rational thinking; Asians as prone to authoritarianism, incapable of democracy; the poor and oppressed as the or violent; and outcaste people as dirty and ignorant. The ethnic, national, racial, religious and cultural minorities are subject to old and new stereotypes in their own situations as political or social separatists. The Christian west has its prejudices and stereotypes against people who believe in Asian religions. These false images and stereotypes are powerfully and subtly projected in the global communications media.

In all these areas, the communication and information media play the role of supporting the powerful in the final analysis, and victimize the peoples in Asia as well as in other parts of the world, including the people in the West.

## COMMUNICATION FOR PARTICIPATION AND SOLIDARITY OF THE PEOPLE

The people as subjects of history have always struggled to overcome the domineering communication and information process. The people create their own ways of communication, ranging from stories in oral traditions to folk art and music, from popular histories to religious and cultural symbolism. The history of popular communication of the people is not much investigated, just as the cultural history of the people is not written from the people's perspective. Traditionally the communication process of the people is suppressed by that of the powerful rulers, who have controlled the message and media through ruling elites and established cultural and religious institutions. Nevertheless,

the people's ways and means of communication cannot have been completely suppressed. The people assert their subjecthood in communication through various ingenious creativity. The rise and development of the people's movements have usually been accompanied by a new and creative communication process, which is often closely associated with popular religious communities.

Originally, the sacred books of the religious communities among the people rose as a new way of communication among the people with new messages to them. The stories and writings of the T'aiping movement in China and the Tonghak in Korea and similar movements in Asian countries are manifestations of new communication paradigm among the people. The Bible is the example par excellence.

The main feature of such communication of and by the people is their direct participation in the communication process and the immediacy of the message without long mediation; another characteristic is the bonding of a new and liberating community, that is, the wholistic solidarity of the people. This implies three fundamental characteristics of genuine communication: immediate participation, solidarity and liberation.

The Bible is a book of communication among those who call themselves the people of God or the People of the Messiah. Therefore, we will seek to discern from the Bible a paradigm of communication among the people.

The Hebrew (HAP'IRU) people and their descendants lived under empires throughout the ages such as Ancient Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Greece and Rome and their vassals. This meant that they lived under the imperial communication order of the ancient empires.

The classical account is the Tower of Babel. The imperial project of building the Tower of Babel required, among many things, a monolingual communication (command) system. This meant suppression of all languages and cultures of nations and peoples for their integration into one imperial language. This is the language and communication of imperial domination, a paradigm which fundamentally holds true in all imperial situations, even today.

The imperial projects of Pyramid, the Tower of the Babel, and the Pax Romana are such illustrations of the domination communication. Economic, political and military communications order reflect such syndrome of the communication of dmination.

The counter-paradigm of such communication is the Biblical communication of the people of God. When they were filled with the Spirit, the paradigm of imperial communication was replaced with the communication of the people of God, which is illustrated in the Pentecost experience. At Pentecost the people with different languages spoke and heard the message of God in their own languages, and this meant the creation of new koinonia

(PARTICIPATION), new household (OIKONOMIA), new identity as a people of God (NEW CULTURE), and new community (NEW SOLIDARITY).

Thus, the movement of the Spirit means freedom and liberation of the people from the oppressive languages and communication of the powers. The Spirit creates the liberating communication to overcome the cultural domination. The Spirit is against the law of dominating communication.

The Bible has several genres of communication, being itself the major communication among the people of God throughout their history. It is a story of the people, and an account of events. It contains various forms and contents of communication. The first is the communication of God's promise for a new future and the vision of this future over against the imperial order. The story of the Creation (Genesis 1 and 2), the Vision of the Messianic Reign (Isaiah 11, Rev. 21 and 22) and other apocalyptic visions belong to the category of the communication of the vision among the people under imperial powers. The content of the communication of the vision is the Messianic Reign in which Life and Shalom will prevail over against the power and violence of death.

This vision is deeply rooted in the story of liberation of the Hebrew people from the imperial despotism of ancient Egypt, that is, in the story of the Exodus. The Hebrew slaves cried out in their toil, agony and suffering; and their God Yahweh listened to their cry and knew their predicament. God communicated the message of liberation to the people against the Pharaoh who refused to release the people. Moses and his company bore the message of liberation among the Hebrew slaves. Thus the Exodus event materialized in history. Such a vision manifests itself clearly and decisively in the message and movement among the people by Jesus, who gives it the name "Reign" or "Realm of God."

Jesus' message about the Realm of God is indeed the good news--the Gospel among the Galilee Minjung. His message, teachings and actions, and whole life, death and resurrection are the ultimate communication of God among the people who are subjugated under the powers of death. The people of God become the bearer of the message of God's Reign --the Gospel among all nations.

Communication in the early community of the people of God was the Covenant Code or the Torah, which means "wisdom and guide." The origin of the covenant codes or the Torah is also the Exodus, in which the people of God were liberated by God and which granted the wisdom of the covenant code -- to prevent encroachment by the Pharaoh's ideology and religion of oppression, and to undercut the vicious bond of slavery and protect the poor, oppressed, weak and alienated. Literally the Torah of the covenant is the living Word of God spoken among the people and indwelling in the hearts of the people. The Wisdom are an integral part of this second form of Biblical communication.

The third form of communication among the people of God is the

prophetic movement under kingship which is often allied with or influenced by surrounding imperial or despotic powers with domineering communication systems. The classic example is the confrontation between the message of Elijah against King Ahab and Jezebel the Baalist over the destiny of Naboth, the steward of the vineyard. The prophetic movements, led by the major and minor prophets, communicate the message of God's justice, judgment and promise of shalom among the people, who have become subservient to the ideology and religion of the despotic kingdom and the dominant empires. Their communication is that of God's justice among the people.

Priestly practices and movements are a fourth form of communication, with their message of restoration, reconciliation and healing of the community of the people of God, and their sharing of the message of shalom. Rites of sacrifice and worship constitute communication for restoration of broken relationships, injured bodies and communities divided by hostility and enmity. The Psalms are an integral part of this communication. As depicted in the Letter to the Hebrews, the Prince of Shalom Himself is the sacrificial lamb and at the same time the priest who presides over the sacrifice of reconciliation, forging a new covenant of shalom. This is an act of communication of the peace of God among the people who have become victims of the violence and wars among nations and powers.

The Bible is the book of communication among the people of God. In it the people are the partners of God, who communicates with them through various media, channels or modes of communication. Often the people are hard-hearted, refusing to be communication partners with God and with each other. They see but do not see. They hear but do not listen. They are taught but they do not understand. This is because they are enslaved in heart, mind and spirit to the dominant communication of the powers-that-be.

But the Biblical communication is the event of the Word among the people to restore them as partners in communication with God and therefore among themselves. God's message is heard, understood and becomes the spirit and the power of the people to overcome the power of the communication that enslaves them and turns them into objects of communication.

Biblical communication builds new, faithful relations between God and the people, and among the people. In place of domination, enslavement and enmity, new bonds of solidarity are established. Solidarity, as the covenant of faithful relations among the people, is the foundation of humane community.

#### FIVE COLUMNS UPON TWO FOUNDATIONS

We regard that the two foundations of the household of God are the people's participation and their mutual solidarity. Standing upon these two foundations the five columns of justice, human dignity, peace, identity and life. We seek to discern these structural elements from the Biblical communication in the

context of the present global order of communication and information.

We have already indicated that the sovereign partner of the sovereign God for covenant and communication is the very people of God, not the powers-that-be, which subjugate the people under their ideology and religion of domination. This is the basis of the people's participation. We have recognized that the free individual subject in liberal democracy is a precarious and illusory being in communication as well as in all other areas of power relations. Therefore, the people's participation should be more than individual freedom as seen in liberal democracy. Participation should mean direct, immediate and effective access by the people to the processes of deciding and relating. Jesus made the people directly accessible to the Realm of God through his communication of the Good News and through the people's faith which was evoked by his message.

As sovereign partners, the people have newly entered into covenant with God, breaking all their enslaving bonds with the dominating powers. Sharing of new bonds of koinonia, love, justice, peace, hope and life was communicated through the crucifixion of Jesus as the Sacrificial Lamb of the New Covenant. This communication is reenacted in the sacraments of the Baptism and the Holy Supper, both of which are the culmination of the forging of the solidarity bond among the people through Jesus their Messiah.

Paul advised the Galatians about the fundamental truth of the Gospel found in the Baptism: that there is neither "chosen" nor gentile, neither free nor slave, neither male nor female, and so on. Communication is an act binding the people together as one body, one household, one nation and one people; an act of forging a new covenant among the people.

The people in this covenant are the stewards of their own economic household (OIKONOMIA). We have seen the centrally planned command economies of the socialist states. A chief cause of their failure may have been the lack of people's participation in the planning and managing of the economy, as well as in distribution. Many third-world economies are also centrally planned and controlled, according to the dictates of the IMF and IBRD. The giant global corporations are highly centralized as planning techno-structures. They neither recognize the OIKONOMIA as the common household nor allow the people's participation. The people are relegated to the position of objects in the big planned projects, and are instructed by communication to follow and obey the rules of the dominant economic powers: states or corporate entities. Communication should awaken the people as autonomous economic subjects, as sovereign stewards of their own life. Self-reliance is not a message of the rich to the dependent poor, but the people's claiming of their sovereignty over their household (OIKONOMIA). The people must participate directly in planning and management, in production and distribution, and in the market. The people as sovereign users of resources must

participate in communication (advertisements) to resist being domesticated as obedient consumers. The people must make direct interventions in the market to fight domination and monopoly, since the political process is not working in this direction. It is essential that the people must participate in economic communication to be economically sovereign over their own life.

Celebration of the rise of liberal democracy in the third world and in Eastern Europe can be a very deceptive political ritual. The political reality is that the people become more powerless than ever to decide their own political life and destiny. The information and communication work of the intelligence agencies is more efficient and pervasive than ever, replacing the use of forcible means. The powers rely heavily upon intelligence, information processes, and communication ranging from ideological propaganda to political campaigns, from war management to character assassination of enemies, and from political domestication to political control of the people. Information and communication is being used as the primary means to achieve the political objective of domination and control over the people.

The people are deprived of their own means of communication and knowing (information). They become objects of this communication and information process. The people must regain their subjecthood as sovereign partners and participants in the communication and information process, in society and in the world. This demands people's participation in the existing communication media; it also demands counter-communication networks to fight the existing communication and information process. It is also necessary to strengthen the people's communication network as an alternative communication order that promotes people's participation and their solidarity linkages throughout the world, across all barriers and boundaries. Thus, communication and information with the people's participation may be a chief means to attain the political self-hood of the people, for such communication can overcome the dynamics of domestication and fragmentation of community.

The communication and information process that is dominated by the powerful creates violent conflicts on the social-psychological level as well as on the cultural level. It accentuates and fuels cultural, social and political conflicts in many nations; when they serve the interests of the dominant power. Racial, ethnic and religio-cultural and communal conflicts are created by means of manipulated communication and information processes, when these are hoped to weaken the enemies of the powers. Most of all, the powers are waging small- and large-scale cultural battles and wars to destroy the enemy in physical, religio-cultural and spiritual terms.

The biblical paradigm of communication is that of peace-making, reconciling and enemy-loving. It is the communication of the prince of peace who became the victim of the cultural and religious violence of the Roman Empire and its allies. The vision of the Messianic Reign, depicted in the 11th chapter of the

Prophet Isaiah, is the real vision of peace that has been transmitted to the people of God throughout history.

In the present changing military alliances and moves for global security, there is more danger of intensified violence along the lines of race, ethnicity, religion and culture, society and economy, in addition to political and military conflicts. It is no wonder that the communication and information process becomes the arena of cultural wars and battles. The communication and information process is used as a low-intensity conflict strategy against the religio-cultural forces and social-political movements that are struggling for liberation for justice, peace and life.

In the process of encroachment into Asia by the Western powers and their culture, the people are denied their own cultural roots; their cultural self-determination and identity is eroded to the extent that their community loses its cultural life. Herbert Marcuse called the internal cultural situation of the globally expanding technocratic civilization "one dimensionalization"; Soelle calls it "apathetic", and others call it the "cultural wasteland." Modern hi-tech communication and information processes immediately injure the cultures of the peoples in Asia, Africa and Latin America, beyond recovery. This is a kind of cultural genocide.

The world that God has blessed is the world of many races and nations with different cultures and religious traditions, all of which will be gathered in solidarity and harmony in the Messianic Reign. The nations will speak their own languages and share their experiences and cultures through their own communication. The extremism of nationalism and ethnic and religious communal conflicts arises due to their suppression by powerful cultures and groups. Cultural identity and abundance is an integral part of human community. Communication and information must foster the creative abundance of cultures and must strengthen the cultural and ethnic identities of peoples and races without being exclusive. Today no society can be wholesome without allowing the self-determination of racial, ethnic and religio-cultural minorities. Communication must be understood as a cultural koinonia, in which all cultures interact creatively to enrich and fulfill each other. Communication must be understood as a cultural feast of the peoples.

The koinonia of life extends beyond the human community. Communication that is rooted in the koinonia of life means the sharing of life of all the living, in heaven, on the earth and below the earth. Life shares common perceptions about the reality of life and about the reality of the threat of death. This is a communication among living beings, which is quite different from perceptions that are gained through abstract images and symbols. Living beings commune with each other and thus communicate with each other. Thus, communication should be a life-enhancing and life-enriching koinonia.

Modern communications media separate human life from the reality of life and place it in a deadly, artificial cultural environment. Our children live in cultural boxes that are manufactured arbitrarily by the communications media. They do not have real life, which is full of tears, lamentation, and "HAN" (a deep sense of justice which rises in the hearts of the people when they suffer wrong in history), as well as joy and happiness.

Today communication must touch the living reality which is full of agonizing toils and of grass-smelling freshness. In the Orient there is the saying that KI (active life energy) is communicated among all living creatures. It is like the Spirit which is the breath of life in Creation.

Communication is the mutually connecting and penetrating interactions among all living things including people. Communication binds the five columns of justice, human dignity, peace, identity and life together in its network, and strengthens the participation and solidarity of the human community in the universe of life.

