LIFE BEFORE DEATH

INCULTURATING HOPE

BRENDAN LOVETT

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Do mo mhatair
agus i gcuimhne mo athair

PREFACE

One basic requirement of a word of hope is that it be uttered with full awareness of context i.e. of all that makes for despair in the world.

Ronald Aronson's recent work, *The Dialetics of Disaster,* is subtitled "A Preface to Hope." The structure of the present short work follows a similar logic. Only after the historical truth of our situation has been confronted, can hope creatively realize itself.

The inspiration for the title comes from a memorable Belfast graffiti which read 'is there life before death?'. The poignancy of the question finds an echo in long-suffering people everywhere. The sub-title, on the other hand, refers to my desire to write as a Christian, i.e., as a person who would wish to incarnate hope in and through his own living.

To try to be a Christian is to hope in people, in their humanity, in their capacity to respond to life creatively. But people have to understand before they can respond creatively. They have to tell their own story with insight and precision. What follows is intended as a slight contribution towards facilitating people's judgment of the historical process in which they find themselves caught up.

This book seeks to do justice to the concerns and the insights of the participants at the March, 1985 Theological Reflection Week held in Ozamiz City in the Philippines under the auspices of the Center for the Study of Religion and Culture. The theme of that week was *Inculturation: The Challenge* and it led to a depth of reflection far in advance of anything anticipated by the organizers.

This was due in part to the levels of awareness of the participants, many of whom had benefitted from workshops held in Ozamiz in previous years and led by people like Enrique Dussel (1982) and Thomas Berry (1984). The critical and liberating hermeneutic of history of the former placed within the ultimate ecological context provided by the latter led people to articulate the issue of inculturation in very demanding terms.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge the stimulating input of Carlos Abesamis and Sean McDonagh to our week's reflection . I must, however, hasten to exonerate them from any direct responsibility for what I have written below. The book was simply occasioned by the reflection week. It is a personal attempt to integrate all the issues that seem to flow into this topic and to provide a framework adequate to all the insights thrown up in the course of the week.

A work which attempts to address such a broad field in such short compass makes itself vulnerable to attack from any number of perspectives. There is a good reason for risking publication of my own attempts to make sense of things – the times demand it. I would like to identify with the sentiments of E. P. Thompson [1982:27] in this regard: it is surely better to risk appearing intellectually ridiculous than to passively accept nuclear and ecological destruction.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The issue of inculturation can only arise when the religion of a particular people claims universal validity and the attempt is made to communicate it to other peoples. When this happens, the relation between the religion claiming universality and the cultures of the receiving peoples necessarily becomes problematic.

One can broadly identify three solutions to this problem in history. The first has been to present the religion to alien peoples together with its parent culture – i.e. the culture of its missionaries or apostles. We find evidence of this approach in the New Testament references to the judaizing Christians against whom Paul struggled. It could be said to have been the style of the missionary Christian churches in the modern period up to the mid-twentieth century. Rather than a chosen 'solution,' this should be seen as an uncritical assumption – the religious message is not seen as distinct from the cultural forms with which the missionaries were familiar.

The second solution involves a more deliberate choice. It is typified in the approach of St. Paul. Here we have an attempt to distinguish the gospel of Christ from its parent judaic culture, even though there is no thought-out strategy for transposing it into other cultures. The attitude to the receptor culture is variable: firm intolerance in regard to its religious manifestations alongside of indifference in regard to all else.

The third solution presupposes 'cultural detachment' and an extraordinary degree of cultural self-awareness. Since these are rare commodities, this solution has never

yet been put into practice on a wide scale. Some claim to find it in the attitudes of the great 16th century Jesuits, Roberto De Nobili in India and Matteo Ricci in China, while others find this claim anachronistic (Amaladoss, 1980:) This solution begins with the receptor culture which is studied and entered into as sympathetically as possible. Then an attempt is made to articulate the gospel from within the culture, as opposed to proclaiming it from outside (Cf. Donovan: 1978).

At the present time, most people would have no great difficulty in affirming that the third solution is the only acceptable one and that the expression 'inculturation of the gospel' should be reserved to a practice consonant with this third solution. But the model of missionary context which has the gospel being carried to people who have not yet heard of it is misleadingly simple. In fact, such a missionary context does not exist any more over large areas of the world. What does exist is a post-missionary situation which is culturally complex in the extreme. In this situation, the relationship between Christianity and culture remains problematic and no one solution can be given to the question. Perhaps something of the needed complexity of response will become clear if it be pointed out that black theology and liberation theology – both of Amercian provenance – are today finding a creative use in the South African context, although both could, perhaps, be classified in terms of solution one above, since they are not immediately concerned with the cultural reception of the gospel but with its socio-political implications and with the socio-political context in which it is being proclaimed now. The reason why this manner of theologizing does not fall under the charge of cultural imperialism is not far to seek. The main line of argument by black theologians is that concern for traditional culture is irrelevant to the painful political and social injustices under which the people suffer in South Africa. Added to this is the manner in which the racist minority regime has stressed the "proper" cultures of different ethnic groups as

a key tool in its ideological arsenal. In this context, it is easy to see why these theologians are suspicious of any talk of 'inculturation' of the gospel.

But perhaps what such ideological practices should lead to is a more critical understanding of what is involved in an authentic inculturation of the gospel, rather than a simple rejection or excessive limitation of the term. It should lead to an awareness of the complex historical forces which are shaping peoples' lives and cultures in our interdependent world. We only have historical cultures: to indulge in an a-historical reflection on a culture is always ideologically regressive.

It is impossible to take a people's culture seriously without situating it historically. It is trivial, if not just meaningless, to invite people to reflect on their culture and not include consideration of the historical forces shaping that culture massively at the present time.

Considerations such as the preceding are what shape the understanding of inculturation which emerges in the present writing. Inculturation is understood to be the mechanics of evangelization. Not any one, but all the levels of theological specialization, culminating in the hydra-headed task of communications, need to be called into play (Cf. Lonergan, 1972). Compared to much recent writing on the topic where the impression could easily be gained that inculturation is a problematic confined to the special realms of rites and liturgies, what follows may seem very broad in scope. The reader is asked to judge the issue of scope by the requirements of the topic. I could refer to one recent publication where the writer adopts a similar attitude to the scope of inculturation, *Inculturation and the Challenge of Modernity* by Azevedo (1981; cf. also Eboussi Boulaga, 1983). We differ, however, rather basically in respective evaluations of the forces of modernity, my view being decidedly less sanguine than his. At this point let me stress where we are in agreement. This agreement is substantial and relates to the manner in which "political and economic carriers have

brought western modernity to almost every country, deeply affecting or thoroughly transforming age-old cultures."

As will become clear through the argument, I tend to find this historical process of modernity destructive of all cultures. A large part of my concern is to determine whether this must necessarily continue to be the case. This argument depends, of course, on how the phenomenon of culture is understood and, consequently, the first chapter is devoted to this topic. But if there be any validity to my evaluation of cultural reality, then the central issue in regard to inculturation must be the critical assessment and subsequent transformation of a historical process which, as is argued in subsequent chapters, is central to the issue of survival for all cultures today.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CENTRALITY OF CULTURE

Meishaa elukunya nalso engeno
One head cannot hold all wisdom

Maasai proverb

It may well be true that the number of definitions of culture is limited only by the imaginations of cultural anthropologists. In spite of this, there can be no question of by-passing the cultural anthropologists since it is in part the empirical study of human cultures which has revolutionized our understanding of humanity and definitively buried the classical notion of culture. (See Lonergan, 1967:252-267; 1974:1-9; 1972:xi, 124, 301). Bernard Lonergan has specified the transition from classicist to contemporary culture in terms of five distinct shifts of emphasis (see chapter four). But he also insists that the most people have failed as yet to grasp the significance of such shifts and continue to live out of a classicist frame of reference. This makes it impossible for them to take the anthropological understanding of culture seriously or to grant the cognitive significance of cultures other than their own.

Taking our cue from the anthropologists, the definition of Clifford Geertz [1975:89] can serve as an adequate starting point: culture denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions, expressed in symbolic forms by means of which human beings communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitude toward life. There are, however, many people who can accept this definition of culture without feeling compelled to assent to the centrality of culture asserted in the title of this chapter. The reason for this is to be found in a very wide-

spread misapprehension about human knowing, according to which the real is to be known by taking a look, the already-out-there-now real. This myth of the real as what begins at the edge of my eye-ball ignores the fact that the real is what is arrived at in true judgment. This misconception is what enables people to oppose culture and reality and, in doing so, to see culture as secondary, as having to do with people's meanings and preferences but not with 'hard' reality.

The Epistemological Question:

There is, regretably, no easy way of extirpating this naive prejudice from people's minds. Yet the need to do so is both urgent and enormous. The indicators from many fronts, to be detailed below, are that we are progressively closing down the earth in all its renewable life-systems. Over the past two hundred years and more especially in our own times, human beings, through exploitative technologies, have changed the chemistry, geology and biology of the earth on an unprecedented scale. We are destroying the air, water, soil, sunlight and living forms of the planet. Much of the damage, especially the destruction of species, is irreversible in historical time. The magnitude of the change can only be measured in geological or biological, not historical, time. I mention this data in the context of trying to understand the centrality of culture because what I have been describing are the manifestations of a pervasive cultural pathology. Failure to see our present malaise as the fruit of a culturally mediated reality blinds people to the alternative mediations of the world which could be so much more life-enhancing.

So, even if there be no easy way of extirpating the naive prejudice about knowing, what is called the epistemological question must be tackled if the full resources of people's creativity are to be brought to bear on our present crisis. We are all, says Pierre Pradervand, Del Fuego Indians. He is referring to the historical account of the

first encounter of those people with the galleons of the Spanish conquistadores. Nothing in their prior experience enabled them to perceive what was in front of their eyes as a human creation, nor could they perceive the Spaniards as men until they entered their small rowing boats. " . . .(A) Wall Street banker catapulted into the middle of the Kalahari would not perceive one tenth (let's be generous) of what a Bushman would see. He would be dead in 24 – 48 hours . . . Life is a permanent process of organization of our perceptions, of our sensual, social and intellectual impressions. These perceptions and impressions are organized via the three basic mechanisms of education, imitation and suggestion. Through them, we form our concepts about 'reality' . . . . " [1982:118]. Trouble arises when our very limited perceptions are inadequate to what is there to be (and desperately needs to be) perceived. Following on the development of destructive nuclear power, Albert Einstein remarked that everything had changed except our way of thinking. Our 'Kalahari', i.e., totally different environment, demands totally new concepts and perceptions for survival. Our 'Wall Street banker' perceptions are guaranteed to ensure total close-down of the planet if we follow them in this changed environment.

Culture and Modernity:

What gave rise to our new environment is the implementation of particular cultural values. Because of the uncritical use of the word 'scientific' to qualify this culture, the peculiar set of human values and cultural preoccupations which are central to the whole historical process are easily obscured. This also serves to hinder people from evolving creative alternatives. The needed insight is contained in Gunnar Myrdal's statement on facts:

> Facts do not organize themselves into concepts and theories just by being looked at; indeed,

> except within the framework of concepts and theories, there are no facts, only chaos. There is an inevitable *a priori* element in all scientific work. Questions must be asked before answers can be given. The questions are all expressions of our interest in the world. They are at bottom valuations. [1970:9; cf. also, Habermas, 1974; Kuhn, 1970].

The uniqueness of every culture is due to the fact that human beings make different valuations, different creative choices about what is important and significant to them and, as a consequence, they both realize themselves and mediate the world in ways that are richly plural. Looked at in this way, culture is a matter of world-constitution, the way in which human beings come to themselves through creatively shaping a world. From here, it is an easy step to see that human freedom is centrally linked to the cultural process. If people give away their right to name the world, if they allow others to define for them what reality is to be, they have ceased to be the masters of their own destiny. They are no longer the ones who define the meaning of their own lives. True education is always cultural action for freedom [Freire, 1972]. The only process that can qualify as real education eschews the goal of trying to convert people to a particular point of view – especially one's own. It attempts to make people see all the implications of different choices and then encourages them to make up their own minds [Pradervand, 1982]. It only needs a moment's reflection on the preceding sentence to see how very demanding a non-ideological educative process would be.

Culture and the Prejudice of the Enlightenment:

Reverting to Geertz's definition above, he stresses that culture is a '(symbol) system of inherited meanings.' We are born into a meaning system that gives us a world. Due to individualistic prejudice, some people find a contra-

diction between our emphasis above on the connection between freedom and cultural authenticity and the fact that culture is an inherited system of meanings. The fact that it is inherited means, in their minds, that it must be opposed to personal creativity, and therefore, freedom. But there is an enormous oversight involved here, reminiscent of, and perhaps derived from, the one prejudice of the Enlightenment, its prejudice against all 'pre-judgment' in the sense of tradition, the wisdom of the past generations. This is the failure to see that inherited meanings are the condition of possibility of the exercise of our creativity. The more that people stand in the accumulated wisdom and experience of life of those who have gone before them, the further and deeper can they themselves understand and live creatively.

What Ezra Pound had to say about words can fairly be extended and applied to whole cultures. He suggested that we entertain the figure of words as "electrified cones, charged with the power of tradition, of centuries of race consciousness, of agreement, of association". [Kenner, 1971:238-9].

Culture and Limits:

Every culture is necessarily limited, the actualization of some human possibilities at the expense of others. To concentrate on this aspect of limitation alone is to wilfully blind ourselves to the obvious: the received culture is alone that which makes possible the emergence of critical thinking. Socialization into a linguistic community is the condition of possibility of creative thought.

It is also clear that, as a historical project, every human culture is subject to a dialectic of progress and decline. The quality of a culture at any given stage will be the result of the presence or absence of attentiveness, intelligence, rationality and responsibility on the part of those who happen to be, at that stage, the living participants in that cultural tradition. Only a creative appropriation of the

insights of the past promotes our living in the present. Although it is not critically grounded, the negative attitude towards the past, subservient as it is to the myth of progress, effectively blocks people from grasping the centrality of culture. Perhaps when I attempt later on to unpack the myth of progress, it may become clearer what has happened. The point to be stressed here is that people deprived of cultural roots cannot contribute creatively to life.

Cultures within the Story of the Emerging Universe:

I am convinced that the only context within which the full import of the preceding statement can be grasped is the widest conceiveable context, that of the story of the universe. This four and a half billion year story in all its immensity of time and differentiation is what we must come to cherish as our own story. We are the point at which the Universe comes to consciousness: it does not belong to us, we belong to it. The basic laws of the emerging story are

i) increasing differentiation,
ii) increasing complexity (interiority/subjectivity)
iii) increasing communion

These laws apply pre-eminently to the recent (4-6 million years?) emergence of the human. The differentiation of species becomes the differentiation within the species at the level of consciousness. The point of stressing our status as recent comers is to focus attention on just how long it took to constitute a world suited to the emergence of the human. The initial emergence of life on our planet has been placed at 3.5 billion years ago. There is an enormous distance between that point and the emergence of the vertebrates 600 million years ago. Then the trees and the flowers, the latter crucial to the emergence of protein, and the age of the mammals 65 million years ago. It is easy to see that as the forms of life become more complex there is an acceleration of the process. [Berry, 1980].