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**ETHNIC DISCOURSE AND THE NEW WORLD DYSORDER<sup>1</sup>:  
A Communitarian Perspective**

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"When the forms of an old culture are dying, the new culture is created  
by a few people who are not afraid to be insecure." -- Rudolf Bahro

The rise of ethnicity as a central problem of our time has a dual origin. The most immediate cause is, of course, the end of the cold war. From Yalta in 1945 to Malta in 1989, the world was dominated by the tidal rivalries between the East and West with a rising undercurrent of North-South conflicts and contentions.<sup>2</sup> The universalist ideological pretensions of communism and liberalism left little room for the claims of ethnic and national loyalties except in the Third World where national liberation movements attempted to chart a third way under the rubrics of national self-determination and non-alignment. While these attempts succeeded in gaining national independence for many Asian and African countries, they failed to give adequate recognition to the enormous racial, ethnic, and tribal diversity of the newly-independent nations themselves. Ethnicity and ethnic discourse thus remained repressed under the weight of a world order characterized by bipolarity and the nation-state rivalries.

The end of the Cold War, however, has unleashed the centrifugal, ethnic and tribal forces within the nation-states. (For a map of current world conflict spots, mostly of ethnic origin, see Figure 1. For a sample of ethnic conflict on American campuses, see Tehranian, 1991c) It has led to the break-up of the former Soviet Union, the world's last multi-national empire, break-down of multi-ethnic patchworks such as Yugoslavia and Iraq, threatening the break-up of other nation-states such as Canada and India, and unleashing racial and ethnic violence in the United States, Israel, South Africa, and other multi-racial and multi-ethnic societies. If we pair these events with other developments such as the rise of religious fundamentalism and feminism, we may argue that the rise of primordial identities as opposed to civic and status identities has profound historical roots in the processes of modernization itself. Modernization as a process of universal levelling of societies into relatively homogeneous entities has encountered four great reactions in modern history, which may be labelled as counter-modernization, hyper-modernization, de-modernization, and post-modernization.

[INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]

The universalist, rationalist, scientific, and technological discourse of modernity, so well articulated in the ideologies of liberalism and Marxism, had for long camouflaged a hegemonic project by a new modern, technocratic, internationalist elite. This elite has largely imposed its will upon the rest of a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-religious, and traditionalist world. With the demise of the Cold War, the fraternal bonds of capitalist and socialist, technocratic elites have been further strengthened. The world center's of wealth and power now speak in the language a new

internationalism, "a new world order." The world peripheries are left with no universalist ideologies except the universalism of human suffering and religious hopes. National and parochial cultures as opposed to universalist and cosmopolitan cultures have thus gained a new lease on time in the peripheries. Counter-modernization in the name of neo-traditionalist religious ideologies (Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism) is challenging the authority of the modern, secular state in many parts of the world. Hyper-Modernization as the ideology of rapid transition to an industrial society has historically worked through nationalism, fascism, and communism to mobilize natural and human resources in the cause of state power in the past; it will continue to be the reaction some of the late-comers to industrialization as in China. De-modernization in the name of environmentalist, feminist, and spiritualist ideologies is taking issue with the modernist ideas of progress as exploitation of nature and engineering of society. Post-modernization is going even further in its critique of modernity by calling into question the absolutist claims of positivist science (scientism) and by proposing its own absolutisms of nihilism and relativism. In the face of these challenges, the continuing projects of modernization have no other option but to co-opt elements of the the emerging ideologies.

The world is clearly in a state of transition from an old to a new, yet undefined order torn between contradictory potentials. Stanley Hoffman has captured the essential feature of this uncertainty by using the metaphor of a bus to characterize the world situation: "The world," he writes, "is like a bus whose driver-- the global economy-- is not in full control of the engine and is himself out of control, in which children-- the people-- are tempted to step on either the brake or the gas pedal, and the adults-- the states-- are worried passengers. A league of passengers may not be enough to keep the bus on the road, but there is no better solution yet." (Hoffman, 1990, p. 122) Although Hoffman's characterization of states as "adults" and people as "children" reveals an unabashed elitist bias, his implicit point about the need for cooperation is well-taken. The futile wars of the past few decades (from Korea to Vietnam and the Middle East) brought no conclusive victories except untold death and destruction on all sides. The Cold War was won by no side except, perhaps, Germany and Japan. The presumed victor, the United States, is in a state of economic disarray while the presumed vanquished, the ex-Soviet Union, presents the world's last imperial system in a state of dissolution and reorganization. As Paul Kennedy (1987) has argued, both superpowers extended their military grasp beyond their economic reach and are now facing the dire consequences.

In the midst of these contradictions, however, five global magatrends seem to stand out, each characterized by inner tensions between two distinctly different tendencies and discourses. These trends may be defined as Globalism, Regionalism, Nationalism, Localism, and Spiritualism. Accelerating processes of world communication through travel and tourism, the print media, global broadcasting, telephony and satellite networks, transborder data flows, as well as the global dissemination of the miniaturized media such as telephones, modems, copying and fax machines, personal computers, audio and video-cassette recorders, and connectivity among them-- have all immensely contributed to what might be called "an acceleration of history." While it took two world wars in this century to dissolve the Ottoman, Austro-Hungarian, British, French, Dutch, Belgian, Spanish, and Portuguese empires, the Soviet empire dissolved within a few years through *glasnost* and the rapid exposure of the Soviet society to the world media, video-cassette recorders, fax machines, and computer networks. This is not to claim for technology an exclusive or even decisive role in revolutionary changes but to suggest that technology always augments the social forces already present and pressing for social change. How does world communication contribute to the contradictory potentials and choices in the five global trends suggested above? In what way does the international public discourse reflect these trends and frame the policy choices?

### Globalism: Hegemonic vs. Communitarian

Globalism is perhaps the most apparent of all five trends. It is particularly visible to the eyes of international travellers at world airports, hotel chains, fast food restaurants, and those ubiquitous signs of modern civilization-- the Big Mac, CocaCola, Madonna, and Michael Jackson. The Big Mac has conquered the old world (London, Paris, Moscow, Beijing) for the new. The CocaColonization of the world has reached the remotest villages around the globe. "Striking a Pose"<sup>3</sup> and breakdancing may be edging out proletarian solidarity, national fervor, and religious devotion.

The engine of globalism is modern capitalism, dating back to the 16th century, tearing down the traditional barriers of feudal, tribal, racial, ethnic, and even national loyalties in favor of the internationalism of the world marketplace of ideas and commodities. Its carriers are the global corporations typically operating in over 100 countries, locating wherever government interference is the least and profit opportunities the most. Its chief technologies are energy, transportation, and telecommunication, the three successive technological breakthroughs leading to three successive long waves of global economic growth. The latest wave, the third industrial revolution, is characterized by the application of computing technologies to all facets of life in manufacturing (Computer Assisted Design-Computer Assisted Manufacturing known as CAD-CAM), administration, education, travel, and entertainment. Without telecommunication, transborder data flows, and electronic fund transfers, the global economy and corporation would have been inconceivable. Globalism's strategies of conquest are horizontal, vertical, and spatial integration<sup>4</sup> of the the key world industries from oil to transportation and telecommunication. Its lubricants are the transfers of capital from the centers to the peripheries orchestrated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, mobilizing world capital, allocating it globally, and reducing the risk for private investors.

Globalism, however, has produced both majestic successes and grand failures. It has brought modern industrial civilization to the remotest regions of the world, but it has also created growing gaps and antagonisms between the rich and poor, humans and nature, and centers and peripheries. Capitalism and communism as the twin faces of globalism, both originating in the Enlightenment project, have also imposed upon the world a secular, scientific, and technological worldview that considers human progress in primarily material terms. This ideology of *developmentalism* is now worldwide. In the peripheries, where the processes of development have taken place piecemeal and unevenly, the social system is often torn between a modernizing elite and a traditional mass. Frequently, the two sectors of the population live in separate quarters, sometimes as if in separate countries and centuries. As bits and watts (indicators of information and energy consumption) increase in mass production and consumption, life is diminished under a system of modernized poverty. Whereas poverty in traditional societies is made tolerable by relative equality, the ethics of self-denial and mutual obligation, and the bonds of community, modernized poverty is driven to despair in a prevailing environment of relentless acquisition, conspicuous consumption, and unabashed greed in the larger society. Modernized poverty thus breeds atomistic mobility, status anxiety, social envy, rising expectations, frustrations, regression, and aggression. The negative internalities of dualistic modernity (such as time-consuming acceleration, sick-making health care, stupefying education, counter-communicative mass communication, and information-void news) thus outpace the positive externalities of growth and development. This used to be primarily characteristic of Third World societies, but increasingly the inner cities of the First and Second Worlds of development also are plagued by class, racial, and ethnic dualisms. Witness the race riots of the United States in 1965 and 1992.

Globalism as a megatrend is however torn between two hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses. There are those who argue for the worldwide triumph of liberal capitalism, the "end of history" as Fukuyama (1989) has called it, suggesting that only the boring details are left yet to be

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worked out, that the great Hegelian battle of ideas in history has come to a conclusive end, that there is little need for a public discourse on the fundamental goals of development. This view is also resonating in the American academic circles in a debate between the declinists, led by Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (1987) and the revivalists, led by Joseph Nye's *Bound to Lead* (1990). While Kennedy argues that all modern great powers, including the United States, have gone through a cycle of economic expansion, military over-reach, and a consequent economic and political decline, Nye suggests that a unique combination of resource endowments, democratic power, and cultural appeal *bounds* <sup>5</sup> the United States to continue as the lone superpower and world leader. The Pentagon has joined this debate by the preparation of leaked documents setting out the blueprint of a proposed strategy for continued U. S. world hegemony. (See *The New York Times*, May 26, 1992.) That hegemony, Pentagon argues, can be guaranteed only through continued U. S. military preparedness while limiting the autonomy of other potential centers of military power such as Japan, Germany, Russia, and others. In the presidential elections of 1992 also a debate is shaping up between the globalists led by President Bush who tends to see America's future in its continued active role in making the world safe for the global corporations and his Democratic and independent critics who propose to refocus on America's domestic problems.

In contrast to the hegemonic, globalist perspectives, there are others who also claim a globalist perspective but with an accent on the local. "Think Globally, Act Locally" is their motto. (Feather, 1980) The notions of "Spaceship Earth" ( Fuller, 1978), Gaia Hypothesis (Lockwood, 1988), common security, sustainable development, soft and appropriate technology, Think Globally, *Dial* Locally, all suggest a commonality of human destiny and need for greater equality that requires devolution of power and communication. In a follow-up to their seminal study of *Limits to Growth* (1971), conducted twenty years later, Donella and Dennis Meadows (1992, 1991, pp. xv-xvi.) have recapitulated their earlier conclusions as follows:

"1. Human use of many essential resources and generation of many kinds of pollutants have already surpassed rates that are physically sustainable. Without significant reductions in material and energy flows, there will be in the coming decades an uncontrolled decline in per capita food output, energy use, and industrial production.

"2. This decline is not inevitable. To avoid it two changes are necessary. The first is comprehensive revision of policies and practices that perpetuate growth in material consumption and in population. The second is a rapid, drastic increase in the efficiency with which materials and energy are used.

"3. A sustainable society is still technically and economically possible. It could be much more desirable than a society that tries to solve its problems by constant expansion. The transition to a sustainable society requires a careful balance between long-term and short-term goals and an emphasis on sufficiency, equity, and quality of life rather than on quantity of output. It requires more than productivity and more than technology; it also requires maturity, compassion, and wisdom."

The publication of the earlier version of *Limits to Growth* was following by a heightened public discourse on the ecological problems. The new edition is coming out at a time that the memories of the Three-Mile Island, Chernobyl, Exxon-Valdez, Bhopal, and the Gulf War ecological disasters are still fresh in people's minds. There is also a worldwide movement for sustainable development as pronounced in the Rio Declaration of the Earth Summit of June 1992. The Green movement and parties have found in color "green" a symbol for their central concern with the preservation of the environment in the face of the onslaught of relentless growth. But destruction of nature is not the only problem. Destroying the delicate bonds of community is the other equally significant cost of rapid and despotic modernization. The traditions of civility and

mutual obligation have eroded under the onslaught of acquisitive individualism and its fetishes of commodity and identity. There is a need therefore for a new balance between liberty, equality, and community, the three axial principles of modern democracies. Since this balance has been undermined in capitalist societies by a relentless pursuit of individual greed and in communist societies by a bureaucratic devotion to state goals, a revival of civil society and their epistemic communities through devolutions of power is called for. I have called this approach to social change "communitarian." (Tehrani, 1990a & b, 1991) Under the leadership of Amitai Etzioni, a new movement bearing the same name has recently emerged in the United States with its own programs and publications (including a new periodical, *The Responsive Community*).

A communitarian perspective on the new world order sharply differs from coercive or hegemonic perspectives. It would call for non-violence, ecologically sensitive and socially responsible sustainable development, protection of human rights, the upholding of human responsibility towards all layers of human community from local to global, and a celebration of cultural diversity. Three elements seem essential to the construction of an effective world community: common *interests, norms, and laws*. Two factors have strengthened global common interests, threats to human survival through ecological disasters and mass violence, and opportunities in a global economy based on peaceful trade and cooperation. An emerging consensus on international norms recognizes the global political, economic, and ecological interdependence. These norms emphasize the need for the global protection of the environment, use of technology, trade, and development policies to overcome the gaps between the rich and the poor, a universal application of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and a collective denunciation of the use of violence in national and international conflicts. The world community ultimately depends on a fragile moral community. Without solidifying these norms, it will be torn apart. But norms without laws and laws without sanctions will have little effect. The world community must be therefore a community of interests, norms, laws, and sanctions.

### **Regionalism: Exclusionary vs. Inclusionary**

Given the enormous heterogeneity of the world, however, a global community is best achieved through an interlocking system of smaller and more homogeneous communities. Regionalism is one such trend. This may be called an Age of Regions. Regional formations such as the European Economic Community (EEC), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), and others represent efforts by groups of relatively close countries to establish effective communities of interests, norms, laws and sanctions. There is a risk, of course, that these budding regional blocs would turn into intense economic competition and possible political confrontation rather than cooperation. Fortress Europe vs. Fortress America vs. Fortress East Asia is not an unlikely scenario. Regionalism can be therefore exclusionary or inclusionary. It can foster a new type of regional chauvinism or it can provide a protective shield for its members against the global hegemonic projects while opening up to the rest of the world for mutual cooperation and benefit.

Regional formations, however, reflect the present dualistic structures of the world system divided between centers and peripheries. First, at the apex of this hierarchy stands North America with its peripheries in South and Central America. NAFTA is the regional expression of this center. Second, catching up and occasionally surpassing North America in per capita income is Western Europe with its old colonial peripheries in Asia and Africa and its new potential peripheries in Central and Eastern Europe. The EEC and the European Union thus represent a broadening regional organization, including Western and Eastern European countries. Third, aspiring to the top position is Japan together with its peripheries in East Asia, some of whom are out-Japanizing the Japanese by remarkable rates of economic growth driven by export development strategies. These include South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore trailed by Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand. Although the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conferences (PECC) and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) are broader in membership, the East Asian

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countries play a critical role in these regional formations. Fourth, Russia in the new Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) presents a new periphery for Western, Japanese, and North American investment while acting as a center in relation to its own Asian peripheries. Fifth, China plays a similar role for Japanese transfers of technology and capital while acting as a center in relation to its less developed regions such as Mongolia, Tibet and the eastern provinces. Sixth, itself similarly vulnerable to Western penetration, India is acting as a center for its multi-lingual empire as well as the smaller nations of South Asia. This regional formation is represented by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). Seventh, the ASEAN region stands out as a unique combination of countries united in common efforts to attain economic growth and avoid periphery status through regional cooperation. In addition to Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, and Brunei, the ASEAN may soon admit Cambodia, Burma, and Vietnam to its ranks. Eighth, despite a unity of language and culture, the Arab world presents a less successful regionalist project. A strategic military location, the possession of oil resources by some and not others, and traditional national and tribal rivalries have divided and weakened the Arabs in their efforts towards such unity. The beleaguered Arab League is the main regional expression of Arab unity. Ninth, Latin America with its wealth of population and resources presents yet another periphery united by a common Hispanic-Portuguese culture, divided by different types of political regimes, promising of regional collaboration for development. The Organization of American States (OAS) is its main expression with some sub-regional organizations. Tenth, a new regional formation under the name of Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), consisting of Pakistan, Iran, Turkey, and the former Muslim Soviet republics of Azarbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkemenistan, Uzbakestan, Tajikestan, and Kirghistan was formed in February 1992. The new Islamic Republic of Afghanistan might join ECO later. Eleventh and finally stands the vast continent of black Africa south of the Sahara with its dark history of white exploitation, famines, tribal conflicts, sluggish growth, and current awakening to a new need for regional cooperation.

Regionalism is driven by a complex of forces in order to detour past hostilities, to achieve regional security, to obtain economies of scale, scope and status, to strengthen common cultural ties, and to protect against global or regional hegemonic projects. Culture and communication thus play a central role in regional formations. A common cultural heritage as in Europe and Latin America, a common language as in the Arab world, common economic and security problems as in the ASEAN region, and close cultural backgrounds and aspirations as in the newly formed ECO, each have played a role. But regional integration is easier said than done. It requires economic complementarity, political trust, and cultural affinity. Even Europe that has been in the forefront of regional integration is now having second thoughts on the pace of its movement towards monetary and political unification. Little and cosmopolitan Denmark, for instance, has recently shown signs of doubt on trading the luxury of unique identity for a European grand design. While smallness might be a handicap, big is not necessarily beautiful.

### **Nationalism: Totalitarian/Aggressive vs. Democratic/Benign**

It is easier to achieve national rather than regional integration. The entire history of nationalism is an effort to mold a state in the image of a single nation with a common language, culture, economy, and political system. Nationalism has proved a relatively successful method of political organization in the modern world precisely because it is a step closer to the realities of human diversity than imperial systems. States which are multi-national, with the possible exception of Switzerland, face problems of internal security. Witness the former Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, India, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Canada, and the United States.

During the Cold War, the death of nationalism was slightly exaggerated. The end of the Cold War has witnessed a new surge of ethnic consciousness and nationalism around the world. With the decline of the universalist ideological pretensions of liberalism and communism, primordial identities have resurfaced as the most potent force in domestic and international politics. We now

have about 178 countries in the United Nations, increasing as the new states in the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia become members. There are, however, over 5,000 nations spread around these countries, many of them restive and clamoring for independence and statehood. Witness the Kurds, the Palestinians, the Qubecquois. Of the 120 violent conflicts currently waged around the world, 72 per cent are ethnic wars. There are currently some 15 million refugees in the world and over 150 million displaced people. Most of these dislocations are due to protracted ethnic conflicts erupting into violence. There are some 4,522 living languages in the world, of which 138 languages have more than one million speakers. Many languages have unfortunately died, however. The number of languages in the United States before the coming of Columbus in 1492 was over 1000. Today it is only 200. (For the sources of these statistics, see Shah, 1992.) Every language represents human creativity at its noblest, the voice of gods breathing life into a dead world. "In the beginning was the Word." We must preserve those languages that live and resurrect those that have died.

A kind of alterative UN, called the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO), was formed on February 11, 1991, to assist the world's disenfranchised minorities towards national self-determination. Fourteen nations and peoples made up UNPO's original roll. The organization had nearly doubled its membership to 26 by 1992, representing nearly 350 million people. Along with its 26 full members, UNPO also welcomes "observer" nations such as the native American groups. In August 1991, 10 observer nations participated in the UNPO General Assembly. The largest member nation is Kurdistan with a population of 25 million in the Middle East; the smallest is probably Belau, a tiny US island trusteeship territory in the Pacific with a population of 14,000. What unites these peoples is a common sense of frustration over the denial of their elementary individual and collective human rights. In Turkey, for instance, the Kurds have not been even acknowledged as Kurds; they are referred to as "mountain Turks." The people of Belau have voted repeatedly in the past few years to refuse nuclear weapons on their shores, but they are being pressured by the United States government to accept nuclear warships in order to achieve an independent status. Tibet has been occupied by China since 1950 and the Uyghur people of East Turkestan have been forcibly subdued by the central authorities in Beijing. A condition for membership in UNPO is, however, the renunciation of violence as a means of achieving self-determination. (See *The Los Angeles Times*, April 23, 1992, and the UNPO Covenant published at the UNPO headquarters in The Hague.)

To defend and celebrate the cultural diversity that the emergence of such forgotten peoples represents, is a great challenge. The forces of globalism and regionalism often tend to homogenize and destroy cultural diversity, much to the impoverishment of the world. However, nationalism also has often been used as the hegemonic project of a dominant ethnic group to repress the weaker ethnic groups. Nationalism can be therefore democratic and benign or totalitarian and malignant, externally aggressive and internally repressive. Swiss nationalism, for instance, is an example of the former. Nazi German and Fascist Italian nationalisms provide examples of the latter. More recently, the nationalism of the colonized peoples has demonstrated how this ideology can be a liberating force in history, while the nationalism of the colonizers shows how exploitation and repression of the subjected peoples can be justified under the noblest of moral claims such as "the white man's burden" or "manifest destiny." Nationalism has achieved much in art and culture, economic progress, and political unity. But it has also produced untold misery and genocides such as the near extermination of the native Americans and native Hawaiians in the United States (Stannard, 1989), the Jewish Holocaust in Europe, and the repression of the Palestinians in Israel.

The trouble with cultural and national identity is that it is often presented as non-negotiable. Much of the violence of the modern world can be traced back to religious, national, or racial ideologies camouflaging material, economic and political conflicts of interests. The Gulf War, for instance, was fought in the name of "superior" Western standards of moral conduct. What if Kuwait's main product were Broccoli? Would President Bush have sent nearly a million U. S.

troops to the Gulf War? Contrast Iraq's invasion of Kuwait with Serbia's invasion of Bosnia which has been largely left to its own devices. The moral standards invoked in the Gulf War were similarly circumvented in Los Angeles when trial by a jury of peers in the Afro-American Rodney King case threatened to bring a guilty verdict upon the white policemen who had beaten him nearly to death. The trial was transferred to a white suburb of Los Angeles where the jury was expected and did, in fact, deliver a non-guilty verdict. These examples of moral obtuseness may seem worlds apart, but they point to a single problem in the modern world. Class, ethnicity, race, and nationality are so intimately intertwined in a hierarchy of wealth, income, and status that it is often easy to pour conflicting economic interests into racial, ethnic, or national passions and violence. While economic conflicts are negotiable, however, ethnic, racial and national conflicts tend to be treated as non-negotiable. That is why racism so often provides a convenient ideological vehicle for class interests.

Through interactive public discourse rather than hegemonic one-way communication, the media can contribute to peace and mutual understanding in domestic as well as international affairs. However, much of the world media is controlled either by government or commercial interests motivated primarily by propaganda or profit motives. In social and political conflicts, therefore, the tendency is towards a threefold process of simplification of issues, i. e. dichotomizing, personalizing, and trivializing public issues towards a construction of media reality considerably at odds with the existential realities of social life. Broadcasting particularly lends itself to these excesses. The visual impact of television is especially suited to an appeal to the right brain, to one-dimensional, singular constructions of reality rather than plurality of meanings. Witness the Gulf War and its portrayal of that conflict as a sanitized, high-tech, visual game with a minimum of human casualties and suffering. No one has yet carefully assessed the real casualties of that war. But the post-war reports indicate over 150,000 dead, 100,000 maimed, a million Kurdish, Shi'ite, and Palestinian refugees, followed by epidemics, vendettas, and high infant mortality rates resulting from breakdown of basic utilities in Iraq and Kuwait. Eighty per cent of the American public receives its news through television, and 80 per cent of the same public was reported to have supported the war. Is there any correlation between these two statistics?

The global village has been historically dominated by broadcasting networks in the service of subtle and not-so-subtle nationalist propaganda. Although between 1965 and 1990, world radio and television sets have dramatically increased in numbers and distribution in favor of the less developed countries (LDCs), the major transmitting networks continue to be dominated by Western media organizations. As Figure 2 shows, world radio sets increased from 530 million in 1965 to 2.1 billion sets in 1990. The share of LDCs increased from 21% to 44% of the total. World TV sets increased from 180 million in 1965 to one billion in 1990. The share of LDCs increased from 17% to 45%. As Table 1 demonstrates, however, world radio broadcasting is clearly dominated by the United States, Britain, Germany, France, China, a declining Russia, and an ascending Taiwan, South Korea, Egypt, India, and Iran-- and most of it in pursuit of their own partisan politics. World Television broadcasting is currently dominated by CNN and Visnews as well as WorldNet (distributing TV programs that "enhance U. S. diplomacy abroad), the BBC commercial World Television News, Deutschland TV, and Canal France International, most of which have entered the arena with generous government subsidies. However, the pioneer in the field is purely commercial. Ted Turner's cable News Network was established in 1980 and is now available on satellite or cable in 137 countries. Its rival is BBC World Service Television, set up in 1991 as a commercial venture after the BBC tried and failed to win government support.

[INSERT FIGURE 2 AND TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

### **Localism: Parochial vs. Liberal**

While nationalism has clearly been a prevailing historical force for the past two centuries, localism is a relatively novel trend pointing to a deepening of the democratic forces. The processes

of decolonization and democratization that started with the American Revolution in 1776 have now penetrated everywhere. The continuing world democratic revolution has gone through four long waves. From 1776 to 1848, this revolution was primarily aimed at the overthrow of monarchies and independence for the colonies in Europe and the Americas. The First World War in 1914-1918 led to the breakdown of the Russian, Austro-Hungarian, and Ottoman Empires and the weakening of European control over their colonies in the Middle East and North Africa. The Second World War in 1940-1945 led to the final breakdown of the British, French, Belgian, Dutch, Portuguese, and Spanish empires in Africa and Asia. The end of the Cold War in 1989 and the breakdown of the Soviet Union may be considered as the fourth wave in a continuing revolution.

The new democratic revolution, however, is focused on local empowerment. Localism is the ideological expression of this trend emphasizing local knowledge, local initiative, local technologies, and local organization. The torch of leadership has similarly passed on from the *ideologues* of the great revolutionary movements of the 19th and 20th centuries, to the *technologues* of the 20th century modern technocracies in government and business, and to the *communologues* of the grass-root, localist movements who speak in the vernacular of local knowledge and epistemic communities.<sup>6</sup> As the slogan of "Think Globally, *Dial* Locally" also suggests, the global communication network has brought to the local communities the power to link with communities of affinity throughout the world. The local initiatives for nuclear weapons free zones (NWFZ) has increased from 250 in 1982 to 5,000 in 1991 (Boulding, 1991). There are already 24 countries in the world which have unilaterally declared themselves as NWFZs. There are also 5 formal NWFZ treaties signed among governments. A global idea thus depends for its implementation on local movements and organizations. (Boulding, 1991; Tehranian, 1991) The organization of Municipal Foreign Policy organizations in many cities in the United States is another manifestation of how local communities are no longer willing to allow the US Department of State to be their sole representative in matters of grave international concern.

However, localism also is caught in a tension-- between parochialism and liberalism. Parochial localism tends to be narrow-minded, bigoted, and persecutionary. The phenomenon of David Duke in Louisiana politics may be considered as an archetype of such trends. Unabashed racism coupled with local prejudices and organizations such as the Ku Klux Klan has proved a powerful tonic at times of dwindling resources and diminishing expectations. The Rodney King case in Los Angeles also demonstrates the parochial power of localism. The jurors in Simi Valley were acting in perfect harmony with their own local views of white policemen as protectors of law and order when they handed down a no-guilty verdict despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary. When localism combines with a national trend towards racism as demonstrated by the Republican Party's willingness to use race as an issue in elections (witness the Willie Horton TV ads in the presidential elections of 1988), the outcome can be tragic as demonstrated in the LA riots of 1992. The Rodney King case also demonstrated both the power and impotence of television in the face of local prejudices. Powerful visual portrayals of a helpless black man beaten to the ground by a group of four white policemen brought about a national outcry for racial justice, but it could not bring a guilty verdict from a jury of twelve deeply entrapped by their own localist worldview. Powerful images of looting and beating of the whites in LA by black rioters has created a backlash for what Vice-President Dan Quayle has called "law and order" against "poverty of values."