Coming to the human part of the story, the tribal-shamanistic period is claimed by Tom Berry as the most creative human period. In this period the creation of the key symbols/archetypes mediating the universe as mystery took place in and through the extraordinarily creative production of languages. What we call cultures are the ways that people have made themselves in mediating the world in variously wonderful ways. Historically seen, the whole richness of our humanity lies precisely in these creations by diverse groups. Human creativity flows from and is conditioned by the authenticity of human cultures.

While it is clear enough that cultures differ, it is by no means clear – contrary to the popular prejudice – how they can be intelligently compared. Categories like simple/complex, primitive/advanced, savage/civilized are question-begging and pejorative and tell us more about the users than about the cultures under discussion. [Evans-Prichard, 1965; Hillman, 1975:57-66]. It was once fashionable to believe in a sort of cultural evolutionism until people began to realize that it depended entirely on what criteria of value one advanced as the norm of comparison.

> If, for example, we evaluate societies by their contribution to mankind's long-range survival potential, then the so-called 'primitive' societies must be rated superior to the so-called 'civilized' societies which have recently progressed to the point of threatening to annihilate mankind in a variety of scientific ways: through nuclear or chemical or biological warfare, or by rendering the environment incapable of sustaining human life, or by tampering with the genetic processes of the human species. [Hillman, 1975:61].

Since all peoples alive today are contemporaries and so equally distant from the origin of the species, all have undergone thousands of years of transformations. All that can reasonably be said of other cultures is that they have specialized in ways different from those which we have

chosen. As people develop many kinds of knowledge, they develop many kinds of ignorance, and all cultures fall under this law. One does not need to reject in obscurantist fashion real advances in various ways of thinking: the point is simply to try and keep in focus what is lost in each new development.

The twentieth century has witnessed a rediscovery of myth [Cassirer, 1953(1924);1962:72-108]. For quite some time it had been the practice of people affected by modern westernized patterns of culture to look down on peoples whose lives were governed by mythic patterns of consciousness, as if this were an inferior form of human living which was to be left behind. This means that it has taken people in the West three hundred years to begin to appropriate the insight of Vico who proclaimed the primacy of poetry, i.e. that the human spirit expresses itself in symbols before it knows, if ever it knows, what its symbols literally mean. [Lonergan, 1967:263]. For people to become fixated on what literally is so, obscures our nature, constricts our spontaneity, and limits our freedom. Claude Levi-Strauss tells us that his concern in writing *Totemism* and *The Savage Mind* was to show that all people are moved by a desire to understand the world around them and proceed to this end by intellectual means, "exactly as a philosopher, or even to some extent a scientist, can and would do" [1978:16]. What is different is a way of thinking which tries to reach by the shortest possible means a total understanding of the universe. This way of thinking implies that if you don't understand everything, you cannot explain anything. Modern science has advanced by abandoning this totalitarian ambition, concentrating on very limited phenomena and advancing step by step. But one cannot really abandon the prior way of thinking. To settle for a world of limited intelligibility is an absurd project. Everybody lives from myth. Asked what was the most important question facing people in our world, Einstein replied: "Whether the universe is friendly." Through their acknowledged or hidden mythic responses

to this question, all people are shaping their lives.

Riches in Diversity:

For the human family as for all the interrelated species that gave rise to and continue to support the human family, differences are fecund. Many have drawn attention to the levelling of cultures which is taking place [cf. most recently, Stavenhagen, 1985]. Levi-Strauss pin-points what he calls 'over-communication' as the problem. By this he means the tendency to know exactly in one point of the world what is going on in all other parts of the world. "In order for a culture to be really itself and to produce something, the culture and its members must be convinced of their originality and even, to some extent, of their superiority over the others". [1978:20]. We are enabled by over-communication to consume anything from anywhere in the world at the cost of losing all originality.

Conclusion:

Throughout this chapter, I have been reaching towards something more than an analogy between the needed diversity of species which constitute the world as a living organism – the world of which we are the consciousness – and what I believe to be the needed diversity of cultures for the enrichment and ultimate survival of all human and other life.

Recent experiences with hybrid strains of rice and corn in the Philippines and elsewhere have caused many agriculturalists to worry about the loss of the 'gene pool' for the original plant varieties. Millions of years of nature's experiments in plant survival are being lost. Related to genetic erosion and the destruction of diversity is the issue of control of world food security. A sustained drive by multinational corporations for monopoly control over the 'first link in the food chain' is facilitated by present patent laws. These multinationals already control the

artificial fertilizer and herbicide market. The pressure to release for farmers' use only the seed which needs their companies' own products is clearly considerable. The trend to monoculture in various crops involves a dangerously vulnerable homogeneity. When diseases strike, the only hope lies in infusion of genes from more resistant strains. These may no longer be available. [Myers, 1985: 152-159; Mooney, 1983].

But a complementary insight is called for:

> People are not yet even aware that the same might happen with humankind. Millions of years of social experiments and knowledge in survival are yielding ground to the hybrid of Northern civilization. [Fuglesang, 1984:61].

That, I think, is the point about cultural diversity. And just as biocide must inexorably lead to the death of a human species that ignored its community of life with all other species, so the suppression of cultures must also bring down the curtain on the human drama.

CHAPTER TWO

APPROACHES TO MODERNITY

"modern man is any person born after Nietzsche's edict that God is dead, but before the hit recording 'I Wanna Hold Your Hand'. "

Woody Allen [1980:85]

If nothing else, Woody Allen's definition may help to alert us to the quagmire of arbitrariness that tends to surround the use of words like 'modern', 'modernization', or 'modernity'. There are non-arbitrary definitions, of course, but they are predictably opposed in their claims. I will try to pick my way through the conflicting definitions in an attempt to do justice to the various viewpoints.

A first approximation can be gained through a history of ideas approach. This would see the challenge of modernity as grounded in the increased dominance of historical consciousness resulting from the historical criticism deriving from the European Enlightenment, the emergence of the scientific worldview, and the Cartesian turn to the subject.

A second approach developed out of the sociology of knowledge. Having co-authored an acknowledged classic in that field [Berger/Luckmann, 1967], Peter Berger moved on, first to the sociology of religion[1971, 1973], and then to grasp the relevance of his scholarly discipline for illuminating the manner in which human consciousness is structured by the modernization process [1974, 1977a: 11-15; 1977b:5-80]. One of the not inconsiderable gains of this approach was to highlight the acute suffering undergone by people whose meanings are savaged by modernization and the necessity of a calculus of meanings. Berger credits Ivan Illich with having mediated to him the 'Aha!

experience' in regard to the development debate [1977a: 9].

People who are in touch with the pain of the negative in history have understandably little time for the history of ideas approach. The victims of modern racism, sexism and other institutionalized forms of oppression do not find it particularly insightful. For them the challenge or, rather, crisis of modernity is not to be spelled out primarily as a cognitive crisis of the turn to the subject and the rise of historical consciousness. Hunger, poverty, oppression, discrimination, and the threat of nuclear destruction are for them the significant effects of modernity, the effects which above all else need to be explained. Such victims are unhappy also with the sociology of knowledge approach, although it at least helps them to name some of the sources of their pain. Basically, sociology is limited to the analysis of what actually exists: it is no part of its task to evaluate the historical reasons or factors which brought it into existence.

Berger [1977:70] defines the core of modernization as the transformation of the world brought about by the technological innovations of the last few centuries. Azevedo derives an interdisciplinary description from political economy and cultural anthropology. He sees modernization as the process of transformation of the world as a result of increasing knowledge dynamically translated into technology[1982:4]. It is difficult to use the term modernization with the neutrality which Azevedo desires. He knows that the political theory of modernization is strongly related to the western theory of development with all its nineteenth century overtones of progress. He also knows that both the theory of modernization and that of development have been countered by the marxist theory of imperialism and the more recent theory of dependence [Frank, 1964, 1967, 1978, 1979]. Azevedo chooses to by-pass the economic approach to modernization in favour of an interdisciplinary perspective which gives primary emphasis to cultural anthropology. He views modernity

as a cultural reality, that is, as a set of meanings, symbols, trends, insights and values which underlie specific ways of understanding, expressing, defining and therefore also shaping social realities.

While I am in basic agreement with the necessity of seeing modernity as a cultural reality, I do not agree that this means overlooking the critical issues raised by the economic approach. As I see things, only the kind of method provided by the work of Bernard Lonergan [1957,1972] can do justice both to empirically grounded phenomenological study and to the evaluational and critical concerns of other schools. At any rate, his is the approach which I shall attempt to follow below.

Up to the fairly recent past, a key voice of moral concern (even when it refused to describe itself as such) in regard to some of the human costs of the process of modernization has been that of the marxist tradition. A large part of my concern is to constructively challenge that voice by drawing attention to oversights which, by their very nature, have served to perpetuate the very evils against which people have tried to struggle. While Azevedo is correct in saying that "a rather outdated, unilinear conception of social evolution" has always been attached to 'modernization' understood within the political – economic framework, this is scarcely reason enough for avoiding the very real challenges which arise within this framework.

I shall devote the rest of this chapter to an inevitably limited survey of some recent writing within this critical socio-economic tradition.

Dependency Theory (Frank):

Mention was made above of the emergence of the theory of dependence especially as articulated in the work of Andre Gunder Frank. The theory claims that:

i) it is false to assume that all countries go through

the same pattern of stages of economic development. Today's developed capitalist countries were never underdeveloped in the manner of many countries today.

ii) underdevelopment cannot be internally understood: it is an essential part of the world capitalist system.

iii) 'dualist' interpretation of economies whereby they are understood to be composed of two autonomous sectors, one modern and under the sway of the capitalist world, the other isolated, feudal and stagnant, must be rejected. The system interpenetrates all.

iv) Metropolitan/satellite relations are internally mirrorred.

v) Satellites experienced their greatest development when metropolitan centres were weakest; as Spanish Depression of the seventeenth century, Napoleonic Wars at the start of the nineteenth century, the depression of the 30's and the two World Wars.

vi) Instead of the dualist version of a conservative feudal sector (no "take-off") and a dynamic capitalist sector ("take-off" of national economy), Frank proves that all sectors always participated in the general process of commodity exchange, i.e., the market system. He claims that this means Latin American countries are capitalist from the beginning and the dependent nature of their insertion into the capitalist world system is the cause of their underdevelopment.

Frank is surely right about (iii). The myth of the "back wardness" of regions was used by liberal elites to discredit the reaction of those interior regions whose relatively diversified economies disintegrated under the impact of competition from European commodities and/or the insistence that they fulfill the role of producers of raw materials for the world market [cf. McCoy, 1982]. But more theoretically rigorous Marxists take issue with the manner in which he identifies in (vi) the market as distinguishing capitalism [Laclau, 1979: 15-50]. On such an identification, capitalism is all that the world has ever seen – from neolithic times. For Marx, sale of labour-power

is the distinction, consequent as it is on loss by the direct producer of ownership of the means of production. For Marx, accumulation of commercial capital is quite compatible with the most varied modes of production: capital is not to be confused with capitalism.

Frank omits all reference to the relations of production from his definition of capitalism. Only by abstracting from them can he get as wide a notion of capitalism as he wants. His main concern is to confront the historical system as a whole and to show the indissoluble unity between the so-called feudal backwardness of some areas and apparent progress of bourgeois dynamism in others. Laclau suggests that the fatal blurring of what is distinctive in capitalism can be avoided through the key distinction between a *mode of production* and *an economic system.* For Marxists, feudalism means a general ensemble of extra-economic coercions weighing on the peasantry. Once the key distinction is kept in mind, maintaining the feudal character of the relations of production in the agrarian sector does not involve one in the dualist thesis feared by Frank. An economic system can include different modes of production: in the feudal mode of production property remains in the hands of the direct producer, whereas in the capitalist mode of production ownership of the means of production is severed from labour-power. An economic system can be taken to designate "mutual relations between the different sectors of the economy or between different productive units, whether on a regional, national or world scale" [1979:35]. [A designation of 'mode of production' is given by Laclau but I do not include it as he indicates in the 1977 Postscript that he now considers it inadequate]. Starting from the relations of production, it is possible to show just why underdevelopment of the periphery is essential to the development of the center – something Frank never does. The argument runs:

– capital accumulation depends on the rate of profit
– the latter is determined by the rate of surplus value and by the organic composition of capital (a rise in

organic composition is the condition for capitalist expansion because technological progress is what boosts labour reserve, maintaining low wages)

- but unless a rise in organic composition is linked to a more than proportional increase in the rate of surplus value, there will be decline in the rate of profit
- compensation is through a) capital movement from industries with high organic composion to those with low organic composition; b) expansion of productive units in which either low technology or superexploitation of labour counteracts the increasing organic composition of capital in the advanced industries. [1979:37-39]

What is needed is a sensitivity to historically variable patterns of dependence. It is necessary to stop talking of capitalism as a *Deus ex machina* and abandon all talk of a single unique contradiction. Relations of dependence have always existed on the margins of the existence of capitalism. Recent historiography indicates that the disparity in price levels during the Middle Ages was always to the benefit of Western Europe at the expense of the Eastern Mediterranean.

> Yet this activity, which greatly stimulated the accumulation of commercial capital in the great European cities, by no means implied the generalization of wage relationships in the sphere of production. On the contrary, it corresponded to a feudal expansion, in which servile ties were very often reinforced to maximize the surplus. Was not the European expansion of the mercantilist epoch perhaps an extension of this process on a world scale? Through its monopoly positions, metropolitan Europe fixed the price of commodities in its overseas empires – with the aim of securing a permanent disparity in its favour – while, by means of extra-economic coercion, it exploited

labour-power in the mines and plantation systems. [37].

Now this type of dependency is very different from that which was to dominate in what Laclau wants to call the specifically capitalist epoch of European expansion. Only an analysis like that reproduced on the preceding page can clarify the contemporary forms of dependency. Laclau's plea is for attention to the historical specificity of relations of dependency, relations which can only be understood by grasping relations of production.

World System Theory (Braudel/Wallerstein):

Laclau's criticism of the work of Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century,* is essentially on the same lines. Once again, the danger is of blurring central shifts in the mode of production by finding the key to the totality in 'production for profit in a market' [1974:399]. On this basis, once again, there would never have been anything but capitalism in the world. I believe that Wallerstein's work is in fact much more nuanced than the one quote picked out by Laclau would indicate. But it is true that, for him, what distinguishes historical capitalism as a system is that in this system capital came to be used with the primary objective of self-expansion, "a curiously self-regarding role" ..... "the accumulation of still more capital" [1983:14]. Laclau sees the argument of Wallerstein as invocation of a merely subjective principle to provide the unity of the system [Laclau, 1979:46].