The hierarchies of inequality within nations in which women, minorities, and immigrants are often trapped at the bottom of the social structures of injustice and violence, ultimately cannot be corrected except through grassroot, local initiatives and actions. No matter how powerful the global, regional, and national forces, it is local conditions and power configurations that shape the routinized structures of violence as in the inner city ghettos. The communities in the U. S. South did not change the scourge of segregation for over a hundred years until industrialization came

there and altered the institutional structures at the local level. The same can be said of the dismantling of *apartheid* in South Africa. The new segregation in urban America relegates one-fifth of the population to the conditions of an "underclass" whose chances for upward mobility are nearly nil. The post-industrial, information society of high technology and fully-automated factories (CAD-CAM) has turned this population into conditions of structural unemployment and unemployability. Male unemployment rate among the black population of inner cities in the United States is about 50%. Such conditions cannot change until remedies take into account not only state and national forces, but also the local level.

The United States presents only one of the most advanced and violent cases of what is unfolding in a post-urban world. Only 12% of Americans now live in big cities. More than 50% of Americans now live in small towns and suburbs. But cities are defined in a peculiar way. As *The Economist* (May 9, 1992, p. 22) points out, "Beverly Hills, home of Hollywood's stars, is completely surrounded by the city of Los Angeles. Yet, it has its own mayor, government, police force and tax structure. So does Compton, a poor, largely black slum close to south-central Los Angeles. The consequence is that Beverly Hills has lavish municipal services and Compton rotten ones. Redraw the maps, make the areas that can afford to spend share the burdens with those that cannot, and things may start to grow healthier."

Transportation and telecommunication are making it increasingly possible, in part via telework, to live and work in small towns or what continues to be inappropriately called "suburbs." These "edge cities," as Joel Garreau (1991) calls them, are where the new high-tech industries, commercial services, and shopping malls locate. The city of Los Angeles is a patchwork of such autonomous suburbs, connected with the world's most sophisticated freeway system enabling their residents to bypass the "undesirable" neighborhoods while having easy access to urban beaches, theaters, museums, and other desirable facilities. While the business districts in the big city and the small edge cities experience revival and expansion, the inner cities decline. Philadelphia, America's fifth largest city, encapsulates this paradox. In the past decade, Philadelphia's skyline in the business districts has been transformed by architecturally exciting new skyscrapers while the ghetto areas have gone into a downward spin. The city's population is down to around 1.5m, compared with 2m in 1970-- but its suburbs are ever more populous. As *The Economist* (May 9, 1992, p. 24) argues, "the benefits of burden sharing are less than self-evident to the average suburbanite. Many people have left the cities to escape high taxes and soaring crime. It is hard to persuade them that it is in their interest to hand over some of their local taxes to the cities they have fled." In the meantime, the inner cities in the United States and many other parts of the world burn both actually and metaphorically.

### **Spiritualism: Fundamentalist vs. Ecumenical**

The world is thus desperately in need of a new ethics of social responsibility. The acquisitive society of the modern world has unleashed boundless human energies and dazzling technologies for production but it has failed to provide fairness or a sense of community. As gaps grow among and within nations, modernity also will increasingly fail to provide security not only for the poor but also for the rich and the middle class. The response to this moral and political crisis has been the rise of a new spiritualist movement in many parts of the world. The movement has, however, assumed two contradictory faces-- fundamentalist vs. ecumenical.

During the past decade, countries as wide apart in geography, history, social structure, and culture as the United States, India, Iran, Israel, and Guatemala have come under the political impact of fundamentalist, religious movements.<sup>7</sup> (Tehrani, 1992b &c) The last three presidential elections in the United States were profoundly influenced by the rise of the new fundamentalist, Christian movement particularly around the Bible Belt. Presidents Carter, Reagan, and Bush each in their own unique style campaigned on a political platform pleasing to the

fundamentalists on such social issues as prayer at schools, restrictions on abortion, ban on pornography, and a general bemoaning of the decadence of a liberal and permissive society. India's last election in 1991 was marked by the spectacular successes of a fundamentalist, Hindu party in a country constitutionally dedicated to a secular regime. Similarly, the Jewish fundamentalist parties in Israel have profoundly affected the balance between the Labor and Likud parties in favor of the latter. And in Guatemala, where only 30% of the population is Protestant, a fundamentalist was elected to presidency in 1990.

Fundamentalism appears primarily as a reactive phenomenon-- to the unsettling effects of rapid social change (hyper-modernization in developing countries, post-modernization in the developed), to marginalization (of the ethnic majorities as in the cases of the Malay in Malaysia and the Hindus in India), to relative material or psychological deprivation (among the urban ghetto or yuppie fundamentalists), and to commodity fetishism as an antithesis to its own identity fetishism. It may or may not be a passing social phenomenon as it seizes power (as in Iran), or is frustrated by the superior power of the state (as in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, or Algeria), is gradually integrated into the mainstream of cultural life (as in the case of Moral Majority in the United States), or is allied to the ruling elites in preserving the status quo (as in the United States, Guatemala and Saudi Arabia). Its alternative strategies thus consist of revolutionary *militancy* (for total power), *withdrawal* (from mainstream society), *accommodation* (with the rest of society), or a relentless *conservation* of traditional religious values and norms. One of its unintended consequences might be to pave the way for greater epistemological tolerance between religious and secular worldviews as each one softens its monopolistic truth claims. Alternatively, it may take over and rule with an iron fist until it too is chastened by the human facts of diversity and need for tolerance.

But the rise of fundamentalism signals a deeper yearning for a spiritual home in a cold and callous modern world characterized by ceaseless wants and anxieties. In this world, the individual is torn away from the ties of community and atomized by those routinized and anonymous technocracies of modernity that reward him with commodities while robbing him of his soul. The secular ideologies of progress, nationalism, liberalism and communism, were thought for a while to provide a new, effective sense of community and social responsibility. However, the secular ideologies never addressed, let alone resolved, the human conditions of finitude, fragility, and morality. Primordial identities (religion, race, ethnicity, and gender), which were thought by such great social pundits as Marx, Freud, and Weber, to be withering away in the modern world, have come back to the political arena with vengeance. Culture as the last repository of collective defense against the onslaught of modernity and its alien and alienating consequences, has assumed a new force and vitality.

Accelerating physical, social, and psychic mobility, facilitated by the technologies of transportation and telecommunication, is producing multiple and syncretic identities and cultures for most peoples of the world. What appeared to be non-negotiable, one's body (race, gender, age), time (historical home), and space (geographic home) is becoming increasingly negotiable. Veiled Muslim women can watch "Death of a Princess," the BBC-WGBH-produced saga of a Saudi Princess stoned to death in Saudi Arabia with her lover for "adultery," via smuggled video-tapes and draw their own conclusions about how they wish to redefine themselves. Michael Jackson's break-dancing has penetrated the hardest bastions of cultural protectionism in Third World societies. Wherever press and broadcasting are muzzled, audio and video-cassettes have provided an alternative channel for alternative news and views. (Iyer, 1988) In 1979, a cassette revolution helped to overthrow the Shah of Iran. In 1988, at the beginnings of *glasnost* in the former Soviet Union, the video production and sale of alternative newscasts in video-cassette rentals became a growth industry. In 1989, the use of fax machines in China undermined the efforts of the government to control the news of the Tiananmen Square massacre. In 1990-91, in a relatively liberal and media-saturated country such as the United States, the managed media's portrayal of the Gulf War was so powerfully challenged by events and alternative channels of communication (computer networking, video documentaries of the aftermath of the war) that the

war "victory" lost much of its legitimacy a year later.<sup>8</sup> Political and cultural pluralism is thus not only desirable but also possible and perhaps inevitable. We must not only tolerate and respect differences but also celebrate them through multi-culturalism and a revitalization of the public sphere of discourse. (Habermas, 1983)

However, we need to forge a unity out of this human plurality, to orchestrate a harmony out of the dissonance of voices. This unity cannot come but out of the oneness of the human spirit. The world is discovering a new sense of oneness. The continuing possibility of a nuclear holocaust, augmented by the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the risks of a deteriorating environmental crisis, the rise of state and anomic terrorism against the innocent by-standers-- all seem to bring the more socially sensitive and responsible world citizens closer together into a new solidarity, a new tribe, a new spirit. The new spiritualism has no name, no rituals, no pope, no ayatollah, and no creed. But it is certainly in the air. It finds its inspiration in the totality of the spiritual heritage of humankind-- in all religions great and small, in all philosophies secular or religious. It may be termed *philosophia perennia* in that the message has been perennially preached, in *Tao Teh Ching*, the *Upanishads*, the *Old and New Testaments*, the *Quran*, and in the Sufi songs. In the words of Sting-- a contemporary English rock poet:

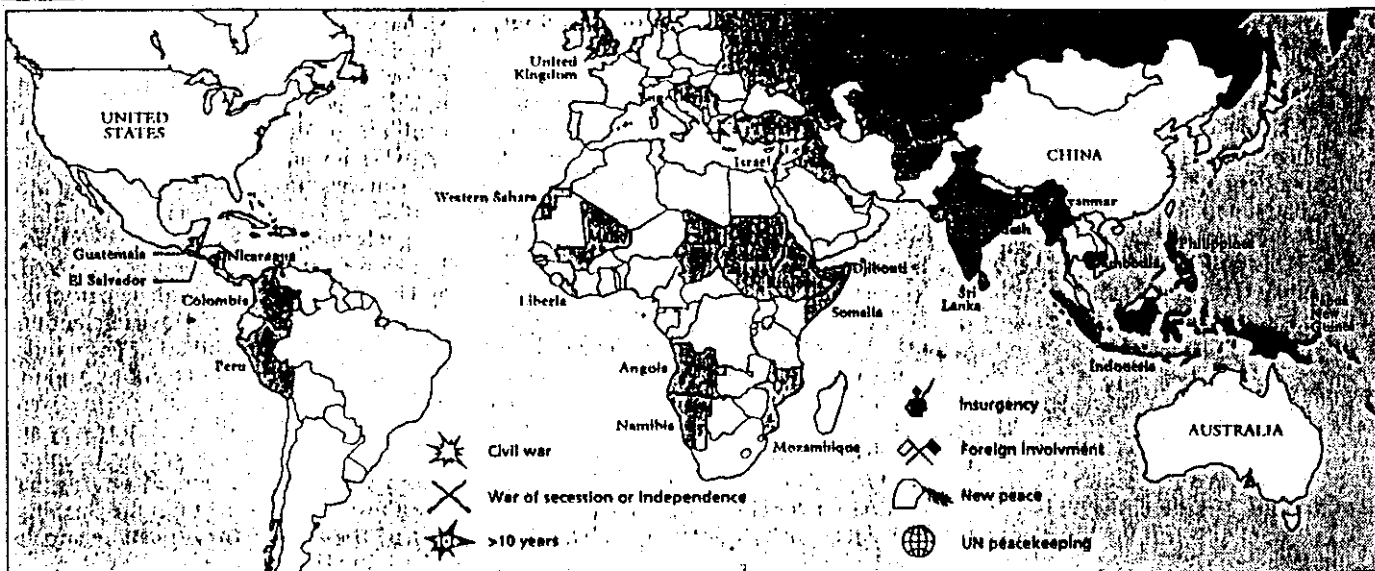
"If blood will flow when flesh and steel are one  
Drying in the color of the evening sun,  
Tomorrow's rain will wash the stains away  
But something in our minds will always stay.  
Perhaps this final act was meant  
to clinch a lifetime's argument  
That nothing comes from violence  
and nothing ever could  
For all those born beneath an angry star  
Lest we forget how fragile we are."

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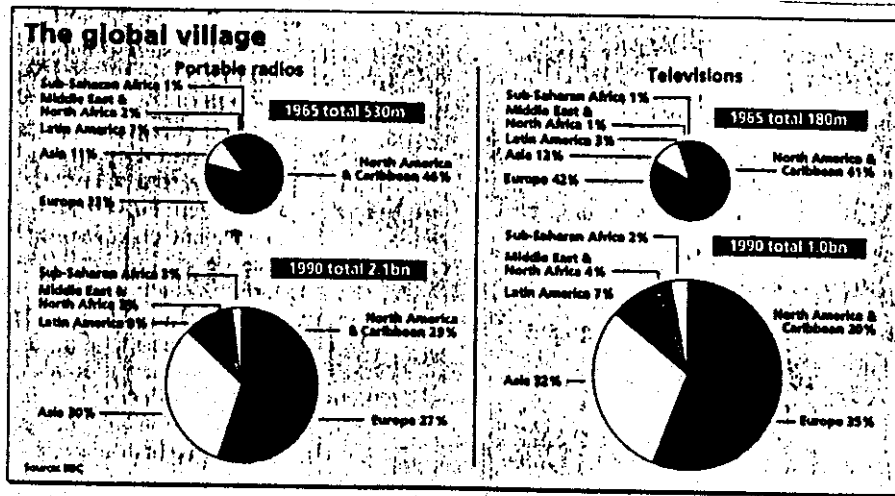
Figure 1. Tribalism Revisited: World's Major Conflict Spots



Americas	Europe
Colombia	Soviet Union
El Salvador	Turkey
Guatemala	United Kingdom
Nicaragua	Yugoslavia
Peru	<b>Asia</b>
<b>Africa</b>	Afghanistan
Angola	Bangladesh
Chad	Cambodia
Djibouti	India
Ethiopia	Indonesia
Liberia	Iraq
Mali	Israel
Mozambique	Lebanon
Namibia	Myanmar
Somalia	Papua New Guinea
Sudan	Philippines
Western Sahara	Sri Lanka

Source: *The Economist*, December 21, 1991 - January 3, 1992, p. 46

Figure 2. The Global Village: World Distribution of World Radio & TV Sets, 1965-1990



Source: *The Economist*, May 2, 1992, p. 21

Table 1. Radio Broadcasting by Leading Countries, 1950-1992

	Hours broadcast per week					Languages, 1992
	1950	1960	1970	1980	1992	
<b>The West</b>						
United States*	497	1,495	1,907	1,901	2,316	51
Britain	643	589	723	719	817	37
West(ern) Germany†	0	315	779	804	673	36
France	198	326	200	125	401	15
Israel	0	91	158	210	388	16
Turkey	40	77	88	199	346	16
Japan	0	203	259	259	336	22
Australia	181	257	350	333	326	8
Holland	127	178	335	289	315	9
Spain	68	202	251	239	263	9
<b>Communist</b>						
China	66	687	1,267	1,350	1,668	43
Russia	533	1,015	1,908	2,094	1,317	46
North Korea	0	159	330	597	702	10
Bulgaria	30	117	164	297	308	12
Cuba	0	0	320	424	251	9
Albania	26	63	487	560	196	13
Romania	30	159	185	198	170	11
Czechoslovakia	119	196	202	255	143	6
Poland	131	232	334	337	110	8
Hungary	76	120	105	127	57	3
East Germany	0	185	274	375	0	0
<b>Third world</b>						
Taiwan	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1,281	16
South Korea	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	617	12
Egypt	0	301	340	548	593	30
India	116	157	271	389	541	24
Iran	12	24	155	175	400	18
Nigeria	0	0	62	170	120	5

\* Includes Voice of America, Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty  
 † Deutsche Welle and Deutschlandfunk. Source: BBC

Source: *The Economist*, May 2, 1992, p. 22.