Laclau's concern here is that the understanding of a mode of production as peculiarly capitalist is dissolved because all its essential determinants are transferred to the level of economic systems. Thus, colonialism, a structural relation between various parts of the world economy which belongs to the analytic level of economic system, is

illegitimately transferred to the level of modes of production. Laclau has no problem in talking of a world system and says that "it is obvious that the dimensions of this (economic) system, conceived as a totality, have tended to be identified from the 16th century onwards with the world market." To what extent was this world economic system capitalist? To the extent that the law of motion of the capitalist mode of production i.e. the fluctuations in the rate of profit (a strictly capitalist category since it presupposes the existence of free labour) has come to be the law of motion which articulates the system as a whole. The crucial moment is the commodification of labour-power, as it is this which gives rise to specifically capitalist profit.

> The condition for speaking of the world capitalist system is not, therefore, that the system be unified by the tendency of a homo economicus to maximize his interests, outside of any specified type of production relations, but that the laws of motion of the rate of profit, conceived as a capitalist category, determine the laws of motion of the whole system. [1979:42-43];

It is necessary to support Laclau's insistence on theoretical rigor. A greater attention to the Latin American debate on the part of recent writers on the Philippine scene could have lent greater value to their works. [Rivera, 1982; Jose, 1982; Bello, 1982]. Something of what could result can be seen in Stauffer's thesis of refeudalization where the fruitfulness of applying even a general non-Marxist model of relationships between developed and undeveloped countries is very illuminating. [Galtung, 1970, 1971; Stauffer, 1979:180-218].

But to criticise Wallerstein on this score is not to deny a value to his work on other counts. His work has been subjected to an essentially theoretical critique by Robert Brenner and the latter's own argument on the transition to capitalism has given rise to an international debate on

the agrarian class structure and economic development in pre-industrial Europe. This debate is far from over. In a recent overview, Perry Anderson classifies Wallerstein's work as 'historical sociology'. He places it within the (rather violent) theoretical juncture between historiography and philosophy which has taken place in recent years. It is, he says, "henceforth impossible for Marxists to proceed – as they did for many years, on either side – as if their history and their theory were two separate mental worlds, with little more than occasional tourism, mildly curious, between them. Theory now is history, with a seriousness and severity it never was in the past . . ." [1983:26]. Since the fifties, Marxism as an intellectual force in the English-speaking world has been virtually synonymous with the work of historians. The result has been the transformation of received interpretations of the English and European past. The cumulative effect of all this work was its consolidation in the seventies into a 'canon of commanding weight well beyond (its) own formal discipline' [Anderson].

It is impossible to be a historical materialist in Marx's sense and write off as 'subjectivist' any serious concern with the historical choices and options – the culturally transformative activity – whereby people shaped their relationship to the material conditions of existence. In such choices people bring into existence the material basis for the structuring of themselves in accordance with a systemic logic neither foreseen nor intended. There are two distinct kinds of causality involved here. They are not to be confused, nor is one to be assumed to substitute for the other. Laclau is right to insist that explanation for the workings of the capitalist system be given in systemic terms. Wallerstein is right to search for the historical options which fed into the rise of this system. No mono-causal, deterministic, intransitive model of the constraints of the material conditions of existences on people's consciousness can pass as a tolerable reading of Marx. Where both Laclau and Wallerstein err is in their

failure to see the limits of their respective contributions: both contribute in mutually irreducible fashion to an understanding of the full historical reality.

I have spent what may seem an excessive length of time on this issue for reasons which are central to this book. We are faced today with the stark issue of survival, planetary and human. It is an issue that in its ecological and military dimensions was simply unthinkable to earlier generations, and that includes those who created the tradition of historical materialism. Anyone concerned today with human liberation is forced to tackle a range of questions which are simply beyond the scope of the received Marxist tradition [Bahro, 1984, esp. 95-121, 209-238; Medvedev, 1981:29-93; Thompson, 1982]. What is at issue is 'the long overdue moment of socialist morality.' The women's/peace movement and the ecological movement raise the most fundamental issues imaginable and they lie 'atwart rather than within the relations between classes that is the central concern of Marxism' [Anderson, 1983:104]. The expansion of the characteristic range of concern of historical materialism is a significant part of the on-going argument of the following chapters.

CHAPTER THREE

THE MODERN WORLD SYSTEM

The C19-20

The Nineteenth Century. The Twentieth Century. There were never any others. No centuries before these. Dante was not hailed in his time as an Authentic Fourteenth Century Voice. Nor did Cromwell thunder After all, in the bowels of Christ, this is the Seventeenth Century.

The two are one aircraft in the end, the C-19-20, capacious with cargo. Some of it can save your life, some can prevent it. The cantilevered behemoth is fitted up with hospi[als and electric Gatling guns to deal with recalcitrant and archaic spirits.

Les A. Murray [1983]

The preceding pages should make it clear that I have no interest in arguing that the modern world system is to be called capitalist from its beginnings. I have no difficulty in accepting the conclusion of the classic study by Eric Hobsbawm in which he locates the 17th century as the period of general crisis in the European economy which marked the move towards the capitalist system, describing the trade pattern of the 15th and 16th centuries as follows:

> Under certain circumstances such trade could, even under feudal conditions, produce a large enough aggregate of profits to give rise to large-scale production; for instance if it catered for exceptionally large organizations such as kingdoms or the church; if the thinly spread demand of an entire continent were concentrated into the hands of businessmen in a few specialized centres such as the Italian or Flemish textile towns; if a large 'lateral extension' of the field of enterprise took place, e.g. by conquest or colonization . . . The expansion of the 15th and 16th centuries was, essentially, of this sort; and it therefore created its own crisis both within the home market and the overseas market. This crisis the 'feudal businessmen' – who were the richest and the most powerful just because the best adapted for making big money in a feudal society – were unable to overcome. [1954:41].

But I am concerned to trace the lines of continuity which enable us to speak usefully of one world system emerging and developing from the 15th century to the present. The key manifestation of the emerging system has been identified as a tendency towards the commodification of everything. Prior to this, many of the links in what came to be called the chain of capital would have been considered either irrational or immoral as 'marketable entities' by the holders of political and/or moral authority. Also relevant is the fact that prior to this time one or other of these links was often historically lacking: either accumulated stock in money form, or labour-power to be used, or a network of distributors, or consumers who were purchasers. One or other of these elements was not 'commodifiable', i.e., considered capable of being transacted through a 'market'. Our modern system involved the growing commodification of processes – exchange, production, distribution, investment – previously conducted other than through a market. What was to emerge was that no social transaction was to be exempt from this self-regarding process. When did this begin? Wallerstein gives it as his opinion that "the genesis of this historical system is located in late-fifteenth-century Europe, that the system expanded in space over time to cover the entire globe by the late nineteenth century, and that it still today covers the entire globe" [1983:19].

The Commodification of Everything:

What is distinctive about this emerging system, in cultural terms, is the extraordinary self-regarding use to which capital is put – the accumulation of still more capital in an endless spiral. The idea of accumulation for accumulation's sake is not one which had appeared particularly bright or moral to people in other times and cultures. The fact that some of the links in the chain of capital simply did not exist in previous social systems should not obscure the nature of the cultural (dis-)value underlying the whole

process. The point is that such links would not have been considered commodifiable in previous systems – on moral grounds. It took a lot of pressure to bring about such a cultural change of values. Since the Church was still a powerful institution in society in the fifteenth century, the question arises to what extent it was responsible for the emergence of the new system. The claim that 'Christianity is the religion of exponential growth' has been put forward in a serious study about the limits of economic growth by Jay W. Forrester [1976:337-353]; I do not think that this is correct and shall indicate why later on. But rejecting this identification of Christianity as the source of all our woes does not mean that the Church did not play a significant role in the initial promotion of the new system. Late medieval Catholicism had an openness to a radical shift in values towards capitalist accumulation.

Earlier, in the creative period of the thirteenth century, Aquinas had picked up on the distinction of Aristotle between natural wealth (food, shelter) and artificial wealth (monetary forms of exchange), noting that, while the desire for the former had limits, the desire for the latter was potentially unlimited, since the unlimited scope of reason could be perverted into the acqusition of material goods [I-II, q. 30, art. 4]. He also observed that the plasticity of human hands, linked to the same unlimited potentiality of the human mind, meant the possibility of producing an infinity of tools [I, q. 76, art. 5 ad 4. q. 91, art. 3 ad 1]. But Aquinas could not have anticipated the extent to which these possibilities were to be realized. While interest in the form of usury was condemned as a sin, nobody was interested in – or, consequently, in touch with – the actual workings of economic mechanisms. As Tawney put it:

> . . . . the specific contributions of medieval writers to the technique of economic theory were less significant than their premises. Their fundamental assumptions, both of which were to leave a deep imprint on the social thought of the sixteenth and

> seventeenth centuries, were two: that economic interests are subordinate to the real business of life which is salvation; and that economic conduct is one aspect of personal conduct, upon which, as on other parts of it, the rules of morality are binding. [1947:31].

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries both ecclesial and social institutions were well and truly perverted into the apparently insatiable pursuit of wealth. Increasingly, the people were exhorted to work, no longer just for a living, but for the sake of accumulation, facilitating the further production of wealth. Recent research by John F. McGovern, reported in Lamb [1978:299], concerns advocacy of the work ethic by medieval lawyers. He has uncovered substantial evidence of both canon and civil lawyers presaging later developments of the work ethic. The extent of the shift can be seen by comparing Brian Tierney's study of medieval poor law with Shaun Sullivan's analysis of the development of moral teaching on killing in defense of private property from the thirteenth to the nineteenth century. [Tierney, 1959; Sullivan, 1976]. What begins as the right of the poor man to kill in defense of what he needs to protect his life – an aspect, then, of the right to life – gradually mutates into a right to kill the poor in the interest of preserving things.

Moving on, while Luther's attacks against the very real corruptions of medieval Catholicism tended to despair of ever controlling concupiscence, Calvin criticized the patristic and scholastic prohibitions against usury. Weber claims that Calvin's followers worked out a sacralized interpretation of industriousness.

> Man could not hope to atone for hours of weakness or thoughtlessness by increased good will at other times. . . . . There was no place for the very human Catholic cycle of sin, repentance, atonement, release, followed by renewed sin. . . The moral conduct of the average man was thus

> deprived of its planless and unsystematic character . . . . Only a life guided by constant thought could achieve conquest over a state of nature. It was this rationalization which gave the reformed faith its peculiar ascetic tendency. . . .(Almost as if) drudgery itself was a means of attaining the certainty of grace. [Bendix, 1962:60, 64].

So, if the beginnings of our system go back to medieval Catholicism, it was the conceptual rigor of Calvinist ethics which blinded people to the true significance of all their striving: accumulation in itself was good as the fruit of industriousness – as long as you did not enjoy it, i.e., as long as it did not lead to 'wanton living'. Mumford sums this up in memorable fashion:

> [This ethical rigor] removed the golden serpent only to replace it with a more formidable monster, less tempting to the eyes, whose very ugliness and inhumanity the Calvinist misinterpreted as a mark of moral value. That monster was the machine . . . [1973:194]

The moral premises of the medieval period to which Tawney draws our attention were transformed by the work ethic into a justification for expanding agricultural productivity, Renaissance mercantilism, and industry. Up to this point what has been said may seem to verify Forrester's claim about the nexus between Christianity and exponential growth. But there are two important qualifications. The first and most basic is that growth, in the period under review, was linear, not exponential. The second is the extent to which both Catholic and Protestant theologies emphasized moral and religious responsibilities towards human and non-human nature as being God's creation and under his divine providence. This framework of religious value exercised some restraint on the new tendencies until the emergence and spread of empirical rationality marked the end of all such sacral constructions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

[Cf. Lamb, 1978: 272]. The analysis of this new horizon of rationality will be taken up below.

Before closing this section on the tendency of this system towards the commodification of everything, the questions arises as to why such a system should have arisen in the first place. Whose interests were being served? Only the most unreflective believer in the myth of progress will assume that the answer could possibly be the interests of all. Yet Marx, that lone philosophical voice from the past on the side of the oppressed, was infected with the self-justifying ideology of progress to the extent that he could commend the 'progressive' role of British colonialism in India. And Galbraith refers with approval to economist Joan Robinson's dictum that, while it is terrible to be the victim of capitalist exploitation, still worse is the fate of those who were not so exploited. [Galbraith, 1982: 125 referring to Robinson, 1964:45]. It is very hard for us to realize the historical negatives of the system with which we are so involved; to grasp, for example, the human cost of even the first century of this system. The population of Mexico was 16,871,408 in 1532: in 1580 it stood at 1,891,267 [Dussel, 1981:42]. Hans-Guenther Prien gives the total population figures for the New World as 100 million in 1492: by 1570 his estimate for the total population is 10-12 million survivors [1978:82] This is genocide of unparalleled proportions. If the system had such appalling results in terms of distribution, why did it begin in the first place?

Wallerstein suggests that the reason was to ensure precisely such bad results of distribution! He presents the following scenario. Economically, feudal Europe was cracking up; the pressure towards egalitarian distribution was strong; small peasant farmers were showing great efficiency as producers. Internecine strife was frequent within the ruling class and the ideological cement of Catholicism was internally under strain from egalitarian movements. The direction of the change desired appalled the upper strata. The effectiveness of their response to this crisis is

shown by Wallerstein in two sets of figures. Looking at the two-hundred-year period between 1450 and 1650, he finds that by the end of this period the basic structures of our system as a viable social system had been established with a reasonably high level of continuity between the families who were the high strata in 1450 and those who occupied this position in 1650. Moving on to the period 1650 to 1900, he finds that most of the comparisons with 1450 still hold true. The trend towards egalitarianization had been drastically reversed. [1983:40-43];

In the sections which immediately follow I shall delineate with unpardonable brevity some of the structural elements of the new system.

The Proletarianization of Labour:

In historical systems preceding the modern one most work-forces were fixed and limited, in some cases to the producer himself or to his extended family or to those bonded to him through various legal or customary regulations, e.g., forms of slavery, debt bondage, serfdom or permament tenancy arrangements. It is clear that a fixed work force sets serious limits to the project of the accumulation of capital. Expansion of activities demands non-fixed work-forces. This provided the base for the institution of wage-labour, the operations of a labour market wherein those who have no option but to sell are called proletarians. The progress of our historical system is marked by an ever-increasing proletarianization of the work-force.

Wallerstein comments that this process does not apply very meaningfully to individuals: rather, it should be seen as applying primarily to households, i.e., the relatively stable structures of shared current income and capital within which individuals have tended to live their lives [1983:23]. If this point is granted, it helps to make sense of his further contention that semi-proletarianization has better served the needs of capitalist accumulation than

absolute proletarianization. The economics of subsistence production needed to be kept going but not acknowledged. Globally, the location of wage-workers in semi-proletarian households has been the statistical norm.

Innate Sexism of the System:

Every known historical culture discriminates against women but the form of oppression is an historical variable which has to be understood in system-specific terms. The key to the sexism of our modern system is contained in the matter of the preceding paragraph. This really calls out for extended treatment but for our purposes it will have to suffice to draw attention to the imposition on the working-class of the distinction between 'productive' and 'unproductive' work. What qualifies as productive is what is money-earning: everything other than what releases a surplus for the market is denigrated as 'mere subsistence'. The work of women which had given them power and position in society is now classified as non-productive and gradually comes to be denied the social recognition due to 'real' work. There then emerges the language of 'work-place', 'bread-winner', 'housewife'. [See Illich's latest work, *GENDER*, 1983].

Ethicization of the World Work-force:

Just as it would be mistaken to conflate sexism with other historical forms of the oppression of women, it would be equally mistaken to confuse historical forms of xenophobia – literally, fear of the stranger – with the modern phenomenon of racism. The key connection to be perceived is that between ethnicity and work-force allocation. The ideology of racism asserts that genetic and/or 'cultural' traits of various groups are the cause of differential rewards under the economic system. Feeding into this ideology and helping to maintain it structurally was yet another, the ideology of universalism. Universalism is a belief about the knowable and how it can be known:

we have knowledge, other peoples have beliefs. It results from the wedding of classicist cultural assumptions with scientism, i.e., the failure to understand that scientific knowing is still a culturally conditioned project, operative within specific cultural values.

The manner in which universalism is made to serve the system is instructive. The appeal to a universal truth – it just happens to be the truth of the powerful – underpins the whole schooling enterprise. In its name, peoples were taught the systemically requisite cultural norms and alienated from competing cultural norms. This involved Christian proselytization, the imposition of European languages, changes in mores and legal codes. [See in this regard the revealing puzzlement of author Owens (1984) faced with the historical evidence of Bicolano reluctance to buy into the 'self-evident' value of accumulation].

The educational structures instituted under historical capitalism have the effect of creating elites in both central and peripheral areas who are 'sold on' the values of the system as self-evident and who can be trusted to dominate the lower working classes in the name of intellectual liberation. It is, I think, only in the light of this historical framework that people can appreciate the sustained attack on both schools and professions that cultural critic Ivan Illich has been involved in over the years [1973a, b; 1975; 1976;1977a, b; 1978]. Such historical understanding removes the paradoxical note from such favoured Illichian categories as 'disabling professions', 'useful unemployment' and 'joyful austerity'.

Transnationality and the System:

Two basic mechanisms worked to increase profits within our historical system: increasing monopoly and 'vertical integration', i.e., ownership of more and more links in the chain of production. This latter device has the neat effect of seller and buyer being one and the same agent at a particular stage of the chain. It can be seen in the char-

tered companies of the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, the great merchant houses of the nineteenth century, and the transnational corporations of the twentieth century. The language of 'center', 'periphery' is indicative of the direction in which the flow of profits ran. The transnationality of commodity chains is as descriptively true of the sixteenth-century system as it is of the twentieth century.

* * *

Most of what I have written so far about our world system is unqualifiedly negative and, despite contemporary disillusionment with ideas of inevitable progress, no thinking reader can feel that justice has been done to the real achievements and breakthroughs of the last four centuries. At this point, then, I would like to present an analysis which is both more nuanced and capable of revealing the ground of ambiguous results in our historical system.

* * *

The Rise of Empirical Rationality:

It is a commonplace to say that rationality is what is distinctive about the emerging world-system. What needs to be analysed is just what kind of rationality is present here. It is simply the case that the meaning of rationality varies with the controlling horizon of meaning. Lonergan has distinguished three such horizons [1967:252-267].

i) The classical horizon was one within which the subjective pole was a normative canonized construct of the cultural world to which the objective pole had to conform. So, Aristotle articulates the ideal of rationality by the approximation of any knowledge to the certain, immutable, necessary and true knowledge of material, formal, efficient and final causes. All investigation presupposes the metaphysical categories of the normative cultural world.

ii) The modern horizon of rationality refers to any horizon within which the subjective pole rejects any canonized construct of objective knowledge as normative and insists that every such construct – whether of meaning or of value – must be controlled by verification in the world of matter and energy. This is *empirical rationality* which found its initial successes in the physical sciences. Geographical discoveries led to awareness of cultures empirically divergent from classical culture. Historical scholarship showed how all the constructs of the human world were subject to empirical conditioning. The tendency was to model the methods of the human sciences on successful empirical natural science with the result that the activities of consiciousness and the constructs of the human historical world were increasingly reduced to processes in the natural world. Consequently the enormous positive gains of empirical rationality in the physical sciences were accompanied by a spreading reductionism, materialism, positivism, relativism and historicism. The consequence of these latter processes is that we are now faced with the acute possibility of the literal reduction of the worlds of consciousness and civilization to the physical world through a nuclear holocaust.

iii) A contemporary horizon or control of meaning is one within which the subjective pole appropriates the structures of human consciousness and thereby seeks to correlate all the knowledge and action of the human world and the physical world as its objective pole. This horizon promotes nuanced and differentiated empirical methods appropriate to the kinds of intelligibility to be found in the biological and human sciences. An attempt to specify this further will provide the content of the next chapter.

With attention focussed on the control of meaning which constitutes the horizon for the empirical rationality of the modern period, it is easier to grasp the emerging pattern and the ease with which the issue of human praxis

was glossed over in this whole period. In what has become a much-quoted judgment, Herbert Butterfield said that "since the rise of Christianity there is no landmark in history that is worthy to be compared with" the seventeenth century revolution in science [1965:190]. It helps to unpack the various moments whereby this process of world-historical significance emerged.

The Emergence of Empirical Rationality:

The early Renaissance saw the development of capital accumulation and the emergence of bankers like tje Medici to whom the princes of church and state went to finance their wars. By the seventeenth century, this function had been taken over by the emerging nation-states and large banks (e.g. the Bank of Amsterdam, 1690). The careers of Richelieu, Wallenstein, Gustavus Adolphus and Cromwell illustrate mercantilism in tandem with state power financing expanding armies and hierarchical bureaucracies. Butterfield's judgment above would claim that, in the long run, such power struggles of the pragmatic order were less important than the emergence of empirical rationality in the guise of the new natural science through the work of people like Copernicus, Galileo, Kepler, Descartes, Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Newton, Pascal, Boyle and Leibniz. Of course, most of these men were deeply religious and some carried on theological investigations alongside of their epoch-making scientific work. Newton, whose work laid the foundation for scientific thinking for two centuries, devoted more time to tracts on the Trinity and the Apocalypse than he expended on the *Principia* or the *Opticks*. And Descartes claimed to be defending the old sacral truths through his scientific work.

But the very success of the control of meaning in the natural world through empirical verification ultimately led to a secularist reduction of all religious values. This shift did not, of course, occur in isolation from contributing historical factors. The breakdown of a unified, sacral

cultural matrix in the wars of religion led to rival sacral versions of the human world and the savagery of those struggles led thinking people into natural-rational forms of religiosity, as in Deism. Although Descartes, for example, needed God to hold his system together, empirical rationality was to discover that it did not need a 'God hypothesis' to grasp the intelligibility of the natural world. Today we find ourselves in the context of an overt secularist reduction of religious value as in Freudian or Marxian views of religion as projections of collective neurosis or of socio-economic alienations, or more covert reductions as in secularist claims that religious values have meaning only in terms of empirical investigations of an historical, psychological or sociological kind.

Empirical Rationality and Economic Value:

Of obvious interest to the earlier part of this chapter is the effect of the new horizon on economic value. The initial effect was mediated through the political philosophy of Hobbes-Locke-Hume. They developed an economic theory which was grounded on 'natural rights' but the grounding was radically ambiguous as it asserted the equality of all while also maintaining that:

> society is composed by two classes differentiated by their level of rationality – those who were 'industrious and rational' and had property, and those who were not, who laboured indeed, but only to live, not to accumulate. [Macpherson, 196:243].

The propertied citizen is the subject of freedom in the French Revolution and it is property that is the primary determinant of the content of freedom in the French Constitution of 1793 [Cf. Bloch, 1966:220-227; Metz, 1977:25-43]. Locke removed any limitations on the acquisition of property – henceforth, the 'value' of individuals would be measured by how much they possessed.

The universal mathematics/mechanics had become normative for all knowing.

Autonomous political economics was linked to an outright attack on the religious values of the old order in the Enlightenment. For Holbach and Hume, only agnostic non-theism' was compatible with 'enlightened knowing, i.e., the secularist empirical understanding of self and world which they were developing. "The reductions of the materialists and perceptualists assured the success of a mechanistic conceptualism in absorbing the sacred into the secular, mind into matter-in-motion, society into bureaucracy and culture into industry." [Lamb, 1978:274]. So while the Enlightenment set out with the laudable goal of ehancing the autonomy and dignity of man, the chief means to that goal was an empirical rationality which in practice precluded from the composition of man any autonomy or dignity. The attack on the values of the old order had the short-term effect of liberating rationality from the excessive control of that order: the long-term effect was to absolutize materialist economic values.

The publication of *the wealth of nations* in 1776 marked the breakthrough of empirical rationality in determining economic value. In Adam Smith's work the reductionist pattern is evident in basing economic theory on the presumed natural instincts of man and society. People have a 'natural propensity' to barter for gain. On the other hand, the 'natural inclination' of societies was to hold together. By presupposing the common interest in increasing production through a disciplined division of labour, Smith tried to show how this would avoid the uncertainties of mercantilism while leading to the unlimited acquisition of money, riches and possessions. But Smith, who had resigned from a chair of moral philosophy, was not being cynical in speaking of the 'invisible hand' that guided society: he was referring to the regulative principle of justice and expressing his deep belief in divine providence. His separation of economics from

moral philosophy was merely provisional. But whatever his intent, his work gave a powerful thrust to the separation of economics from the larger context of moral life. Nicholas Kaldor claims to be able to pinpoint the precise moment where economic theory went astray:

> I would put it in the middle of the fourth chapter of Vol. I of The Wealth of Nations . . . in (that) chapter, after discussing the need for money in a social economy, Smith suddenly gets fascinated by the distinction between money price, real price, and exchange value and from then on, hey presto, his interest gets bogged down in the question of how values and prices for products and factors are determined. One can trace a more or less continuous development of price theory from the subsequent chapters of Smith through Ricardo, Walras, Marshall, right up to Debreu and the most sophisticated present-day Americans.
>
> [Quoted in McShane, 1980:134]

Mainstream economic theory constitutes a critique of this 'classical' political economy only in terms of an analytic economics interested in the development of empirically verifiable instruments of research into economic processes. This analytic economics has achieved an ever more sophisticated quantification of specifically economic values through a growing specialization in which the notion of economic value has passed from the labour-theory of value in Political Economy through the varieties of the marginal utility theories of value to the quantified indifference-curves of equilibrium analysis. My own current reading in this field tends to be limited to the pages of the Chicago-based publication, *Economic Development and Cultural Change,* but it is precisely there that the contrast between technical brilliance and poverty of perspective is most obvious. As long as reason signifies quantification the real issues will continue to be overlooked.

The radical critique of 'classical' political economy is associated primarily with the work of Karl Marx. Socialist appropriation of the means of production would restore the surplus value of the production to the workers who created it and so do away with all alienation. The return of the use-value of labour's surplus-value to its worker-creators would do away with the reification of value within the fetishism of commodities. I will be concerned below to try and determine the extent to which this critique was hindered in its thrust through involvement in the reductionist horizon of empirical rationality.

The Industrial Revolution and the Reification of Labour:

The nineteenth century marked the coincidence of the industrial revolution with the further articulation of economics a la natural science and the general dominance of empirical rationality. The empirically valid analytic discoveries of the century's economists tended to be clothed in reductionist epistemologies. The devastating effect of this on thinking about human labour is well expressed by Weisskopf [1955:66-67]:

> Labour services are interpreted as output, produced by the input of food and necessaries; labour bestowed on these wage goods produces the commodity labour and determines its value . . . This interpretation reflects the general tendency of political economy to reify social relationships. Labour services are nothing but a link in the chain of production; they produce exchangeable commodities but they are, in turn, "produced" by exchangeable commodities. The labourer consumes commodities in order to be able to produce commodities. People's purpose in life is production for the market. The economic value complex is reflected in this theory – work and production are ultimate ends. Thus the mechanistic and the ethical outlook are welded into a unified world picture.

Religious institutions throughout this period were unable to distinguish the positive advances of empirical rationality from its reductionist pretensions and so were happy to condemn the autonomy of the secular movements *in toto*. In retrospect and with the facility provided by historical distance, it is possible to see how close attention to the actual progress of empirical investigation in natural science might have contributed to such needed distinction. Butterfield refers to "The Postponed Scientific Revolution in Chemistry". He is referring to the amount of time it took to move in terms of appropriate science from the level of physics to that of chemistry. Chemistry emerges as scientific only in the late eighteenth century. The reason is simple and illuminating: chemical reality is more difficult to understand than physical reality. Likewise, the shift of the study of biology into truly explanatory, i.e, scientific perspective was a nineteenth century achievement and McShane is only half-joking when he remarks that Konrad Lorenz got a Nobel Prize in the '70s for discovering that zoology was about animals [1980:88]. The insight to be gained here is central to my whole argument – reductionist methodologies cannot do justice to the increasingly complex levels of intelligibility to be found in our evolving universe. We are still a staggeringly long way from anything like an adequate science of the human. But only from that still distant perspective will we be able to intelligently use (or decide not to use) our knowledge of everything else in the universe. In the closing chapter, I hope to outline a heuristic which may guide us forward, but now I must bring this necessarily impressionistic chapter to a close by reference to the discoveries which finally forced us to reflect on the inadequacy of the modern control of meaning.

* * *

The Dawning Crisis:

Due to the linear fixity of thinking shaped by the kind of empirical rationality we have been considering, one of the most difficult things for people in present-day westernized culture is to understand the fact that if you do something that is good, then more of the same will not necessarily be better [cf. Capra, 1982:41]. It takes an experience of fairly massive impact to jolt us now out of our maximizing value-framework. But just such experience has impacted on people in the latter part of our century. The initial shock came with a dawning grasp of the reality and significance of the population explosion.

But a more traumatic shock was in store in the questioning of the most cherished presumption of all schools of thought in our modern world – the presumption concerning continuing growth. Growth was to become the transcendent debate of the 70s [Barnet and Mueller, 1974:334]. Research, projecting up to the year 2100 and relative to the exponential curves of population and production growth, pointed towards looming catastrophe. [Cf. Meadows, 1972. 1973, 1974]. The conclusions were:

1. Exponential growth in population and material output is the dominant force in socio-economic change in most contemporary societies.

2. Current growth rates cannot be sustained indefinitely, Present trends would almost certainly overreach important physical limits if continued for another fifty years.

3. Growth may come to an end either through an orderly accommodation to global limits or through an overshoot of those limits followed by uncontrolled decline.

4. The overshoot behavior mode is the dominant mode of the world system as long as the implicit value system continues to promote physical growth.

Subsequent studies clarified that the needed transition is not from exponential to zero growth but to differentiated more organic growth. This refinement is important for the

exploited geoeconomic regions of the world since it indicates the way in which they can meet the very real crises they face as a result of their victimization by the historical world system.