Figure 2. Two Cartoons on New World Order and Ethnic Warfare  
Source: *The Honolulu Advertiser*, June 12, 1992



The 1980s

COMMUNISM



The 1990s

ETHNIC WARFARE



# A Critique On Church Communication

by Andrew Greeley



The various responsible offices around the country continued to babble about "evangelization" when in fact they are evangelizing no one.

A few Sundays ago in my country there appeared on NBC's Sunday night movie, a film called *"The Love She Sought"*. It starred Angela Langsbury and told the story of an American bishop, an Irish priest, and a teacher at a Catholic school in northern Minnesota. The cinematography was superb, most of the film was shot in Ireland. Catholic imagery and Catholic theology pervaded the story, a tale of love and forgiveness. The program was enthusiastically praised by critics both for its acting and its story and won the Sunday night ratings contest. Catholicism could not have asked for a more stunning or more effective communication of its genius and heritage.

Moreover, the screenplay was based on the novel *The Green Journey* by Jon Hassler, a Catholic author who has been widely hailed by the secular critics and who teaches at St. John's University in Minnesota. Finally the same day Hassler's new novel, *North of Hope* (also about a priest, perhaps the best novel about a priest since Geene's *The Power and the Glory*) earned an ecstatic review in the New York Times Book Review, matching an earlier review in the daily Times.

One would have expected a great rejoicing in the American Catholic community. A Catholic author who writes warm and powerful religious novels had made it in the secular media. Catholic imagery and Catholic theory were being "communicated" on prime time TV and praised in the nation's most important newspaper. *"The Love She Sought"* was the most effective and pervasive exercise in evangelization in many years. Surely priests would urge their people on Sunday morning (or Saturday evening) to watch it. Surely Catholic press and radio and TV would have celebrated it before and after. Surely Catholic study groups and adult education groups would have discussed its poignant portrait of change and continuity in the Church?

Right?

Wrong!

The institutional Church ignored *"The Love She Sought."* It is utterly unaware of John Hassler's existence (except, it would seem, at St. John's Abbey) and couldn't care less about him, or his work, or films based on his work.

The various responsible offices around the country continued to babble about "evangelization" when

in fact they are evangelizing no one. The RCIA cultists continued to dismiss people from the Eucharist after the homily. The Catholic television network happily announced that it would carry the press briefings from the annual meeting of the Catholic bishops — a sure-fire TV hit, as you can imagine!

(The CTNA, by the way, is in fact, one transponder on a satellite. If you want to see a press briefing, you'll have to buy a satellite dish. But even then you won't be able to watch it unless you pay for a decoder and for the decoding signal of CTNA. One can flip through the channels on a satellite dish and see for free all kinds of Protestant evangelizing and even programs by the followers of the late Archbishop LeFevre. But the Catholic bishops scramble their programming — such as it is and it isn't much — so they will evangelize you only if you pay before hand!)

I must confess that I am unaware of Jon Hassler until his publisher sent me the bound galleys of *North of Hope*. I read it on a single evening and found it as powerful a challenge to my priesthood as a week long retreat. I then asked every Catholic I know who engages in serious reading if s/he had ever heard of Jon Hassler, including the literary editor of *America*. The only one who had heard

of him was my nephew who had attended St. John's! My nephew's sister noted Hassler's name in a TV guide story about *"The Love She Sought"* and called me. I made a few phone calls.

I cite this story to establish that while I agree completely with the Cardinal about the importance of the Catholic "presence" in the secular media, I must admit that in my country the church couldn't care less about either the presence of Catholic images and themes or of Catholic artists in the secular media. We do our own institutional programs (our own Sunday morning talking head shows) expertly on occasion, ineptly and unprofessionally in most instances, and ignore the potential religious power of the catholic "presence" in the secular media.

We are stirred into action only when there is something or someone to condemn. Television, we warn our people, is pagan, materialist, secularist. Country music was denounced by implication recently in the *London Table* as shallow and superficial. Martin Scorcese who, most secular

**We are stirred into action only when there is something or someone to condemn.**

critics, Catholic as well as non-Catholic agree is one of the great Catholic artists of our time, was bitterly denounced for his film *"The Last Temptation of Christ"* - often by men who had not seen it and would not watch it. The fact that the film made millions of people talk about Jesus and think about Him and thus provided us with a wonderful opportunity for "evangelization" somehow was completely overlooked.

(I do not deny the flaws in the film. As I said in my article about it in the New York Times Arts and Leisure Section, its most serious flaw is to present married sexual love as a temptation instead of a sacrament. The best way to watch the film is on video with the sound track turned off. Then one realizes that Scorcese has filtered through his Italian American imagination the whole history of Catholic iconography.)

The eagerness to condemn is frequently justified on the grounds that the faithful will be shocked by something on radio or TV or in a film. This notion that we protect the easily threatened faithful is patronizing and con-

descending and ignores the data on how well educated and sophisticated the faithful actually are. They make up their own minds about media consumption. A condemnation of by the Catholic hierarchy is irrelevant when it does not in fact an asset to a film or a program. The laity turn not to their bishops but to their film critics, many of whom like my fellow Chicagoan Roger Ebert are also Catholic.

(Roger is worth a parenthesis. Because of his network TV program with Gene Siskel. He is certainly the most influential film critic in America as well as the most literate. He determines what people watch as well as what they don't watch. To what extent has the Church, including his own, admittedly overworked, Cardinal, engaged in dialogue with him? I think the answer to that question reveals just how important Catholic "presence" in the popular media is to the institutional Church in my country.)

Religion, I am convinced is imaginative before it is propositional.

(continued on page 10)

(A Layman's....from page 8)

It begins in (1) experiences which renew hope, is encoded in (2) images and symbols which become templates for action, is shared with others through (3) stories which are told in (4) communities and celebrated in (5) rituals. This model is a circle, not a straight line, and hence suggests that the stories, communities and rituals in their turn influence hope renewal experiences.

Because we are reflective creatures we must reflect on our imaginative religion. Because we are creatures who belong to communities which have heritages we must critique our imaginative religion. Creeds, catechisms, theological systems, even teaching authorities are an inevitable and essential result of reflection on and critique of experiential religion. Religion must be intellectual but it is experiential before it is intellectual. I do not want to deny the importance of intellectual religion. I am merely saying that religion takes its origin and its raw power from experiences, images, stories, community, and ritual, and that most religious socialization (transmission) takes place through narrative before it takes place in non-fiction. Jesus is a story teller; we know from the exegeses like Cardinal Martini that the parables are in many respects the essential Jesus, that they share with us Jesus's experience of the generous, hope-renewing love of the Father in heaven (who, be it noted, in the stories of Jesus loves with a mother's forgiving tenderness as much as he loves with a father's vigorous protection).

The Jewish tradition is passed on especially in the stories of the Holidays and the Passover. The Catholic tradition is passed on especially in the stories of Christmas and the Christian passover. Indeed I often think that maybe half our heritage is transmitted to children around the crib at Christmastime — and especially in the wonderfully mysterious explanation of the Incarnation to little kids that Mary is God's mommy.

Two assumptions in passing:

1) I agree with David Tracy that the Catholic imagination is analogical, sacramental or metaphorical. It senses the presence of God lurking in the world revealing

**Anything that is quick and inexpensive and hence shoddy and shabby is unworthy of Jesus and unworthy of the Church which produced the Sistine chapel ...**

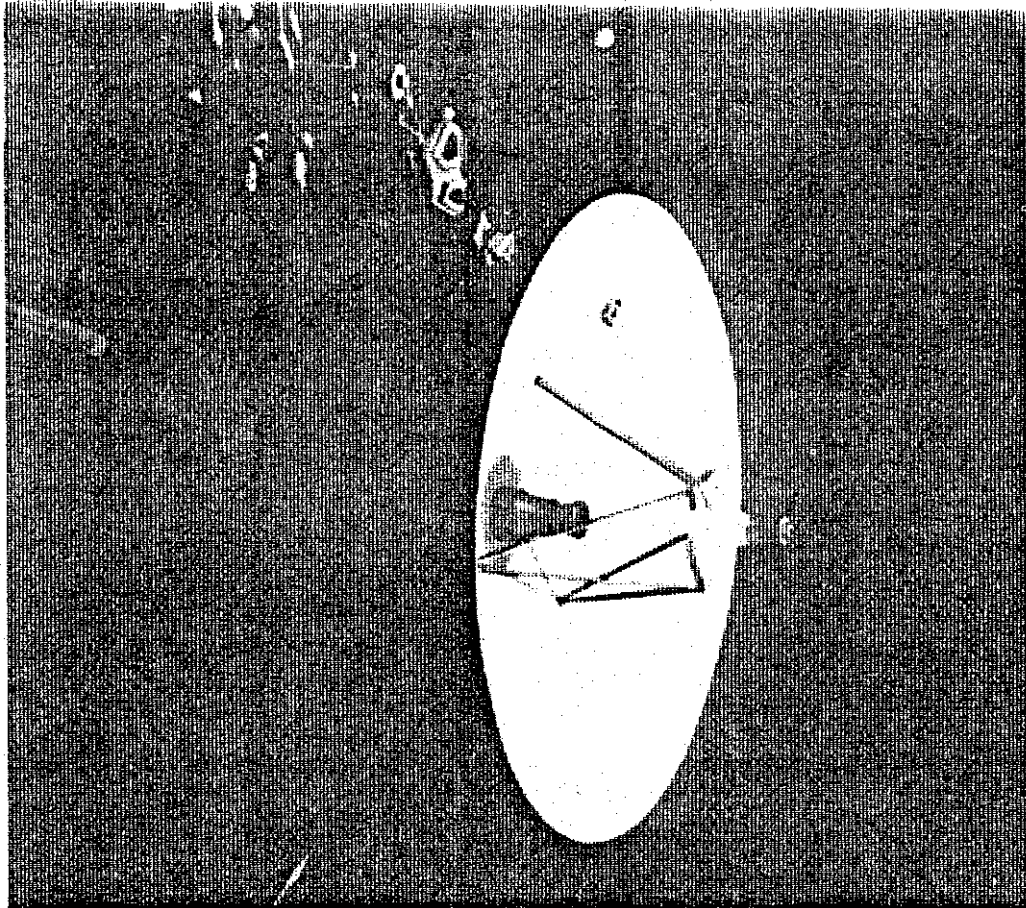
love and renewing hope. It considers the world and its persons and events and relationships as metaphors for God — unlike the dialectical imagination which emphasizes the distance of God from the world. To illustrate briefly: Catholics have saints and stained glass windows and holy water and lighted candles, and incense, and souls in the purgatory, and a church institution, and especially, definitive for the analogical imagination, Mary the Mother of Jesus. Other Christian denominations do not have these symbols and stories.

2) My own efforts as a sociologist to validate Tracy in research on twelve countries confirms that the Catholic religious imagination continues to be different even among the young and the university educated. We are not dealing with people who are Spirit-less as some of our aprioristic liturgists and religious educators seem to think. The analogical imagination is alive and well. So too, despite shallow ecumenism, is Mary the Mother of Jesus alive in the imagination of the Catholics, still our greatest symbol resource.

If these assumptions are true — and the empirical data suggest strongly that they are — then we must be prepared to dialogue openly and sympathetically with any source

of images in the world to see whether we can find lurking among them the presence of God's Grace. We realize that there is much that is shallow, superficial, and degrading in the secular media. However, God and no one else, including teaching authority, decides where Grace is to manifest itself. The spirit blows whither She will. God discloses His saving love anywhere and everywhere. Given the enormous and indeed pervasive influence of the secular media in the lives of people, our failure to be open to hints of the self-revelation of God in these media is irresponsible and tragic.

Let me cite three recent films which will be on TV soon. In "Flatliners," five medical students try to induce Near Death Experiences in themselves to see if there is life after death. Instead they discover a much greater truth, there is forgiveness in the universe even between the living and the dead. In "Always" (in many respects a dull film) Audrey Hepburn plays God. In "Mr. Destiny" Michael Caine plays Mr. Destiny who is God. Both Ms. Hepburn and Mr. Caine are sacraments of God in these films (as in Jessica Lange in "All That Jazz"). They give us hints, positive and alluring hints, of what God is like and how much God loves us. These are signals of Grace, glimmers of the transcendent, rumors of angels.



We ignore such sacraments at the risk of betraying both our people and Grace. We must draw these hints of Grace (and I believe that they abound: see my book *God in Popular Culture*) out of the secular media and by our example each our people do the same.

I am asked whether I think God is really as pretty and as piquant and as affectionate as Ms. Hepburn is in *"Always"* or so alluring as Jessica Lange in *"All That Jazz."* I reply yes, only more so.