The varied response from different sectors to these findings is instructive. While natural scientists took them seriously and immediately set to work to develop the models which would enable us to test the truth of the world as organism, economists were outraged. There was talk of the computer that printed out W*O*L*F [Kaysen, 1972:660-668], of an over-supply of bad news [Simon, 1980:1431-137]. Some Marxist responses to this concentration on resources and environment were even more vehement [Enzenberger, 1874:3-31]. The whole trend of economic thinking for centuries had paid no attention to the data under review. Concentrating on their indicator of labour and capital needed to produce a unit of output in, e.g., the extractive industries, the economists claimed that this has declined dramatically over the past century. On this basis, they claim that there is no evidence of resource scarcity. But this indicator has never impressed natural scientists, because it says nothing about the quality and quantity of resources remaining, or the difficulty of developing new technologies. The economists completely ignore the increasing organizational complexity necessary for the social and environmental regulation of new technologies. Purchased agricultural inputs – fuel, electricity, water, fertilizers, pesticides, – the inputs associated with modern agricultural technologies now rival labour in terms of the share of expenditure but they fall outside the narrow scope of the indicator. In the extractive industries, what is ignored by the economists' indicator is the proportionally growing expenditure in the public sector for the provision of education, research and development, transportation and other physical infrastructure environmental management and, very often, defense that alone makes modern resource exploitation possible. According to the overview article by Richard B. Norgaard

[1984:525-546], the only economist to simply accept the logic that exponential growth of resource use cannot continue and to argue for self-imposed limits before they are imposed by nature was Herman E. Daly [1980].

But the empirical data supporting the original work done in M.I.T. have continued to accumulate in unambiguous fashion. The data have now been co-ordinated in *The Gaia Atlas of Planet Management* [Myers, 1985] where, after putting forward all the caveats appropriate to the evaluation of the data at the present stage of investigation, the general editor says:

> . . . . the data are overwhelmingly clear in their import. Most devastating are those which show rates of soil erosion, desertification, deforestation, species loss, pollution, as well as the very fully documented facts on militarization, increasing violence, income division, human suffering, and wasted potential. Even if some estimates vary . . . most of them are more likely to be under rather than over estimates. [259].

The Paradox of Conscious Purpose:

A rationality that is not adequate to reality must needs operate in a very paradoxical manner; it will be highly probable that we will do great evil even when we intend to do nothing but good. Recently, the World Health Organization (WHO) attempted to control malaria in Borneo. The normal way to do this is to spray DDT in order to kill the disease-carrying mosquito. With the Dayak inland people of Borneo conveniently living together in groups of up to five hundred or more under a single roof in their long houses, the program went ahead with great efficiency. The short-term effect was gratifying. There was a rapid and dramatic improvement in the health of the people. But the intervention failed to take the systemic loop structure of ecological systems into account.

Before the spraying of the DDT, the long houses with

their thatched roofs provided a habitat for a whole variety of organisms, including cats, cockroaches, and small lizards. The cockroaches absorbed the DDT. They were eaten by the lizards. The cats, in turn, ate the lizards. As the DDT became more concentrated with every step upwards in the food chain, the lizards contained enough to kill the cats that ate them. When the cats died, the woodland rats invaded the villages, bringing fleas, lice and other parasites. This new community of organisms presented a new threat to the health of the village peoples in the shape of sylvatic plague. To prevent this from breaking out, living cats were parachuted into the isolated Dayak villages to control the rats. While the newly arrived cats were dealing with the newly arrived rats, another effect of the spraying was discovered. It seemed that the DDT had killed off the predators of a small caterpillar. As long as the population was effectively controlled, these little caterpillars had only done minimal damage to the roofs of the houses. Now, with a population explosion underway, they caused the roofs to collapse on the people. [Cf. Coates, 1980:531-532 and references).

This story only illustrates a small intervention with local effects. But our industrialized societies are rapidly disrupting all ecosystems of our one earth. We are extinguishing species we have not yet even discovered. If our children are not to have a life amid the ruins of the planet, we need to appreciate what has gone wrong with our conscious purposes and break with the addictive habits of a culture blind to quality. [Bateson, 1970:3-20; Capra, 1982:99-262; Laing, 1982].

CHAPTER FOUR

TOWARDS ADEQUATE AND BALANCED EMPIRICALITY

for we knew only too well:
even the hatred of squalor
makes the brow grow stern,
even anger against injustice
makes the voice grow harsh. Alas, we
who wished to lay the foundations
for kindness could not ourselves
be kind.

-Brecht. 'To Posterity'

If Lenin could explain dialectics
starting from a glass of water, why
the – –– can't you?

Kent Miner, 1974.
[Quoted by Sharratt, 1982:3]

Two issues will dominate the remainder of this short book and they are interrelated. The first is a more accurate delineation of the historical forces that have gone into the shaping of the contemporary world. The second is the appropriate response to be given to the challenges of modernity. Something of the answer to be given to the second issue is, of course, contained in the title of the book – a creative response must involve hope. But if hope is not to be groundless, a *creatio ex nihilo*, it must relate to positive possibilities present in the historical process. This means that, no matter how critically it be done, modernity must in the final analysis be open to being positively conceived. The descriptive data of earlier chapters may seem to have loaded judgment unmistakably in a negative direction. If this data is still to be taken seriously, a positive conception of modernity can only emerge through unravelling the concrete process of the meshing of the history of ideas with history. One may think of this meshing primarily as failure, focussing on the manner in which human bias has meshed with, and distorted, whatever was positive in the historical process. [Cf. Lonergan, 1957: 227 ff.; 1972:178ff.]. Alternatively and more optimistically, one may conceive of the meshing positively, in terms of 'ripening times' [McShane, 1980:158]. If you happen to share Lonergan's high evaluation of the discovery of a mistaken belief, it matters surprisingly little

whether we read the historical process as failure or as groping towards success.

The condition for advancing with hope and phantasy is a comprehensive grasp of what precisely it is that has occurred in modern history that distinguishes it as modern, coupled with an 'owning' of the whole historical process as entirely our human responsibility. I use the word 'phantasy' in the preceding sentence in the usage of Marcuse:

> Without phantasy, all philosophical knowledge remains in the grip of the present or the past severed from the future, which is the only link between philosophy and the real history of mankind. [1969:155].

To anticipate, what will then perhaps be perceived is that we are merely at the beginnings of a long and demanding task: that the much-vaunted 'explosion' of knowledge and technology is more accurately read as

> predominantly a frail network of elementary suspicions, the most palatable of which are overhastily objectified in history's constructs and schemes of recurrence. [McShane, 1980:20].

The Specification of Modernity:

Mention was made at the beginning of the second chapter of various ways of identifying modernity. The work of Peter Berger referred to in that context is described by him as a search for a method. Since Berger lacks any basic strategy, the sought-after method fails to emerge. Berger is very clear about the need for intermediate structures if what he sees to be the malaise of modernity is to be overcome. [1974:213]. He is not so clear on what these intermediate structures are to embody if they are to be helpful.

The life-work of Bernard Lonergan can be understood as an invitation to modernity, an invitation to grasp what has been going forward in the last few centuries. His foundational study, *Insight* (1957), was such an invi-

tation. It facilitated the appropriation of generalized empirical method [243-244] which is "a normative pattern of related and recurrent operations which yield ongoing and cumulative results" . . . . "Generalized empirical method operates on a combination of both the data of sense and the data of consciousness: it does not treat of objects without taking into account the corresponding operations of the subject; it does not treat of the subject's operations without taking into account the corresponding objects." [1985:140-141, also see Lonergan, 1972:3-25]. But this foundational work needed to be contextualized and the needed contextualization was provided in *Method in Tehology* (1972) which cycles the fruits of modernity through eight functional specialties in an on-going genesis of method adequate to contemporary knowing. But adequate, also, to contemporary doing.

The age of innocence assumed that human authenticity could be taken for granted – while wickedness was admitted, the presumption was that it could be evaded by invocation of self-evidence, necessity, or sound critical philosophy a la Kant or Compte. The end of the age of innocence means that we now know that human authenticity can never be taken for granted. Like it or not, we are irreversibly embarked on a hermeneutic of suspicion as a needed moment in our every search for truth. A theory which gave intellect precedence over will in the past and liberal faith in automatic progress in the present both 'freed'the academic world from concern with the irrational in human life. The end of the age of innocence brings praxis to the fore and praxis raises the final unavoidable issue, What are you going to do about it? What use are you to make of your knowledge?

> Empirical method moves from below upwards, from experience to understanding, and from understanding to factual judgment. It can do so because it can presuppose that the data of experience are intelligible and so are objects that straight-forward understanding can master. But

> praxis acknowledges the end of the age of innocence. It starts from the assumption that authenticity cannot be taken for granted. Its understanding, accordingly, will follow a hermeneutic of suspicion as well as a hermeneutic of recovery . . . But the basic assumption, the two-fold hermeneutic, the discernment between the authentic and the unauthentic set up a distinct method. This method is a comound of theoretical and practical judgments of value." [1985:160-161].

In ever more detailed manner, Lonergan has pin-pointed the shift that is involved in the transition from classical culture to our distinctly modern ways of understanding and knowing. [Cf. most recently, 1985: 35-54]. But more important is his contribution in thematizing the sublating context of praxis, the context of human choice and decision which effectively situates all of our understanding and knowing. As McShane puts it, What counts is the praxis-thematization of what counts. [1980:23]. Against all scientism and positivism, Lonergan stresses that authenticity is needed at all levels of our knowing and doing:

> [We have to take our stand] on the authenticity with which intelligence takes us beyond the experimental infrastructure to enrich it, extend it, organize it, but never to slight it and much less to violate its primordial role; on the authenticity with which rational reflection goes beyond the constructions of intelligence and draws sharply the lines between astrology and astronomy, alchemy and chemistry, legend and history, magic and science, myth and philosophy; on the authenticity with which moral deliberation takes us beyond cognitional process into the realm of freedom and responsibility, evaluation and decision, not in any way to annul or slight experience of understanding or factual judgment, but to add the further and distinct truth of value judgments and the consequent decisions demanded by a situation

> in which authenticity cannot be taken for granted. [1985:160].

While taking into account all the points made by others, Lonergan succeeds in providing an adequate explanatory account of all aspects of modernity, both success and disastrous failure. In a phrase of McShane's which provides the heading to this present chapter, Lonergan's work can be seen as manifesting 'an ever-growing respect and care. and the thematization of that respect, for adequate and balanced empiricality'. [McShane, 1980:19]. The fundamental strategy at work is the appropriation of empirical rationality through self-appropriation by the knower, i.e., one's own engagement in modern mathematics, natural science and philosophy is needed to mediate the grasp, through heightened reflexivity, of the kind of intelligibility to be found in our world, as well as of what constitutes adequacy in this kind of knowing. What the resulting respectful attitude can be expected to mediate is a growing, authentic nescience. The clear recognition of how little we actually do know of what we need to know in order to be able to act responsibly can be seen as a most precious achievement. But it will be so seen only those who have come painstakingly to understand the advances and oversights that have brought us to our present situation.

Accepting the identification of what was positive in the thrust of modernity as a movement towards adequate and balanced empiricality, I would like to concentrate on the manner in which inadequate empiricality, manifest particularly in the nineteenth-century handling of the human sciences, gave rise to problems that are still with us.

The Truth of Structure:

From my opening insistence on the centrality of culture to the above suggestion that the work of Bernard Lonergan, focussing as it does on the authenticity of the human subject, provides the best framework for understanding

modernity, I have been consciously flying in the face of received scientific and philosophic wisdom. Part of the legacy of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been a concern as to whether social, economic and psychological "laws" are so pervasibly operative that freedom is an illusion. And even if it were to be granted that social determinants were not so all-pervasive as to rule out all responsibility for history, society and history provide unquestionable evidence of structures, trends and dialectics which were the product of no person's mind. How is it possible to conceive history as constituted by originating acts of mind when even mind seems to operate socially and intersubjectively in accordance with structures which nobody originated?

> The massive truth which has been discovered in the last two centuries is that the individual's exercise of practical intelligence is shaped by the social, historical materials of experience which he or she shares as a citizen of a social group, by the socially learned meanings and skills which become the tools and anticipations of intelligence's habitual operation, by the patterns of feeling and appetite which go hand in hand with a socialized lifestyle, by the subtly and almost imperceptibly appropriated theories which were the discoveries of yesteryear and which function as the overarching vectors of today's intelligent activity, and by the almost insurmountable pressure towards stable, inertial, invariant perpetuation of the inherited culture exercised by this socialization process. [Melchin, 1985:27].

An earlier period read freedom as illusory in the light of such determinants. The current trend is to stress that, while some measure of freedom may remain, the conditioning function of such determinants must be the point of departure for any adequate explanation of history, society and human responsibility. Lonergan's account of practical intelligence, centering as it does on the sub-

ject's exercise of intelligence, rationality and responsibility, seems wrongly focussed in the light of this present trend.

This problem was formulated in the first chapter above in terms of the argument for the centrality of culture and re-emerged in the second chapter in the context of the Laclau – Wallerstein debate. A number of insights are involved in the adequate resolution of the problem. The fundamental one is the generalized world-view of emergent probability, a heuristic structure of anticipations worked out by Lonergan in the first five chapters of *Insight*. Grasping the intelligibility of our evolutionary world in terms of emergent probability may yet come to be seen as one of Lonergan's greatest contributions. Since world processes display the characteristics both of classical laws and of random or coincidentally interacting sets of events and laws, Lonergan put the two heuristic structures together by differentiating systematically recurring sets of events and relations from the environmental conditions (themselves fulfilled in accordance with statistical probabilities) necessary for the emergence and survival of such sets. In the work from which I have quoted above, Melchin points out that, for him, the most triking aspect of emergent probability is its ability to expalin how the presence of randomness can be understood as the condition for the emergence of new being onto the scene of world process. I appreciate that the brief mention of a topic of such complexity hardly throws a lot of light on things. The point is to stress, not only that mechanistic, reductionist models of the universe are scientifically passe, but that an heuristic model for understanding the relations of higher emergent forms of life to their conditioning environment already exists. In its light we can see how the explanation of world processes can include the differentiation of levels of explanation corresponding to the presence of higher order integrators controlling the recurrence of events in what would otherwise be a coincidental manifold of non-systematically recurring pro-

cesses. [Cf. Melchin, 1985:11].

The socialization of the subject described in the above extended quotation from Melchin does not supplant the probably emergent structure of practical intelligence. The undeniable patterning effect of societies operates by shaping the trends and flows in patterns of integrative acts, i.e., by setting up the probable series of insights which will occur. But it is still a matter of creative insight. The data on the socialization of the subject does not detract from human freedom, it simply provides us with the framework within which freedom operates. But this gives rise to the need for a further insight in the shape of a distinction between essential and effective freedom.

The central point is that the constitutive elements of society, history, culture and economy are acts of meaning, cognitionally emergent integrations in and of the neural manifold of human subjects. Acts of meaning and their correlative objects simply do not exist apart from this higher order integrating function of intelligence. While historical determinants do shape the exercise of practical intelligence, they do not function as lower level systematic links between the cycling schemes which mediate a social world to people and socialized meanings and skills. Freedom is not to be conceived as freedom from constraint, as it is were to be found only in the absence of any determination. Essential freedom consists in the fact that a course of actions of a person can be constituted in accordance with a cognitionally emergent pattern. And such constitution is always self-constitution even in the case of the child responding to the parent's example: the effect of the patterning is to shift the probability associated with the child's cognitionally mediated integration to a probability of emergence.

Thus Lonergan's treatment of practical intelligence, in centering upon cognitionally mediated acts of the subject, also enables us to make sense of the massive truth referred to in our quotation. It is precisely because the probabilities associated with the recurrence of socialized meanings are so

high that the project of culture need not begin from zero with each new generation. The hard-won achievements of an earlier generation are often effortlessly appropriated by their successors. But it is also disturbingly clear that the immanent exigences of the subject's neural manifold are shaped in very large measure by the patterns of meaning implicit in the gesturing and responding of the members of one's family, class, profession and circle of friends. With whom one stands in this world notoriously determines what is seen to be significant: consciousness, as the young Marx scribbled down in *The German Ideology*, is consciousness of. And an important part of that of which we are habitually conscious is whatever is significant to the 'significant others' in our social world. This is the issue of group bias and is analysed below under the more familiar heading of class consciousness.

The issue then is not between 'no freedom if social conditioning' and 'freedom if no conditioning'. Essential freedom is compatible with the fact that self-constituting activity usually operates within quite narrow ranges shaped by environmental, historical conditions.

What of the other term of the distinction, effective freedom? What is in focus here is that aspect of practical intelligence which Lonergan has increasingly come to refer to under the heading of "conversion". In his understanding of the term, any occurrence of insight is a form of conversion in which an integrated pattern grasps a person and 'implicitly defines' the relevant elements of the experiential manifold with respect to questions. Each and every cognitional integration of the neural manifold is a more or less dramatic structuration or restructuration of the entire human subject in his or her affectivity. We tend to advert only to the minor effect, i.e., the making present of intelligible contents, and to overlook the major effect of intelligently mediated courses of action as totally restructuring the affectivity of the subject with consequent effects on his or her environment.

> The action is not only a change by the subject. It is also a change in and of the subject. It is also a change in and of the subject's "outer" environment – that source of materials for the schemes which cycle between the "inner" and "outer" subjective environments. Consequently the remediation of the "outer"to the "inner" gives rise to a second change in and of the subject, a change whose form has been shaped not simply by the structure of the subject's acts, but also by the endless modifications and transformations resulting from the act's encounters with the universe. [Melchin, 17]

The unfolding of the dynamics of practical intelligence is thus seen to be dialectical. There is the immanent exigences of the experiential manifold and at the other pole there is the currently operative, intelligent anticipations and appetites of the subject. In striving for some measure of intelligently integrative correspondence, there follows some transformation of the subject's intelligently mediated feelings as well as a set of changes in the historical world to which the subject is responding. The latter set of changes will set up a renewed challenge to the transformed sensibility of the subject. The result of this dialectically operative succession of movements between attempted consolidation and resultant further instability is the launching of the subject in a sustained pattern of transformation (conversion).

(The question arises of the relation between the conversions operative in most intelligent acts and the transformations of persons for which we normally want to reserve the word. The difference is to be found not in the structure of the event but in the differing degree of probability of occurrence. In other words, there are skills in fields where mastery is very easily achieved, and there are the major conversion events relevant to the transformation of human history, which are major precisely because the relevant fields of human experience are those

in which mastery is improbable.)

Further, the actions originated in such transformative living must be understood to operate socially, historically constituting trends in communal praxis and generating non-systematic repercussions through-out the society. The extent of effective freedom can increase with the cultivation of skills in wider and wider environmental contexts. The resulting transformation of society operates in three distinct ways: 1) systematically through accomplishing one's intended effects, ii) non-systematically through the random interactions of one's initiative with social and political events and initiatives, and iii) systematically but unintended, in accordance with wider operative communal, economic, social, historical structures which the subject has not understood at all. [cf. Melchin, 30-32].

But while the above account may help us to see the real compatibility of human acts of meaning and the determining constraints of social historical conditions, does it justify the claim that individual responsible action can be the focal point for an explanation of historical humanization? There is evidence in history for the ordering effects of human acts of meaning but there is also evidence of the existence of wider structures which have functioned through the ages without anybody understanding their operative patterns.

The temptation here is to think that if nobody understands the overall structure then its operation must proceed independently of conscious subjects. Such an oversight can serve to make plausible utopian hope in automatic progress or in dialectical laws of history. But it is not necessary for anybody to understand fully the overall structure, and intend it, for the structure to be dependent on human acts of meaning for its existence. The fulfilling conditions for the systematization of the recurrent pattern are any bond of mutuality linking two subjects in a common project. The actual successes and rewards following upon each turn of the scheme is sufficient to keep the scheme recurring and such recurrence is the heart

of structure.

It should be clear that, in thus arguing for the primacy of acts of meaning in understanding history, the intention is not to underplay the reality of structure, much less deny the importance of systemic insight in advancing creative historical action. Reverting to the discussion in the second chapter, both Laclau and Wallerstein are in touch with some relevant truth but are unappreciative of each other's positions. Each sees his position as excluding the other's. What is not thematized by either of them is the relation between human action and resultant system.

Just as the failure to grasp that conversion is socially transformative action has led Church leaders' appeals for conversion of heart to appear socially reactionary, so the preoccupation with systemic determination has led others to indulge in fantasies of 'social engineering', and even to the justification of the elimination of large sectors of the population in the interests of humanization. Those who believe that structures, not free conscious action, determine history are understandably prone to manipulate people for what they perceive as the people's own good.

Group Bias as the Truth of Class Structure:

Picking up on the qualifying comments made above (p. 65), the full significance of the socializing function is only seen when we realize that the necessary presence of the other gives rise to a second, 'double' dialectic in the workings of practical intelligence. The presence of the other functions as a distinct and massively operative principle of intergration, shifting the probabilities towards those of the currently operative trends of a particular social and cultural praxis. There are always two dialectical movements going on: my response to the immanent demands of the experiential manifold at hand and my response to the patterns of meaning implicit in the living of the members of my family, profession, circle of friends.

It would be quite wrong to underestimate the pressures

involved in the second dialectic. It is commonly overlooked that the issue is one of acceptance or rejection of self. We make ourselves through our choices and judgments. Since the content of an act of meaning is essentially self-constituting the affirmation of another's meaning is participation in his or her act of self-constitution. Conversely, rejection or misunderstanding of my meaning involves a challenge to the intrinsic worth of my self-constitutive activity. We are all involved in the bonding of mutual self-constitution.

Our need for affirmation is the need of agreement on the value of our self-constituting activity. If we despair of reaching such agreement in a particular instance, we are faced with unavoidable choices. We either reject the other as a legitimate subjective agent or else capitulate to the other's interpretation and thereby lose some trust in our own capacities as intelligent, responsible agents. Sometimes, more drastically, we may attempt to repudiate the drive towards mutuality itself but we typically do this selectively, i.e., by 'splitting' people into groups, only one of which is deemed worthy of the effort called for in striving for intelligently mediated unification.

> The bonds linking subjects both on the level of shared meaning and in the more fundamental and powerful mutuality of shared approval become the links that schematize the recurrence of socialized patterns of action in groups. Consequently, the two-fold dialectic of socially, historically operative practical intelligence can be seen to head towards two goals or intentional terms: the emergence, verification and actuation of the program of action towards the good, and the unification of the two subjects in mutual action and care. When this goal of mutuality *functions so powerfully as to override the norms and exigencies of practical intelligence* then there arises what Lonergan calls the "group bias". [Melchin, 1985;24, emphasis added].

Marx's correlation of social class to the material base in terms of the relations of production is validated in a non-deterministic manner in the above account. When deference to agreeing with the meanings of the group overrides integral attention to the demands of the reality to be properly understood, then we participate in the consolidation of group bias. But conversion is always possible: in gospel terms we can attend to the truths and values taught by our elders and not to what they actually do in their living.

The Truth of Economic Structure:

In the last chapter some brief indication was given of the emergence of economic science under the aegis of inadequate empiricality. Once again, it was not the search for structural insight that was misplaced but the failure to correlate this with a social ethics. the failure to "place" economics accurately as the study of a field constituted by human action. Recently Wilber and Jameson have carried out what they term an inquiry into the poverty of economics. They locate this poverty in mainstream economics ahistorical, abstract analysis and its unexamined assumptions about human nature and institutions. Contrary to the scientific pretensions of proponents of both laissez-faire and Keynesian theorists, each approach is a social philosophy as well as being a response to a specific historical situation which no longer exists. They have no trouble in showing that neither position is really dependent on evidence. The Milton Friedman school relies on predictability in true positivist fashion but there has been precious little in the way of successful prediction in recent years. Empty, ahistorical rhetoric which ignores social context constitutes the real basis of neo-conservative economic theory. Thus they quote Friedman as in favour of "planning by each of us separately, in light of our individual, though shared, values, coordinated by voluntary exchange in free markets". The authors point out that for

Firedman, as for Adam Smith before him, there simply are "no Rockefellers, no multinational corporations, no imperialism, no environmental destruction; just so many small buyers and sellers engaging in production and exchange, and thus maximizing their freedom and economic welfare. If we could only get government to attend to its proper business, all would be well. This vision of the world may be beautiful, but it is a vision, and a vision . . . at odds with the realities we must operate in" [1983:81].

They tease out in great detail the manner in which oligopolistic corporations have been able to insulate themselves from the control which the market was traditionally supposed to exert. The traditional cure for inflation was thought to lie in the working of the market where reduced demand would force prices to come down. The oligopolistic corporations respond to lowered market demand by raising their prices. With large non-price-competitive firms dominant, recession will bring not only unemployment but rising prices, i.e., what they term staglation. The logic behind this is that of the markup pricing system. In this system direct costs are calculated, profit requirements added on, and investment plans piled on top of that. It is this third factor that is meant to ensure an optimum growth of sales revenue. It provides funds to invest for further growth and is justified by the claim that such retained earnings are what the firms rely on to finance their fixed capital expenditures. In 1980 retained earnings of corporations were $333 billion while personal savings amounted to a much smaller $104 billion.

The authors claim that a free market economy was "an historical aberration: if anything is unnatural it is a laissez-faire system of self-regulating markets"[166]. What was and remains natural is the social control of the economy as a way of embedding it in the total system of societal life. Emerging new theorists concentrate on the neglected human and institutional realities and are called Post-Keynesian Insitutionalists. They focus on systemic relations, conflict, changes in technology, distribution of

power, and the evolution of social institutions. Including their own work, the authors summarize:

> These characteristics of PKI (Post-Keynesian Institutionalists) – holistic, systemic, evolutionary – combined with their appreciation for the centrality of power and conflict and the recognition of the importance of non-rational human behavior, differentiate PKI from standard economics. [155].

Their conclusion is that the economic crisis is unavoidably a moral one. Only the creation of a new social consensus can meet it. Basically an economics divorced from social ethics is a chronically inadequate economics. The inadequacies of mainstream economic theories is not unrelated to their propensity to fight shy of the larger questions of social justice.

But flight from the issues of social justice is not the only problem in mainstream economic theory: there is also the question of the adequacy of the analysis of economic process, and ignorance of such adequate analysis will not be supplied for by any ethical concern. On the other hand, having such an analysis will not guarantee the fruitful workings of an economic system. To think that it would is the pathetic legacy of nineteenth century reductionist faith in an economic science, which would infallibly deliver the goods through being the correct science and without having to be involved in the murky 'unscientific' fields of consensus on morals and values and reliance on the integrity and intelligent performance of human beings. But having such an analysis will enable us to make sound moral judgments on the injustices that wreck the process of circulation of goods and services. As Lonergan once commented in a postcard, the basis of economic morality is to be found, not in some view of the family wage, but in an adequate economic analysis [McShane, 1980:133]. Only when there is a consensus grounded in scientific knowledge of the needs of productive process, will it be possible to move forward crea-

tively. At present there is no such consensus and it is worth breaking the flow of the argument to illustrate this.

The global reach of the multinational corporations formed the material of a lengthy study by Barnet and Mueller [1974]. They begin by discussing the aims of these corporations: they propose to run the world as they alone are equipped to do so. The authors then question the effect of these companies on the underdeveloped world: the effect is to be making these countries more hopelessly worse off than they would otherwise be. Finally, the authors question what such corporations are doing in the United States, their home ground, since most of them are American: they are treating the United States in basically the same way as they are treating the underdeveloped countries and with basically the same effects in the long run. Now if they are thus generating worldwide disaster, why are they permitted to do so?

> The trouble is that there is nothing really new about multinational corporations. They aim at maximizing profit, and that has been the aim of economic enterprise since the mercantile, the industrial, the financial revolutions ever more fully and thoroughly took charge of our affairs. The alternative to making a profit is bankruptcy. The alternative to maximizing profit is inefficiency (where, of course, inefficiency means by definition the failure to maximize profit). All that the multinational corporation does is maximize profit, not in some town or city, not in some region or country, but on the global scale. It buys labor and materials in the countries where they are cheapest. Its credit is unimpeachable and so it can secure all the money it wants from whatever banks or money markets are in a position to create it. Its marketing facilities are a global network and to compete one would have first to build up a global network of one's own. The multinational corporation is a

> going concern. It is ever growing and expanding. It is built on the very principles that slowly but surely have been moulding our technology and economics, our society and our culture, our ideals and our practice for centuries. It remains that the long-accepted principles are inadequate. They suffer from radical oversights.
>
> [Lonergan, 1985:102-3]

The Longer Cycle of Decline: What Lonergan is drawing attention to here is the patent inadequacy of a reading of our present malaise simply in terms of group bias. There is a more basic general bias and failure to address it perpetuates our deepest problems. Group bias is the fruit of group egoism where the concern to cling to power involves a commitment to maneuvers that in one way or another block development and impede progress. General bias, by contrast, flows from the arrogant and illusory omnicompetence of common sense, "insisting on procedures that no longer work, convinced that the only way to do things is to muddle through, and spurning as idle theorizing and empty verbiage any rational account of what has to be done"[Lonergan, 1985:105;cf. also 1957: 191-206, 218-242].

Corresponding to these distinct kinds of bias, Lonergan develops his understanding of the longer cycle of decline and the shorter cycle of decline within a dialectics of progress and decline. By progress he refers not to the eighteenth century myth, nor to dialectical materialism but simply to a cyclic and cumulative process wherein a situation gives rise to an insight, the insight in turn generates policies, projects, plans, courses of action. Courses of action give rise to a new and improved situation which gives rise to further insight and the consequent renewal of the cycle. Decline is the opposite cumulative cycle. Here the insights and their resulting policies and plans run counter to vested interest and other forms of human inauthenticity. The result is compromise between the demands of

authenticity and the demands of human obtuseness and irresponsibility. Unwillingness in facing the growing problems radically leads to rationalization and to ever more complex systems of rationalization acclaimed by all as the wisdom of the day. As things get worse and tend to disintegrate, amoralism emerges with its claim to be really practical and effective.