If it is foolish to ignore the presence of Grace in the secular media, it is intolerable that we ignore the work of the Catholic artists and performers in these media, especially when they are dealing with Catholic images and Catholic themes. These men and women are doing, implicitly and indirectly and perhaps without realizing it, enormously important work of evangelization, work that is much broader in its impact than what we do as institution. They deserve our support, our encouragement, our praise. We simply must develop the mechanism and the institutions which will provide such support and encouragement for them. This is especially true, I should think, in those dioceses where creative people are likely to live — Los Angeles and New York in my country, though note that Jon Hassler lives in the diocese of St. Cloud.

Do I have to say that there is in neither city no organized nor even informal ministry to such people?

Let me illustrate by example the opposite of this support. A couple of years ago I wrote an essay for Jesuit magazine *America* about the Catholic baptismal imagery that pervades the work of rock singer Bruce Springsteen. When Springsteen's marriage ended, many priests chortled, "well, you were wrong about Springsteen, were you not?"

I told them that they were donatists. Since they didn't know what that was, I said they were people who made the worth of a symbol dependent on the moral life of the one who created it - an attitude which would be devastating for much Catholic art. Every priest should mourn for the pain at the end of a marriage. But the reasons for the end of the marriage are none of his business, not if he believes in the Lord's words that we should

not judge lest we be judged. Much less should a priest say that a person's professional work is worthless because of problems in his personal life. Yet so much of our reaction to the popular culture is either condemnation or moral judgment about the personal lives of the people involved that we have little discernment for the signs of Grace which might lurk in the popular culture, and much less time for support and encouragements of the Catholics who are our "presence" in popular culture.

Mind you, we do not use such people for purposes of indoctrination, much less for propaganda. They engage in evangelization only by exercising their art and their crafts in their own fields with their Catholic imaginations free to flourish. That may be the most important evangelization activity available to us. I presume no one will disagree with me when I say that such activities are not pervasive in the Church. For that may God forgive us.

It is so much easier to moralize and condemn than it is to listen and encourage. There need not be a sharp distinction between the Catholic presence in the radio and TV (and film) and the institutional efforts of the Church in these media. The latter can support the former by film forums or mass culture symposia for example. Moreover, on occasion the Church may well invite its own members who are skilled in lively arts to perform on the church's own media outlets. However, when that is done, we must be absolutely professional in our dealings with creative Catholics. We cannot expect their work for us to be quick and inexpensive. We must offer to pay them what anyone else would pay them. If they decline to accept pay, that is virtuous, but we should leave them free to practice such virtue on their own initiative. As a matter of fact, all our work in radio and television should be professional by the standards of our own country or region. Anything that is quick and inexpensive and hence shoddy and shabby is unworthy of Jesus and unworthy of the Church which produced the Sistine chapel or Notre Dame du Paris or Da Vinci's last Supper or the Divina Comedia.

All too often in the American church we put vast sums of money into expensive

and high tech hardware (satellite transmissions, TV stations) and only after the hardware is installed do we begin to worry about the shortage of software. We find we have marvelous transmission facilities and no programming to go with it. While we are only too willing to hire technicians (who are generally docile if not expensive), we do not want to hire actors and creators (who are perhaps congenitally undocile, if not relatively inexpensive before they become famous). Then we exhibit our amateur talking heads which are poor competition for *Nightline* or similar programs and make ourselves look like inept amateurs.

Let us take it as a rule of thumb that if we cannot do it professionally within our budgetary limitations we do not do it at all. Nothing else is worthy of Catholicism.

Finally, I will only note that communications in the church today are in terrible shape; they break down at every level — between laity and clergy, between clergy and hierarchy, and between hierarchy and curia. I think it possible to improve our internal communications but only with changes which, while they are not doctrinally impossible, would encounter enormous opposition both in clerical culture and bureaucratic structure. I am struck, by the way, that it is often the priests who complain most about the levels above them in the bureaucracy who are most intolerant of honest communication from lay people.

To return to NBC Sunday Night Movie and *"The Love She Sought."* It was the most important evangelization event of the year, I would submit, in my country. In terms of the sheer number of people who saw it, and understood Catholicism better by seeing it, it had far more impact on presenting the Church and its tradition than all the homilies preached this year in American churches combined — and all the statements of the American hierarchy too.

The institutional Church missed it completely. Fortunately, for all of us, twenty five million people didn't miss it. God prevailed, as He usually does, despite us.



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**'communications in the church today are in terrible shape; they break down at every level — between laity and clergy, between clergy and hierarchy, and between hierarchy and curia.'**

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Garrett-Evangelical Theo. Sem.  
Ethics & Society

Spring 1992, 22:627  
Thursday 6:00 - 8:00

**STUDIES IN POPULAR CULTURE:MYTH, RELIGION AND STORY**

Instructor: Jeffrey Mahan  
Office: 722 Phone:866-3956

Does modern popular culture serves a mytho-religious purpose? This course examines the cultural function of mass-market story telling in television, film and print, looks at religious critiques and interpretations of the media, and at religious broadcasting.

**MYTH, MEANING & POPULAR CULTURE**

3/26) Overview: methods and context  
A Mythic context for the study of Popular Culture  
The western as an American myth of origin

Reading: Kaminsky/Mahan, Chap I Hist. Perspective  
          Chap II Critical Task  
          Eliade, Chap I The Structure of Myth  
                  II Magic & Prestige of Origins  
                  IX Survivals & Camouflages of Myths

Recomended: Geertz

4/1) Screening: SHANE, discussion

Mimesis and Formula: Structuring Story/Structuring Reality  
Student Panel: Kaminsky/ Mahan Pt 2

Reading: Jewett & Lawrence, Introduction  
          Kaminsky/Mahan, Pt 2, History & Structure  
          Mahan, "Preface:The Study of Religion & Pop. Culture"

Recomended:Real, 1 "Significance of Mass-mediated Culture"  
          Slotkin  
          Cawelti, especially early theory chapters

4/9) Popular Culture as a Moral Universe:Test case - Disney  
Student Panel: Kaminsky/Mahan Pt 3

Reading: Kaminsky/Mahan, Pt 3, Psychological Approaches  
          Mahan, V. "The Social Function of Popular Culture"  
          Jewett & Lawrence, VII "Disney's Land"

Recomended:Real, 2 "The Disney Universe"  
          Nelson

Screening: CINDERELLA

**THEOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO POPULAR CULTURE**

4/23) A Theological Context to Think about Culture

Christian Interpretations of Popular Culture: Sex & Violence  
Christ the Transformer of Culture: Jewett/Lawrence model  
Christ Against Culture: National Fed. for Decency  
Student Panels: Kaminsky/Mahan Pt 4  
Jewett/Lawrence

Reading: Niebuhr  
Journal of the NFD (reserve)  
Kaminsky/Mahan Pt 4, Sociological/Anthropological  
Jewett & Lawrence, III "The Golden Way to Violence"  
IX "The ... National Monomyth" X

"Zapping the Monomyth:

Recommended: Hoover  
Schultze, et al  
Niebuhr, Christ & Culture

4/30) Religious Interps: Mysteries, morals, and individualism  
Reading: Mahan, I. "The Morality of the Hard-boiled Detective"  
IV. "Ego Control & Independence"  
V. "Social and Ethical Implications"

Recommended: Macdonald, The Moving Target

Screening: HARPER

#### MEDIA RELIGION

5/7) Mainstream Religious Broadcasting - Chicago Church Federation  
GUEST SPEAKER: TBA

Reading: Mahan, "Mainliners ... Airwaves," Christian Ministry

Recommended: Real, Chap 6, Billy Graham  
Hoover

5/14) Religion in Secular Media: The Religious Spectacular  
Research Presentations

Screening: TBA

NOTE: Screening times outside of class to be arranged.

5/21) Religion in Secular Media: The Function of Religious Figures  
Research Presentations

Screening: NORTHERN EXPOSURE

#### CONCLUSIONS

5/28 Research Presentations  
Wrap up Discussion: Whither from Here?

#### ASSIGNMENTS:

1) Panel Discussion - Each participant will be part of one of four small group which will review and respond to Kaminsky/Mahan PT 2 (4/1), K/M Pt 3 (4/9), K/M Pt 4 (4/23), or Jewett/Lawrence (4/23). Panel Presentations should last aprox. 30 minutes. Assume that the entire class has read the material and do not summerize the individual chapters. Rather indicate the key interests which motivate the approaches, describe the method, and critically engage the the arguement made. 30% of grade.

2) Four Reading Summaries - Brief (1-1&1/2 typed pg) reflections on the critical texts assigned (Eliade, Jewett & Lawrence, Mahan, Niebuhr) indicating the authors approach, major issues and your critical response. Contrasts with other readings encouraged. Due the week after the last reading addressed is assigned. 2.5% of grade each summary.

3) Two Critical Analysis - (aprox. 4 pg typed) Interpretive responses to a popular texts (novel, television series, or film) using critical methods introduced in class or agreed upon in advance with the instructor. One should address a film shown for class and is due the week after class discussion. The other should address a text of your choosing and is due 5/14. 10% of grade each analysis.

4) Term Paper - (10-12 pg typed) Possibilities include an indepth theological, mythic, or social analysis of a particular text or genre, an analysis of a religious critic or critical approach or other topic agreed upon in advance with the instructor. Due 5/28. 30% of grade.

5) Research Presentation. The research and conclusions of your term paper will be presented to the class for discussion and response, 5/14, 5/21 or 5/28. Plan a 15 minute presentation with five minutes for follow questions anbd discussion. 10% of grade.

## GRADES:

Attendance and participation are expected, Final grades will be figured as follows: Term Paper = 30%, Presentation of Research and Conclusions 10%, Panel Discussion of Reading, 30%, Critical Analysis of popular texts 10% (each X 2), Reading Response 2.5% (each X 4).

- A = clearly superior, publishable work
- A- = generally superior work, with evidence of integration with the student's broader work and thinking
- B+ = above average understanding and execution with well handled application and creative effort.
- B = good clear understanding and execution, meets standard expected of graduate professional student
- B- = general understanding with some lack of clarity or ability to apply insights, and or errors in execution
- C+ = broader grasp of material and some effort to analyze and apply
- C = passing, general grasp of material and methods but little effort to analyze or apply methods
- C- = clear problems with understanding and execution but meets minimum standards for passing
- D = fails to meet minimum standards for passing but indicates some degree of effort - (not given as final grade)
- F = failure to meet minimal standards

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Required Reading:

Eliade, Mircea Myth and Reality

Jewett, Robert and John Sheldon Lawrence The American Monomyth

Kaminsky, Mahan American Television Genre

Mahan, Jeffrey A Long Way From Solving That One

Mahan, Jeffrey "Mainliners Should Take to the Airwave," Christian Ministry, Jan/Feb 1992 (reserve)

Niebuhr, H. Richard The Meaning of Revelation

Recomended Reading:

Cawelti, John Adventure, Mystery & Romance

Geertz, Clifford The Interpretation of Culture

Hoover, Stuart M. Mass Media Religion

Macdonald, Ross The Moving Target (a novel)

Nelson, John Wiley Your God is Alive and Well and Appearing in Popular Culture

Real, Michael R. Mass Mediated Culture

Schultze, Quentin J., et al Dancing in the Dark

Slotkin, Richard, Regeneration Through Violence

Garrett-Evangelical Theo. Sem.  
Christian Education

Fall 1992, 33-640  
Tues - Thurs 9:00 - 10:50

33:640 - MEDIA FOR MINISTRY AND MISSION  
Jeffrey H. Mahan, Instructor

A. OBJECTIVES:

Introduce the theory and practice of communications with a focus on the use of media in the local church. While there will be readings, guest speakers and lectures, the primary teaching method involves a series of media exercises. Students are expected to relate the course work to the parish where they worship or serve.

B: REQUIREMENTS:

I. Attend and participate in all sessions.

II. Read assigned sections of the following:

Goethals, Gregor, The Electronic Golden Calf (Required)  
Sommervill & Townson, Media Handbook for Churches (Required)  
Sarno, Ronald, Using Media in Religious Education (Required)  
Compesi & Sherriffs, Small Format Television, 2nd Ed  
(Recommended)

III. Complete and present assignments on due dates indicated below.  
(See attached for fuller description of assignments)

IV. Every effort will be made to make the course work reflect the public nature of media. Assignments will be prepared for the local church and regularly presented in class for review and discussion with the class and instructor.

V. Grades: (clarify grading & assignments) Grades will reflect a balance of concern for finished product, effort, and a willingness to experiment with new forms of communication. Final grades will be determined as follows: Assignments One and Five = 10% ea, Assigns. Two and Three = 15% ea, Assign Four = 50%. Attendance and participation will be considered in borderline situations.

C. COURSE OUTLINE:

I. Theology of Narrative, Text & Media

September 29: Course Outline and Expectations, Context & Definitions

October 1: Oral Media - The Word as oral experience.

Reading: Sarno Chaps 1

Assignment: Tell your biblical story in church

October 6: Writing, Print and Publishing - the effect on Christianity of literacy and the emergence of publishing.

Reading: Sarno, Chap 2

Assignment: 1 pg report on experience of Biblical storytelling.

October 8: CLASS RESCHEDULED - Attend Evanston Public Access Cable Intro on Monday Oct 5, Nov 2, or (Dec 7).

October 13: Presentation of student papers

Assignments: 1 pg analytical/exegetical introduction to the story appropriate to a particular group in your local church.  
1 pg literary or poetic reworking of the story.

Reading: Sarno, Chap 3

## II. Stories and The Story

October 15: "Theological" film

Reading: Sarno, Chap 7

Screen: MR PASCAL  
INCLUDED OUT

October 20: Accessing the Culture's Narrative

Reading: Sarno, Chap 8

Screen: WHOSE WORLD VIEW?