In a key article, Fred Lawrence quotes the following ominous passage from Machiavelli's The Prince:

> . . . many have imagined republics and principalities which have never been seen or known to exist in reality; for how we live is so far removed from how we ought to live, that he who abandons what is done for what ought to be done will rather bring about his own ruin than his preservation. A man who wishes to make a profession of goodness in everything must necessarily come to grief among so many who are not good. Therefore it is necessary for a prince who wishes to maintain himself to learn how not to be good, and to use this knowledge and not use it according to the necessity of the case.

Commenting on this passage, Lawrence asks whether it is not a shock to discover that the whole of our political theory, running in one stream through Hobbes, Locke, Smith, and in another from Rousseau through Kant, Hegel and Marx, is rooted in this Macchiavellian option [1978:239-240]. It will, I hope, be clear by this stage that the two preceding chapters were my attempt to outline our involvement in a longer cycle of decline.

To resume our reflection on the truth of economic structure, Lonergan returned many times in the course of his productive life to the writing of a study called "An Essay in Circulation Analysis", revising drafts in 1944, 1978, 1980 and 1982. The text remains incomplete and unpublished. It has not yet been subject to scrutiny by economists. From my limited comprehension of the text available to me (1982 version), it becomes clear that the

structural truth revealed by Lonergan has implications completely at variance with the passion for competitive accumulation characteristic of our longer cycle of decline. The importance of his structural clarification is conveyed by Lonergan in this analogy from an earlier version of the manuscript:

> A study of the mechanics of motor-cars yields premises for a criticism of drivers, precisely because the motor-cars, as distinct from the drivers, have laws of their own which drivers must respect. But if the mechanics of motors, included, in a single piece, the anthropology of drivers, criticism could be no more than haphazard.

What his work reveals is the inherently cyclic nature of the productive process. This, he warns us, is not to be confused with the familiar trade cycle, with its booms and slumps. The trade cycle is due to human inadaptation to the demands of the pure cycle which, of itself, is entirely a forward movement. Lonergan sees the inadaptation as being a matter of ignorance rather than of greed. He is acutely aware of the political implications of education regarding the truth of economics.

> . . . [A] s makeshift follows makeshift, it becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish between a democratic and a totalitarian economy.
>
> But economists can be champions of democracy as well as advisers to dictators or planning boards. The proof of the possibility is an historical fact: the old political economists were champions of democracy; and if the content of their thought has been found inadequate, its democratic form is as valid today as ever. That form consisted in the discovery of an economic mechanism and in the deduction of rules to guide men in the use of the economic machine, a rule of laisser faire for governments and a rule of thrift and enterprise for individuals. It is now fully apparent that these rules serve their purpose only in part-

icular cases, but it is still insufficiently grasped that new and more satisfactory rules have to be devised. Without them human liberty will perish. For either men learn rules to guide them individually in the use of the economic machine, or else they surrender their liberty to be ruled along with the machine by a central planning board.

The reality of that dilemma measures the significance of an effort, however tenuous and incomplete, to formulate the laws of an economic mechanism more remote and, in a sense, more fundamental than the pricing system. Now there is little dispute that the dilemma is real, for the liberal dream of an automatic economy has, like all dreams, at long last broken. The necessity of rational control has ceased to be a question, and the one issue is the locus of that control. Is it to be absolutist from above downwards? Is it to be democratic from below upwards? Plainly it can be democratic only in the measure in which economic science succeeds in uttering not counsel to rulers but precepts to mankind, not specific remedies and plans to increase the power of bureaucracies, but universal laws which men themselves administrate in the personal conduct of their lives. Thus the breaking of the liberal dream of automatic progress provokes a revision of judgment on the old political economists. Their greatness lay not in fostering an amoral devotion to automatism but in developing an economic science and from it issuing universal precepts of proper economic conduct. The automatism is a husk that has withered and fallen, and to cling to it is to fall into the totalitarian abyss. The old science and the old precepts have gone the way of Ptolemy and Newton. But to deny the possibility of a new science and new precepts is, I am convinced, to deny the possibility of the survival of democracy.

Marx and the Longer Cycle of Decline:

Alone in his time, Karl Marx refused to treat economic cycles/crises as a phenomenon that is superimposed upon the normal course of capitalist life. In fact, in his time, the only coherent theoretical structure which did not see recurrent cycles and depression-like conditions as an accident is the analysis of Marx.

The most tragic aspect of our involvement in the longer cycle of decline is that its values, unwittingly taken for granted, can undermine our most creative attempts to combat the evils with which we are in touch. More and more, I am coming to see how Marx's liberating insight into use-value was undermined by his absolutization of the productive process. In his attempt to establish labour as the universal criterion of value, the values of social interaction were reduced to labour interpreted as a natural process. His surplus-value theory confuses his own distinction between the quantifiable use-value of commodities and the actual process of using those commodities, so that his theory does not maintain the dialectical internal relation between a quantifiable labour-power and labour as a specifically human activity. In reducing the latter to the former, Marx tends to legitimate what he set out to criticize – the fetish character of the labour commodity in capitalism.

> Marx did not see that by investing the production process with such transcendental value he was radicalizing the very alienation of empirical rationality he so staunchly opposed in capitalism. Indeed, in his efforts to locate man's essential nature in the production process and to ground man's value-creating activity in terms of his theory of surplus value, he not only failed to understand adequately the production process itself but also provided an ideology capable of justifying the most inhumane sacrifices in the name of liberation. [Lamb, 1978:280].

Under the unavoidable influence of reductionist nineteenth century science, Marx held that a socialist appropriation of the means of production would restore the surplus value of production to the workers who created it and that this would do away with all alienation: the return of the use-value of labour's surplus-value to the workers would do away with the reification of value within the fetishism of commodities.

Freed from the restrictions of such reductive science, Marx's insights can be given more adequate expression. The reaffirmed dynamic of human creativity as basic context makes it clear that the principle of progress is developing intelligence and the principle of alienation and decline is complex, being made up of i) individual and group egoism and ii) the arrogance of onmicompetent common sense. Hope and love of life, not hatred, can alone fuel the creative healing of a sick world. The problem of recovery cannot be reductively framed as simply 'political', in modernity's sense of enforcing a solution on everybody.

> . . . the appeal to force is a counsel of despair. so far from solving the problem, it regards the problem as insoluble . . . . For the general bias of common sense is the bias of all men and, to a notable extent, it consists in the notion that ideas are negligible unless they are reinforced by sensitive desires and fears. Is everyone to use force against everyone to convince everyone that force is beside the point? [Lonergan, 1957:632].

When the roots of both the shorter and the longer cycles of decline, i.e., group bias and general bias, are confused, it is easily assumed that the corrective principle of the shorter cycle can solve all our problems and reverse the (unacknowledged) longer cycle of decline as well. Just as the totalitarian multinational corporation is the natural result of the uncritical liberal democratic myth of automatic progress and growth, so the totalitarian communist

state is the natural result of the equally uncritical myth that class conflict can resolve the deepest dialectic affecting human minds and hearts, that of fidelity and infidelity to the normative exigencies of enquiry that guide us to fulfilment in our search for direction in the movement of life. [Cf. Doran, 1981:220].

Marx's concern to reverse the shorter cycle of decline must become part of any creative strategy for the future. The manner in which it can be integrated will be a part of my concern in trying to construct the integral scale of values in the next chapter. Clearly, more than has been done needs to be done at the level of the social praxis of the oppressed if their general bias is to be corrected and the full range of creativity made operative for the healing of our world.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE GENETIC THROBBING OF HISTORY

> *"Meshing with the massive folly and malice of the drive of modernity towards empire and state, which blossoms in the control structures of modern government and business, is a pseudo-theoretic of microcontrol which seeds patterns of experimentation and implementation, of mind set and lifestyle, of research and relaxation, of farming and foodprocessing, that cuts man out of the genetic throbbing of history."*
>
> [McShane, 1985:29-30]

[Nature] won't be owned, or more precisely, it will not be disanimated, unsouled, by the manner in which we try to own it. When it is owned, it disappears. Perhaps nowhere is our human mania for possessing, our delusion that what is owned cannot have a soul of its own, more harmful to us . . .

To see woods and forests merely scientifically, economically, topographically or aesthetically . . . proves the gathering speed with which we are retreating into outer space from all other life on this planet. . . There is a spiritual corollary to the way we are currently deforesting and denaturing our planet. In the end what we must most defoliate and deprive is ourselves.

[John Fowles, 1983]

One of the aspects of the longer cycle of decline shared in by both the liberal progressives and by Marx was the prospect of endlessly expanding material prosperity through the expansion of industrialization and technological domination of nature. But, in the light of looming ecological catastrophe, it is this oversight – rather than any failure to discover the purely cyclical nature of the productive process and its implications – that is subjecting mainstream economic theory to most devastating criticism at the present time. It is the simple inability of present economic thinking to evaluate the extinction of species and the loss of genetic diversity, to grasp the significance of the build-up of toxic and radioactive wastes, deforestation, soil erosion and the possible massive alteration of the global climate that leads one to consider it in its scientific pretentiousness as a rather singular manifestation of brain-damage. Never to have reflected on whether there could ever really be any such thing as 'profits', without some unrecorded debit entry, strikes one in retrospect as extraordinary. [Cf. Hazel Henderson, 1984].

It seems very likely that the imperatives of survival will demand the contraction of the cash nexus and the expansion of non-market-related, non-economic forms of subsistence. [This will make very little difference to large numbers of people in our contemporary world: it would be informative to discover just how high a proportion of the Filipino rural population, for example, has always been living from such forms of subsistence, hitherto despised by economists.]

> Subsistence that is based on a progressive unplugging from the cash nexus now appears to be a condition for survival. Without negative growth, it is impossible to maintain an ecological balance, achieve justice among regions, or foster people's peace. And the policy must, of course, be implemented in rich countries at a much higher rate than in poor ones. Perhaps the maximum anyone can reasonably hope for is equal access to the world's scarce resources at the level currently typical for the poorest nations. [Illich, 1982:17].

I do not know how accurate that particular prediction may turn out to be but it is clear that the suggestion of cutback is liable to outrage the cultural expectations engendered by our involvement in the longer cycle of decline where success and meaning in life is identified with material accumulation. Illich himself has no illusions about the enormity of the cultural change needed. He places this change under the aegis of 'the recovery of the commons'.

> Unless the distinction between scarce productive resources and shared, porous commons is philosophically and legally recognized, the coming steady state society will be an oligarchic, undemocratic, and authoritarian expertocracy governed by ecologists. [1982:19].

I find *that* prediction eminently probable. The only creative way forward will be for people to come to appreciate the needed change as desirable, not as deprivation. I see two distinct steps in getting to that point. The first is the generation of a more coherent grasp than we have hitherto had of *the structure of the integral human good.* The second is a *psychic conversion* which will enable us to embrace and affirm all that belongs to that structure.

* * *

The Integral Scale of Values:

A start can be made from a suggestive paragraph in *Method in Theology*.

> [We] may distinguish vital, social, cultural, personal, and religious values in an ascending order. Vital value, such as health and strength, grace and vigor, normally are preferred to avoiding the work, privations, pains involved in acquiring, maintaining, restoring them. Social values, such as the good or order which conditions the vital values of the whole community, have to be preferred to avoiding the work, privations, pains involved in acquiring, maintaining, restoring them. Social values, such as the good of order which conditions the vital values of the whole community, have to be preferred to the vital values of individual members of the community. Cultural values do not exist without the underpinning of vital and social values, but none the less they rank higher. Not on bread alone doth man live. Over and above mere living and operating, men have to find a meaning and value in their living and operating. It is the function of culture to discover, express, validate, criticize, correct, develop, improve such meaning and value. Personal value is the person in his self-transcendence, as loving and being loved, as originator of values in himself and in his milieu, as an inspiration and invitation to others to do likewise. Religious values, finally, are at the heart of the meaning and value of man's living and man's world . . . [1972:31-2]

This yields a five-fold hierarchy of values. Without some such construct and a further elaboration of the relations that hold between the various levels it would be quite impossible to show what it might mean for Christianity to proclaim the redemption and healing of the world and consequently impossible for Christians to effectively live

out their lives for the life of the world.

But I have already suggested that the only adequate contemporary frame of reference for thinking about ourselves is nothing less than the whole story of the emerging universe, the Big Picture, or what Tom Berry calls the New Story, new in the sense that we are the first people to be able to give an account of the whole process of our own genesis. Not, of course, a complete account by any means, but enough to make us gasp with wonder and awe and enough to guide us to the future if we will only pay requisite attention.

In the light of the Big Picture, a few more levels of value need to be added to the above. While Aristotle was happy to give an abstract definition of human being by genus and species, a contemporary definition would be concrete. It would recognize that, with the emergence of people, "six-level things within schemes become part of the actual series" [McShane, 1980:187]. The contemporary definition looks like this: $f(p_i, c_j, b_k, z_l, u_m, r_n)$ where the first four levels are the physical, chemical, botanical and zoological, respectively, and each variable denotes a level of conjugate forms with a range referring to coincidental acts of one level which are always related to the level above, e.g., c_j: j ranges over the periodic table relations inclusive of compound molecules that occur in chromosome, muscle and brain tissue. McShane, whom I recall as proferring this model as far back as 1971, points out that only the understanding of this six-levelled hierarchy can enable us to make sense of such diverse phenomena as claustrophobia, chemotherapies, biorhythms, thirst, psychoneurosis, insight, serenity, and mysticism! At any rate, we cannot hope to operate satisfactorily without accepting a nine-fold scale of values as belonging to the integral human good. It is worth looking at this more closely.

Level One: The foundation for thinking about ourselves and the whole universe as a unity at the level of physics

has been well and truly laid in our century. While some of the truly delightful popularizations involve more than a little epistemological muddle [e.g. Zukav, 1980], this is only to be expected since physicists themselves are, according to McShane, "subtly trapped by a Euclidean imagination" in their search for the coherence of their subject-matter, now a cluster of curiously named particles. [Cf. Heelan, 1965 for some guidance through the muddle]. To catch up with this revolution in physics, those working in the biological and human sciences will simply have to go beyond the mechanistic and reductionist approach and develop holistic and ecological views. They have to do this to be consistent with the theory of the New Physics, i.e., to operate at a level of adequacy appropriate to at least the most basic level of intelligibility to be found in their field of study. [Cf. Capra, 1982:49ff.]

At the level of the New Story, i.e., physics as our story, attention needs to be payed to the extreme fineness – a matter of milliseconds – of the conditions of emergence and survival of the universe. To grasp the emergent probability of the universe is to experience immanent Providence, revealed in the passionate finality of the process. Or, at least, to begin to experience this because we need to take the physical story further than the first moment right to the present moment of our own struggle to understand who we are. In the quotation from Swimme that follows, feeling, thinking, hoping are seen as psychic manifestation of the body's neurophysiological processes, electric flows through the nervous system being in physical correlation to our human experiences.