Assignment: Bibliography re church response to secular film

October 22: Film analysis

Reading: Sarno, Chap 9, 10

Screening: WE'RE NO ANGELS

## III. Claiming the Tools as Our Own

October 27: Electronic Media in the Parish

Reading: Compesi & Sherriffs, Chaps 1, 12

Assignment: Media audit of local church  
Proposals for local church film screening

October 29: video training: camera work  
GUEST SPEAKER: Dave Driesbach - Coordinator of Media Services

Reading: Somervill & Townson, Chaps 1 - 5

Compesi & Sheriffs, Chaps 2,3

November 3: Northern Ill. Conf. - United Methodist Church  
GUEST SPEAKERS: Beth Bundy - Media Librarian  
Dana Jones - Communications Director

Reading: Sommervill & Townson, Chaps 7, 8

Assignment: Media proposal for local church

November 5: Life in the Commercial World  
GUEST SPEAKER: Jim Motzer - film maker

Assignment: shoot and review at least 45 minutes of videotape

November 10: Developing Video Proposals

Reading: Compesi & Sherriffs, Chap 12

November 12: video training: simple editing  
GUEST SPEAKER: Dave Driesbach

Reading: Compesi & Sherriffs, Chap 9

November 17: Computers in the local church  
GUEST SPEAKER: Walter Cason

Reading: review Somervill & Townson, Chap 7

Assignment: Video Proposal A

November 19: Guest Lecture: Religion & Technology, David Himrod

November 24/26: Thanksgiving Break

December 1: Presentation and discussion of student videos

Assignment: Video Proposal B

December 3: Presentation and discussion of student videos

December 8: Presentation and discussion of student videos

December 10: Closing discussion

Reading: Somervill & Townson, Chap 8

Mahan

33-640

ASSIGNMENTS:

Because the focus of this class is on the use of the communications media in the local church all assignments should be prepared as though they would be presented in the local church you attend most regularly. In order to duplicate as nearly as possible the public

sphere in which the media are produced and consumed assignments will regularly be shared and discussed in class.

#### Assignment One: Oral and Written Media

Part A) Write a one-to-two page report on your experience telling the story of Blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52) in some setting within the local church. Credit/No Credit

Part B) Write a 1 pg analytical/exegetical introduction to the story appropriate to a group in the local church.

Part C) 1 pg literary or poetic reworking of the story.

#### Assignment Two: Film Analysis

Part A) Prepare an annotated Bibliography re church response to secular film. Identify at least ten religious sources (books or journals) that review secular film. Indicated briefly the kinds of films reviewed and the questions which concern the reviewer(s).

Part B) Prepare a proposal and study guide for the screening and discussion of a popular film by a group in your church. Include a one page of analysis (not simply a review) of the film, a brief paragraph promoting the program for the church newsletter or bulletin, and an outline of the questions or exercises you would lead the group in.

#### Assignment Three: Media Equipment in the Local Church

Part A) Prepare a media audit of your local church indicating the various media technologies (telephone, video, audio amplification, etc) currently available and accessing how effectively they are being used.

Part B) Prepare a media proposal for an appropriate body in your local church (trustees, education work area, church council, etc) arguing for the addition of some new or enhanced media technology.

#### Assignment Four: Developing Video Planning and Production Skills

Part A) Attend the intro to community television at Evanston Cable Television, Monday 7:30 PM Credit/No credit, Pref. 10/5

Part B) Shoot & review at least 45 minutes of video tape. Write a 1 pg reflection on what you learned about camera work.

Part C) Video Proposal A. With one other class member, develop a proposal for 10 - 20 minute video for local church use which

can be shot with the video equipment available to you. The proposal should indicate the purpose of the video, its audience, and suggest how and where it will be shot. Include a "production log" outlining the videos audio and visual components.

Part D) Video Proposal B. Develop a one-to-two page proposal for a 28 minute segment of the Ecumenical Cable Project.

Present video (Proposal A) in class.

#### ALTERNATIVE: Assignment Four: Skills for Public Access Cable

Part A) Attend the intro to community television at Evanston Cable Television, Monday 7:30 PM, 10/5

Part B) Take the Basic Studio Production Course at ECTV, T/Th Evenings, Oct 13 - 27 and all day Sat Oct 17. Training Costs \$65 plus \$15 (\$10 for full time students under 25) annual membership fee.

Part C) Participate in planning and producing a program segment to be aired in the locally produced ecumenical video series.

#### Assignment Five: Integration and Self-Evaluation

Prepare a three-to-five page paper on what you have learned and how you will integrate it into your ministry. 12/5

# The Real Task of Practical Theology

ROBIN W. LOVIN

**PRACTICAL THEOLOGY** provides the theme for much of today's discussion about theological education. Experienced voices are calling for a more central role for the practical disciplines—preaching, counseling, education and the like—which are often relegated to the intellectual margins of the seminary. More important, this focus on practice leads to probing questions about the purposes of theological education and the connections between religious faith and social context.

These concerns have antecedents, of course. Already in the 19th century American seminary professors stressed the importance of contemporary scientific studies alongside the classical theological disciplines. The same intellectual currents that led some clergy to founding roles in the social sciences led others to insist that education in those sciences was the key to effective ministry in an urban, industrial society. When the young Reinhold Niebuhr challenged his denomination in 1921 with an article titled "Shall a Minister Have an Education?" the education he had in mind was this comprehensive understanding of the social setting. His concern was shared by many other progressive denominational leaders, who saw the usual education in confessional theology as too narrow for the demands of modern ministry.

But the development of Protestant theological education after World War II turned away from this early 20th-century vision. Timeless affirmations of Barthian theology and transcendental questions of modern philosophy dominated theology and ethics, while pastoral studies fostered the professional competences of the counselor. Even courses on preaching and education tended to promote individual self-acceptance and happiness.

*Robin W. Lovin is dean of the Theological School at Drew University in Madison, New Jersey.*

Catholic seminaries, for somewhat different reasons, developed a similar curricular schizophrenia. The social vision of John A. Ryan failed to penetrate the institutions of theological education, and the Protestant split between theology and "application" was mirrored in the cleavage between the Thomistic education mandated by Leo XIII and the televised pastoral assurances of Fulton J. Sheen.

The current interest in practical theology may be seen as a return to the earlier effort to develop a comprehensive, integrated understanding of the life of faith in contemporary society. Practical theology continues the emphasis on psychology that has characterized preparation for the ministry since the 1950s. Today, however, the individual aspects of this psychology are often coupled with interests in congregational assessment and education as well as in personal growth.

A more striking change is the significance that practical theology gives to the social context of theology. Practical theologians attend to the sociology of congregations and to the studies of the changing role of religious institutions in American public life. They also make extensive use of contemporary social theology, seeking to understand in the most general terms the ways that societies function, the ways in which ideas are communicated and the ways in which religious concepts can be plausible and authoritative in a modern, secular context. American philosophical pragmatism, French phenomenology and German critical theory all provide important idioms in which practical theologians have explained their own projects. The works of Don Browning, John Cobb or Lewis Mudge are a lively introduction to contemporary psychology, social thought and philosophy, as well as an argument for their own constructive theological positions.

Along with this effort to provide a broader social understanding of religious institutions and a more

sophisticated framework in which to explain the dynamics of religious life, practical theologians raise specific questions about education for contemporary religious leaders. Edward Farley has introduced these questions most pointedly, tracing the shape of contemporary Protestant theological education to a pattern that originated in Europe early in the 19th century. The implica-



tions of his argument, however, also apply to Roman Catholic theological education.

Farley's point is that the shape of theological reflection has been distorted by the requirements of professional pastoral competence. The key to a more vital and credible theology, Farley argues, is to abandon the "clerical paradigm." What practical theology must provide is an understanding of how faith can guide action in contemporary circumstances. That important task is trivialized when practical theology is reduced to a set of useful skills for the working minister.

Contemporary practical theology is thus more than the "application" of theological concepts to one social situation or another. Theology is fundamentally transformed by the conditions under which the people of faith must live and by the choices through which they participate in shaping the future. We simply do not know what the doctrines of atonement, incarnation and redemption mean until we understand what they mean for persons shaped by this historical milieu. All theology must be practical theology.

**W**HILE THE practical theology movement has provided important new direction to debates about theological education, serious questions have been raised about its approach to theology and ministry. Foremost among these is the question whether the contemporary psychological and social theories that are supposed to provide guidance for interpreting religious traditions have in fact been transformed into standards of theological

truth. Is it possible, the critics ask, that what makes the Christian theological task so difficult is just that the message of our dependence on God's grace is not credible to an age that believes in individual autonomy and the competence of human reason? If that is the problem, it will not be solved by a more precise understanding of the forms of reason and authority that have validity for the modern mind. If anything, attention to those standards may lead the theologian to limit the truth of the gospel to what already seems to be true to those who have not yet been grasped by it.

Every practical theologian would, of course, deny that this is what his or her investigation intends, but the critics cannot be easily dismissed. The questions that modern thought raises about theology are penetrating, but they also tend to be generic. They apply to every attempt to think about a framework of meaning that transcends human constructions and every claim to truth that cannot easily be tested in human experience. If practical theologians devote their energies to explaining how modern people can believe anything at all, they may lose sight of the specific claims about God and humanity that characterize Christian

faith and distinguish one form of Christianity from another. Much of the meaning of Christianity lies in what it tells us about the details of our lives. To the extent that these details are lost in large-scale theoretical constructions, the relevance to the actual life of faith that practical theology seeks is diminished.

The principal critics of practical theology therefore advocate a radical rejection of modern questions about reason and practice in favor of a discussion in which the most important questions about the meaning and validity of the Christian message are assumed, precisely so that the details can be intelligently debated. Narrative theologians across a broad spectrum from George Lindbeck to Ronald Thieman insist that genuinely "practical" theology begins by asking how choices and practices make sense within a community that is already committed to the gospel. Stanley Hauerwas has developed Christian approaches to personal and social ethics from this same starting point. Others, led by theologian Thomas Oden, call for a return to "classical" theology, the great systems in which the thinkers of the early church took all of reality, including their own salvation, into a comprehensive understanding of God's activity. Disputed questions about the nature of Christ's divinity or the details of human salvation are not ancient quarrels that modern Christians ought to forget. They are critical questions about our own existence that can hardly be asked, let alone answered, without knowing the theological context in which they first were formulated.

The arguments for and against practical theology raise

important issues for theological education. The rejection of the "clerical paradigm" in favor of a reflection on Christian practice broadly based in the whole Christian community requires a changed concept of pastoral leadership and a new pattern of preparation for it. While the practical theologians and their critics disagree over exactly how this practical thinking begins, both sides agree that theological education is not primarily a matter of mastering specific skills or acquiring specialized knowledge for which other Christians have no use.

The minister's education cannot consist simply of Bible knowledge, theological concepts and liturgical details that the laity are unlikely to know, although this apparently provides some clergy with a satisfying sense of academic respectability. Nor can ministry proceed only by analysis of underlying social processes—race, class and economic power—although this apparently provides some clergy with a satisfying sense of contemporary relevance. The real task is to figure out what is happening at the nexus between the order of meaning presupposed by Christian faith and the order of events predicted by modern social theory. That is in some sense where all Christians live all the time, trying both to "take no thought for tomorrow" and to figure out whether it will be their department that gets eliminated in the next corporate takeover. The pastor is not someone who has a different concern, but she can provide leadership only if she is able to think about these questions more comprehensively and speak about them more articulately than those other Christians whose practical theology remains more intensely personal.

Education for this kind of pastoral leadership—as our Protestant forebears in the early decades of this century understood so well—must connect individual faith and social context. While the curriculum of American seminaries may have been dominated by a "clerical paradigm," the real life of these institutions has shifted toward an ethos of self-discovery in which many students are equally bored by theological subtlety and social complexity. The thought that the sparks might really begin to fly when those two apparently inert elements are struck against one another rarely enters their minds.

Meanwhile, congregations and denominational leaders increasingly understand a "practical" theology to be one that communicates the gospel in ways that build loyalty and commitment among a people whose attention is captured by the demands and attractions of a secular society. The urgent need for results in ministry is translated into a demand for result-oriented theological education, and church leaders who are most concerned about reaching the laity become unwitting proponents of the "clerical paradigm." The demand of seminaries today is for pastors with skills to do quite specific things: organize youth groups, start new congregations, attract young adults, and so on.

These objectives are often very important, but few who measure practical theology in terms of pastoral skills recognize how much knowledge is required to do any of

these things in ways that will yield more than short-term success. The knowledge, moreover, must be of society as well as theology, for communicating the gospel is as much a matter of knowing how it will be understood (or how it is apt to be misunderstood) as of knowing what it says.

When the religious understanding of society is superficial, the results can be comic. Mystical union takes to the airwaves in lyrics of romantic ecstasy, and cable television presents discussions of sacramental piety in the format pioneered by the "Tonight" show. But superficial understanding can also be tragic, when pastors and people who do not understand the roots of social disorder respond to demagogic appeals to "decency" and "Christian values," or when a genuine religious longing for human community takes anti-Semitic and xenophobic forms that can destroy a pluralistic society.

**T**HE URGENT task of practical theology, then, is to understand society well enough that the church can truly be the church. A community shaped by the biblical

## What Is Practical Theology?

During the past decade practical theology has come to mean much more than "applied" skills of ministry or the activities that frequently fall under the category of seminary "field work." Current proponents of practical theology emphasize that theological reflection—and indeed any form of thought—is context-related. Theological reflection responds to and is conditioned by certain sociopolitical arrangements, patterns of church life, and personal experiences. Theological work is inescapably embedded in human practices. The implications of this approach have been felt in almost all theological disciplines, but especially in discussions about theological education. Among the basic works in the field:

Don S. Browning, *A Fundamental Practical Theology: Descriptive and Strategic Proposals* (Fortress, 1991)

John B. Cobb and Joseph C. Hough, *Christian Identity and Theological Education* (Scholars Press, 1985)

Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Fortress, 1983)

Joseph C. Hough and Barbara Wheeler, eds., *Beyond Clericalism: The Congregation as a Focus for Theological Education* (Scholars Press, 1988)

Donald E. Miller and James N. Poling, *Foundations for a Practical Theology of Ministry* (Abingdon, 1985)

narrative and steeped in classical theology can easily become a gentle anachronism, rather like the clubs that get together to hold costumed jousting tournaments. Or it can become a haven for hatred and resistance to change. It is too simple to suppose that these errors would all disappear if the churches better understood the gospel. Often what churches need is not a better understanding of the

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The minister's education cannot consist simply of Bible knowledge, theological concepts and liturgical details that the laity are unlikely to know.

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faith, but a more adequate knowledge of the society in which they are trying to live it out.

Theological education must prepare persons for religious leadership in those circumstances. Creative, practical skills and theological understanding must be linked to a knowledge of social context. Biblical norms and historical models must be related to contemporary possibilities with an imaginative grasp of what this history is apt to imply for those who see it against the background of their own fears and choices. Practical theologians have no for-

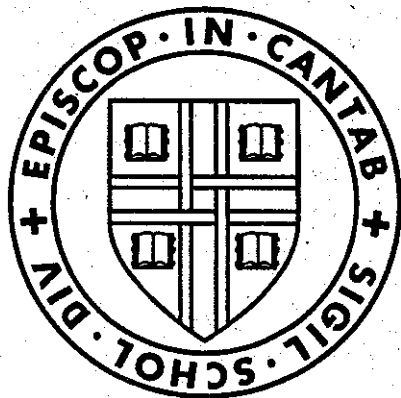
mula that will yield a prescription for each and every one of these situations, but they need more than a bag of tricks with which to capture the wandering attentions of the information age. Knowledge is required, and not all of the knowledge that is needed will be found within the classical theological disciplines.

Not everyone who becomes a practical theologian in this sense will be preparing for pastoral leadership. Indeed, in a complex society where no one can grasp more than a few of the details, some of the most important practical theology will have to be done by specialists in medicine, law or business, or by theologians and ethicists whose training equips them for specialized roles in those institutions. To that extent, practical theology's critique of the "clerical paradigm" is on target. Theological schools must be measured in part by their ability to support serious theological reflection by those who are neither pastors nor professional theologians.

The central task of those institutions, however, must be to sustain pastoral leadership that is truly practical and truly theological. A congregation that is able to live simply and faithfully out of the Christian story is a gift of grace, but that gift must be sustained by some remarkable social creativity. The recent interest in practical theology may help to spark that creativity in the seminaries, where the discussion has been centered, and in the churches, where the conversation needs to be continued. ■

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# WATCH, READ, LISTEN

## Resources for Follow-up

### IN PRINT

*Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, Marshall McLuhan, 1964. This classic is available in any library.

*Cultural Politics in Contemporary America*. This superb collection of short essays by leading media theorists lays out the ways in which American media and American culture are interlocked, 1989. Routledge, 29 W. 35th St., NY, NY 10001; (212)244-6412, \$15.95.

*Codes of Advertising*, Sut Jhally's groundbreaking book on the cultural impact of advertising, 1990. Routledge; \$14.95.

*All Consuming Images: Politics of Style in Contemporary Culture* by Stuart Ewen. Powerful, provocative and persuasively astute about the power of images today, 1988. Basic Books, HarperCollins, P.O. Box 588, Dunmore, PA 18512; (800)242-7737, \$11.95.

*The True and Only Heaven: Progress and its Critics* A landmark work of social and cultural criticism by Christopher Lasch, 1991. W.W. Norton, 800 Keystone Industrial Park, Scranton, PA 18512-4601; (800)233-4830, \$14.95.

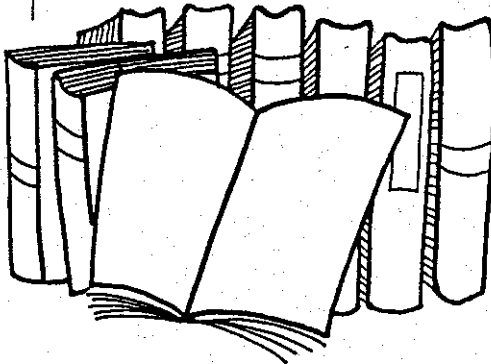
*The Unreality Industry: The Deliberate Manufacturing of Falsehood and What it is Doing to Our Lives* by Ian I. Mitroff and Warren Bennis argues that Americans use the triviality of television to escape from life's complexities, 1989. Birch Lane Press Books, Carol Publishing Group, 120 Enterprise Ave., Secaucus, NJ 07094; (201)866-0490, \$17.95.

*Technology, Theology and the Idea of Progress* contrasts technological advancement with human progress, emphasizing how the two are seen as the same. By David H. Hopper, 1991. Westminster/John Knox Press, Spring Arbor Distributors, 10885 Textile Rd., Belleville, MI 48111-2398; (800)395-5599, \$14.95.

*Television Culture* by John Fiske looks at television's role as an agent of popular culture and offers a detailed study of the complex cultural processes that underlie television's many meanings, 1988. Routledge, \$14.95.

*The Electronic Golden Calf: Images, Religion and the Making of Meaning*. Gregor Goethals argues how media images now perform ritual functions in our lives, 1990. Cowley, 28 Temple Pl., Boston, MA 02111; (800)225-1534, \$11.95.

*Mythmakers: Gospel, Culture and the Media*, by William Fore. Chapters 4, 5, 6 provide an accessible overview of this issue's theme, 1990. Friendship Press, P.O. Box 37844, Cincinnati, OH 45222-0844; (513)948-8733, \$7.95.



*Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society*, is a collection of James W. Carey's research and thought for the past 25 years, 1988. Unwin Hyman, Routledge; \$13.95.

*The Hunger for More: Searching for Values in an Age of Greed*, by Laurence Shames, looks at our love affair with consumption, 1989. Vintage Books, Random House, 400 Hahn Rd., Westminster, MD 21157; (800)733-3000, \$11.

*Big World, Small Screen: The Role of Television in American Society*, Aletha Huston, et al., explain the role of television in the formal and informal education of Americans, 1992. University of Nebraska Press, 901 N. 17th, Lincoln, NE 68588-0520; (800)755-1105, \$25.

*Following Christ in a Consumer Society: The Spirituality of Cultural Resistance*, John F. Kavanaugh looks at our image culture in the light of spiritual values, 1991. Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY 10545; (800)258-5838, \$13.95.

*"She Wants Her TV! He Wants His Book!": A (Mostly) Polite Conversation About Our Image Culture*, A fascinating dialogue between critic Camille Paglia and educator Neil Postman in *Harper's*, March 1991.

*"Images and the Disappearing Word"* includes 8 perspectives on the impact of images around the world. Volume 38, Number 4 (1991) of *Media Development*, World Association for Christian Communication, 357 Kennington Ln., London SE11 5QY, England; £3 or \$6.

*Frame-Work, The Journal of Images and Culture*, published 3 times a year by the Los

Angeles Center for Photographic Studies, 1048 W. 6th St., Los Angeles, CA 90017; (213)482-3566, \$18/year, institutions \$28, foreign \$24.

*Technology and the Character of Contemporary Life: A Philosophical Inquiry*, Albert Borgmann blends social analysis and philosophy to discuss how technology creates a controlling pattern in our lives and leads to effortless, thoughtless consumption, 1984. University of Chicago Press, 11030 S. Langley Ave., Chicago, IL 60628; (800)621-2736, \$14.95.

### SIGHT/SOUND

*The Public Mind*, a 4-part series with Bill Moyers explores how public opinion is formed through the mingling of fact and fiction in a society saturated with images; Part 3 - *Consuming Images* offers compelling and valuable insights. 58 min. ea., 1989. PBS Video, 320 Braddock Pl., Alexandria, VA 22314; (800)344-3337, \$59.95 individual purchase, \$200 series.

*Avalon*, 1990 feature film by writer-director Barry Levinson uses the development of TV in America to mark the evolution of the consumer society and the breakdown of the traditional family. RCA/Columbia Pictures Home Video, \$40, or for rent at your local video store.

*World of Tomorrow* 90-minute documentary portrays how the 1939 New York World's Fair imaged "the future." Direct Cinema, Ltd., P.O. Box 10003, Santa Monica, CA 90410; (800)525-0000, \$250 purchase, \$75 rental.

### ORGANIZATIONS

*International Visual Literacy Assoc.* a professional association with newsletters, annual conferences, and professional development. Contact: Alice Walker, IVLA, Educational Technologies, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA 24061-0232; (703)231-8992, memberships start at \$40.

*Popular Culture Association* provides academic forum for the field including annual convention and the *Journal of Popular Culture* (\$25/yr.). Bowling Green University, Popular Culture Center, Bowling Green, OH 43403; (419)372-7865.

# WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

## Resources for Media Literacy

### MAJOR REFERENCES

*The Media Studies Book*, edited by David Lusted, is an invaluable practical guide for teachers new to media education, 1991. Routledge, 29 W. 35th St., NY, NY 10001; (212)244-6412, \$16.95.

*Teaching the Media* is a comprehensive "Bible" on media education, by Len Masterman, covering the history, current application and future of this important new field of education, 1985. Routledge, \$15.95.

*Television "Critical Viewing Skills" Education: Major Media Literacy Projects in the United States and Selected Countries* by James A. Brown evaluates the first generation of media literacy materials in the 1970s. Valuable for its historical perspective, 1991. Lawrence Erlbaum, 365 Broadway, Hillsdale, NJ 07642; (201)666-4110, \$29.95.

*Questioning the Media: A Critical Introduction*. Essays by leading thinkers and writers provide analysis and questions for focusing media study. John Downing and others, 1990. Sage, 2455 Teller Rd., Newbury Park, CA 91320; (805)499-0721, \$24.

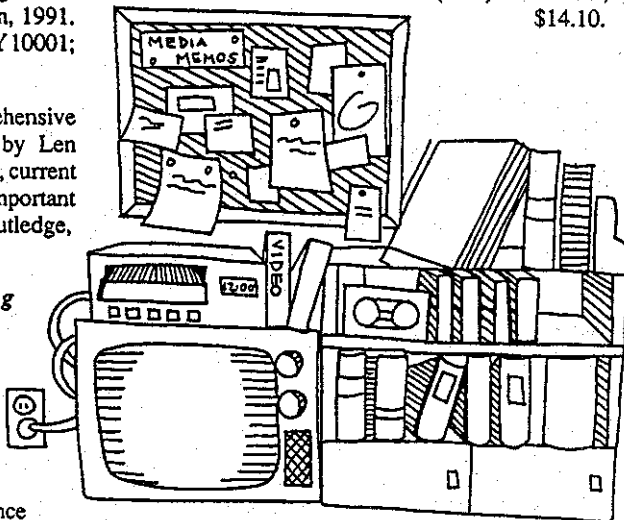
*The Province of Ontario, Canada now requires media literacy education in both junior and senior high. Resources and texts developed for this innovative program are not available for purchase in quantity by U.S. customers. Individual copies may be purchased only for reference.*

*Media Literacy Resource Guide*, from the Ontario Ministry of Education provides the overview and framework for teaching media literacy in Canadian schools; includes valuable activities and background. Government of Ontario Bookstore Publications, 880 Bay St., 5th Floor, Toronto, Ontario M7A 1N8; (516)326-5300, \$7 (Canadian).

*Mass Media and Popular Culture*, by Barry Duncan, is one of several basic textbooks for students in media literacy classes, 1988. HBJ Holt, 55 Horner Ave., Toronto, Ontario M8Z 4X6; (416)255-4491, \$25.20 (Canadian).

*Meet the Media* J. Pungente, et. al., adapted for

Canada an Australian text that introduces mass media to junior high students, 1990. Globe/Modern Curriculum Press, 3771 Victoria Park Ave., Scarborough, Ontario M1W 2P9; (416)497-4699, \$14.10.



### TEXTS FOR TEACHING

*Only a few curriculum materials are currently available for use in the United States but as the field develops, expect more to be published.*

*Media Literacy Workshop Kits™* from the Center for Media and Values provide a variety of curriculum resources (some with video) for adults and youth on sexism in the media, values in the news, tobacco/alcohol advertising, analyzing the Gulf War and parenting in a TV age. Other themes in development each year. Contact the Center below for catalog and prices from \$17.95 up.

*Media & You: An Elementary Media Literacy Curriculum* provides basic skills of media literacy through exercises and step-by-step strategies for teachers. Donna Lloyd-Kolkin and Kathleen R. Tyner, 1991. Educational Technology Publications, 700 Palisade Ave., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632; (201)871-4007, \$29.95.

*The Electronic Lifeline: A Media Exploration for Youth*, Linda Woods Peterson provides teens with lively ways to explore the connections between youth culture, media and Biblical values, 1990; \$3.95. *Who Touched the Remote Control?: Television and Christian Choices* by Mary Duckert contains activity pages, sto-

ries, and a teacher's guide to link media with children's religious faith, 1990; \$9.95. Both from Friendship Press, P.O. Box 37844, Cincinnati, OH 45222-0844; (513)948-8733.

*AML Anthology*, is a 250-page binder of ideas, teaching units and resources developed for teachers by teachers using the Canadian media literacy program, 1990. Contact Association for Media Literacy below for details.

### ORGANIZATIONS

*Membership organizations provide the most current information on media literacy through their publications, conferences and training programs.*

*Center for Media and Values* publishes *Media&Values* magazine and a growing collection of Media Literacy Workshop Kits™. 1962 S. Shenandoah, Los Angeles, CA 90034; (310)559-2944, memberships: \$30 for individuals, \$95 for organizations.

*Strategies for Media Literacy* publishes excellent newsletter, *Strategies* (\$15/year) comprehensive bibliography and teaching ideas. Contact Kathleen Tyner, 1095 Market St., #410, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415)621-2911.

*National Telemedia Council* provides resources for teachers on evaluating television and media. Newsletter, *Telemedium*. Contact: Marieli Rowe, 120 E. Wilson St., Madison, WI 53703; (608)257-7712, memberships: \$20.

*Assembly of Media Arts* is a section of the National Council for Teachers of English with newsletter, *Media Matters*. Contact: Robert Happ, Hempstead High School, 3715 Pennsylvania Ave., Dubuque, IA 52001; (319)588-5172, memberships: \$10.

*Association for Media Literacy* is the leading voice for media literacy in North America with an excellent newsletter, *Mediacy*, plus conferences, training programs and resources for their 1500 teacher-members. Contact: Barry Duncan, AML, 40 McArthur, Weston, Ontario M9P 3M7; (416)394-6992, U.S., memberships: \$30.

*The Media Foundation* works on environmental media literacy issues and resources especially *Adbusters* magazine (foreign, \$20/year). 1243 W. 7th Ave., Vancouver, BC V6H 1B7; (604)736-9401.