> . . . from a physical point of view . . . Different ion flows would give you qualitatively different experiences; or, equally true, a qualitatively different mood would manifest as a different movement of ions in your nervous system. The question I want to ask is simply this. What enabies the ions to move? Or what enables you to think? On what power do you rely for your thinking,

feeling, and wondering?

Ions don't move by their own power . . . A close examination shows that an energy-soaked molecule in the brain is responsible for the ion movement. Closer examination shows that this molecule is able to push ions around because of energy it got, ultimately, from the food that you eat. The food got the energy from the Sun; food traps a photon in the net of its molecular webbing, and this photonic energy pushes and pulls the ions in your brain, making possible your present moment of amazing human subjectivity. Right now, this moment, ions are flowing this way and that because of the manner in which you have organized energy from the Sun.

But we are not done yet. Where did the photon come from? We know that in the core of our Sun, atomic fusion creates helium atoms out of hydrogen atoms, in the process releasing photons of sunlight. So, if photons come from hydrogen atoms, where did the hydrogen get the photons? This leads us to the edge of the primeval fireball, to the moment of creation itself.

The primeval fireball was a vast gushing forth of light, first so powerful that it carried elementary particles about as if they were bits of bark on a tidal wave. But as the fireball continued to expand, the light calmed down until . . . the energy level decreased to a point where it could be captured by electrons and protons in the community of the hydrogen atom. Hydrogen atoms rage with energy from the fireball, symphonic storms of energy held together in communities extremely reluctant to give this energy up. But in the cores of stars, hydrogen atoms are forced to release their energy in the form of photons, and this photonic shower from the beginning of time powers your thinking. [1985:168-9].

So fires from the beginning of time fire us now: we are cosmic fire! We are the universe come to consciousness and the psychic energy by which we live is nothing other than the energy of the whole universe.

Level Two: In the core of a star, all the elements of the periodic table up to iron are contained. If it is sufficiently big, it reaches a point where it blows itself to bits and in the explosion creates all the rest of the elements, sending them off into space. Mineral and life forms are created out of supernova explosions. The attraction that gives us a curved universe gives rise to intense creativity in the star and, in its dissolution, makes possible our Earth with all its life. The phosphorus in our bones and all the elements in us were "forged in temperatures a million times hotter than molten rock, each atom fashioned in the blazing heat of the star" . . . "The gneissic rocks of Greenland capture in their crystalline formations the story of our Earth four billion years ago, when the Earth was just leaving its molten state. The journeys of the continents as they crashed against each other and floated across the ocean on the spongy rock of the mantle has been recorded in the mountain ranges, seas and trenches left behind by the collisions." [59, 99].

But the more basic insight to be had is that every living thing is the memory of its past. For the cosmos, memory is the way the past works in the present. Unfortunately, as part of our anthropocentric perspective, we tend to think of history as the past of dead humans, perhaps six thousand years old in terms of any written record, but anyway mostly irrelevant. We have convinced ourselves that all who have gone before us tried to be like us but failed. So we have nothing to learn. "We live in the fingernail of the present, and fail to realize how this cripples us"[102]. To forget the past is to cut ourselves off from the creative resources of our twenty billion year developing universe which is trying to live through us. Our ideas of what constitutes food provides a telling example.

> Instead of eating the natural foods Earth has created over eons of subtle experimentation, we stuff ourselves with the fake junk put out by multinationals with less knowledge of the Earth than could be stuffed into an empty peanut shell, resulting in cancer, heart disease, and all the needless suffering associated with folly . . . Through hundreds of millions of years, life forms learned to feed on each other. This means more than supplying fuel. It means supplying the informed sequences of molecules and amino acids required for our epigenetic unfolding. Our bodies wait for, expect a particular spectrum of foods. [105]

Levels Three and Four: I realize that I am not doing very well in keeping my levels distinct but, then, a large part of the message is the impossibility of treating any level apart from all the others. The deepest reason for this is that we are being forced to the recognition that the universe and Earth can be considered as living entities and then we have to understand ourselves from within their processes. There are enormous theoretical difficulties in formulating this idea but a successful beginning has already been made [Cf. Lovelock 1979, 1985]. Swimme says it's a matter of intimacy: the closer we get to understanding the integral dynamism of the Earth, the clearer it becomes that the four and a half billion years of the Earth's evolution resembles one vast embryogenesis. He provides the example of the prokaryotes. The oxygen content of our planet has been constant for a billion years at near twenty-one percent. The metabolic activity of the first microorganisms on the planet, the prokaryotes, added oxygen to our atmosphere and slowly increased the percentage. Then they reached a point where the oxygen concentration became too much for them. They ceased being the dominant creatures on the Earth, dove to the bottom of ponds or went inside other creatures. But we have discovered that a few percentage points more or less than they

achieved would make advanced forms of animal life impossible. Who told them to stop?

> They just carried on with all their delight in living until the conditions became too noxious for their own genetically anchored limitations . . . They knew nothing of the macrostructure of the biosphere. The whole Earth system was present in the microorganism. The macrostructure was present in the intrinsic genetic limits of the microstructure. [136-7].

But this same insight leads us to reflect that there can be no 'accidental' or 'unnecessary' species. At present there are ten million species alive on the Earth. The best estimates claim that we kill off one species every twenty minutes and will lose half a million in the next fifteen years. Nobody knows what this will mean for the continued vitality of the Earth. The most obvious truth in the world is that babies of all species are created out of soil, air, rain, food, rivers. If we poison all of these, we will change the unborn into poison as well. There has been a doubling of human birth defects in the last twenty years.

Level Five: Even the impressionistic treatment I have given of the first four levels should suffice to show that caring for natural schemes of recurrence is a true part of the human good. This present level of vital value is a good place to make the point of the total interrelatedness of all the levels: to speak of a hiearchy in the scale of values only makes sense where it is seen that causality moves in both directions up and down the scale. There are upward relations of differentiation and creativity. There are downward relations of conditioning and enablement. Last year, a religious sister working in famine- stricken Negros island asked me the rhetorical question, How can you teach an undernourished child to dance. It cannot be done.

Level Six: Social value is the value perceived in the good of order and differentiates into the value of economic system

and the value of political system. Vital values have to be met in a recurrent fashion and they have to be met for everyone in the population. So economic value is found in the system which can meet the vital needs of a whole population in adequate and recurrent fashion. However, such a system is not and cannot be of its nature self-adjusting to varying circumstances. The value of political system is to be found in an order which insures that the needed adjustments will be made in the economic system in changing circumstances to insure, in turn, that the economic system will consistently continue to meet the vital needs of a total population.

Level Seven: Cultural value lies in people determining for themselves the meanings and values in accordance with which they will live their lives. The values that constitute culture may be either healthy or diseased but, as I argued in the opening chapter, they must have priority in determining both political and economic value. It is at this level that the integral dialectic of community is worked out. This dialectic "is a function of a taut balance between two linked but opposed principles of change: spontaneous intersubjectivity and the practical intelligence that institutes a good of social order. Practical intelligence is responsible for three of the dimensions of society: technology, the economic system and the political order . . . The condition of the possiblity of the integrity of the dialectic between spontaneous intersubjectivity and the technological, economic, and political arrangements instituted by practical intelligence is culture, in both its everyday and its reflexive components" [Doran, 1983b:141-2]. It is important to conceive cultural value in dynamic terms. A breakdown in the social order typically demands more than a simple reaffirmation of the received cultural values: it may call for their creative transposition.

Level Eight: The life of any culture depends on the extent to which the people who share in it exercise creativity and

achieve authenticity in their knowing and doing. Personal value is the person in his or her self-transcendence, originating values and calling others to freedom. Where personal value is realized, cultural value thrives and all difficulties can be overcome. In the presence of extensive inauthenticity of persons, the culture degenerates into a slum.

Level Nine: Religious value is what makes possible the realization of personal value in the long run. Only those who are somehow in touch with the fact that they are loved unconditionally by the Mystery that creatively sustains the whole universe will be able to love the world in a manner which can reverse the evil in history, not by repressing it, but by creatively turning it around.

Such, in briefest outline, is the nine-fold integral scale of values. In its light, some of the issues of the last chapter can be given a clearer formulation.

1. We have been struggling to present the outline of a non-reductionist approach to the understanding of historical reality. Within the scale of values, realization at any level is conditional on authenticity on the level above it. Liberal democratic and Marxist political philosophies reveal either a neglect of or scepticism regarding the autonomy of religious, personal, and cultural values and concentrate in practice on the basic levels of vital and social values. A classically inspired religious tradition concentrates its attention on the three upper levels and tends to neglect the every-day cultural, the social and vital. The latter stresses conversion regarding praxis while the Marxist position insists on social-structural transformation. Now it is easy to see the connection between the vital and the social and it is easy to see how the religious, the personal and the cultural interrelate. The hard but necessary thing is to see how all levels interrelate. Take, for example, the population issue.

The gravity of the issue is accepted by all. Of prime relevance is the recognition that industrialized agriculture

is a disaster (– causing among other things the loss of forty billion tons of precious irreplaceable topsoil per annum in the United States alone, where fifty percent of what used to be the richest of continents has been destroyed already). Subsistence levels are the only possible sustainable agricultural levels. What the earth in terms of its bio-regions can sustain in the long term gives the context for thinking about population levels.

But the movement from 'below upwards' in the scale of values was said to be of differentiation and so of creativity. It pushes towards the creativity of new cultural values. But, in the present context, where the cultural cannot be allowed to hold central position, what is opted for is a 'political' solution. Various propaganda measures are taken to induce cooperation. To obtain the unreasoned assent of the majority, all kinds of programmes are launched, most of them emphasizing immediate economic gain for the individual.

> Claim, style and method put the accent on protection against life rather than freedom for it. To be attractive, family planning would have to be embraced as a way to express a deeper sense of life rather than be used as a mere protection against evil . . . Populations are mindless: they can be managed but not motivated. Only persons can make up their minds; and the more they make up their minds, the less they can be controlled. People who freely decide to control their own fertility have new motivations or aspirations to political control . . . [Illich, *Sexual Power and Political Potency,* 1973a, 118-9]

Controlling fertility is effective, creative, and sustained only if it is accepted with other people in mind. But if people reach that level of insight nothing can stop them from creative participation in wider political life and acceptance of the discipline involved in that, even to the extent of sustained revolutionary struggle. So it is that the solution to the population problem is only possible

through transformation of social values and the implementation of these in turn will prove to be impossible short of a transformation of the cultural values informing a society's way of life.

2. Here, in terms of the integral scale of values, is the situation which confronted Marx and still massively confronts us. In a kind of double inversion of the scale of values, economic interests had come to govern the legal and political order, and the political order had displaced the function of culture. The role of politics had become repression and propaganda, convincing people that they needed what the economic system was supplying. The true role of politics should be to mediate cultural values to the shaping of the economic institutions.

> When the integral scale of values is overruled, legal and political institutions become the lowest rung of a mendacious superstructure erected for the preservation of a distorted economic infrastructure whether capitalistic or socialistic . . . The first level of value to suffer, the first element of society to disintegrate, is culture. The public determinants of meaning that would arise from the pursuit of the beautiful, the intelligible, and the true are evacuated from the social scene. They retreat into the margins of society, or become the tools of economic interests. Legal and political institutions take the place of culture as the sources of the public meanings governing the society's way of life. And these institutions are themselves now determined by economic interests, so that the meanings and values that govern the way of life of the society become ultimately economic . . . [Given] the predominance of economic expediency, the political *slips out of the infrastructure* and begins to usurp more and more the functions of culture . . .[Doran, 1983a:60-1;emphasis added].

Marx sought to analyse the workings of a distorted human order. "When one starts with diseased entities, one risks erecting facts into laws" [Doran]. This is a neat way of expressing what happened in conflating the longer and shorter cycles of decline and declaring class struggle the sole key to all history. What Marx saw very clearly was what can happen when individual, group and general bias hold sway, but, failing to advert to the significance of general bias, he promotes the facts to the level of laws of history. So we are invited to rely simply on an attainment of power to resolve the social surd.

Marx never asked himself just what the relations between the economy and politics would be if the cultural and social orders were healthy. [This question only becomes possible if one is in touch with what we have referred to as the longer cycle of decline]. Hence, he could never entertain the idea that the political belongs properly to the infrastructure of society. He remains solidly within the tradition of Macchiavelli and Hobbes.

* * *

Psychic Conversion:

The old Greek tragedies, whose message has been drowned out by the myths of modernity, were insistent that there are organic limits to expansion in every domain. What came to expression in them was the insight that true human growth and development was possible only for those who respected and even embraced necessary limits.

Again, desire lives in and through intelligence and judgment: we come to fulfilment in affirmation of what is independently of our act of knowing. Now if i) all inquiry converges on the way things really are, and if ii) we make ourselves in our judgment, then the innate meaning of all our striving is that we become, participate in what is going

on in the universe. We learn the dance in order to dance: the whole of mind process is the liberation of feeling into universal order. Who we are is the consciousness of the universe and our originating desire reaches fulfilment in love of the universe.

> There is indeed no growth in feeling, there is no emotional maturing, that does not pass through affirmation of what is into becoming of what is not yet. This is what it is to participate in a creation that is ongoing. . . If what is merely confronts us, there is no way beyond what is into what is to be . . . And what is *is* what confronts us unless we have understood it as what we affirm. It confronts us as everything we have not dealt with confronts us. That is the meaning of confrontation – the baleful face of the forgotten. [Moore, 1985:28]

Feeling, outlawed from its true intention, becomes enraged. So psychic conversion is a matter of living emotionally in the order affirmed in any judgment, living with images of liberation into the order of things. [Moore].

In the detailed and creative study of Robert Doran [1981], it is noted that general bias has effected a cumulative neglect of the human psyche throughout the longer cycle of decline. Neglect of the order of value, of quality, is inevitably neglect of the psyche, because values are apprehended in feelings before they are ever pursued by deliberation and decision. To reduce all to the two lower levels of the particular good and the good of order is to cripple the participation of the sensitive psyche in the search for direction in the movement of life. This effects, in turn, a distortion of the movement, making it a chaotic series of fragmented, unrelated, and bizarre complexes of affects and images. Paradoxically, "to neglect the *long-range* point of view is to neglect the organic and psychic root of limitation; conversely, to neglect limitation is to refuse to adopt the long-range point of view." [139].

When the order of values is compacted into the social and particular goods, the drive of transcendence is distorted into a megalomanic drive to power and domination. Of course, what would really stretch us to the full capacity of our intentional reach would be paying attention to our bodily and psychic limitations, the source of all creativity. To fail to do this is, simply to *miss* life.

Moore tells of the visit of a group of Pentagon planners to Michael Howard, Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford and a world-authority on the history of war. Howard tried in vain to tell these planners who visited him looking for advice that their planning bore no relation to the reality of war, that it was an abstruse piece of theorizing operating in a world of its own, untouched by memory, untested and untestable by any experience. It leads Moore to evoke Novalis' prophetic utterance at the dawn of the nineteenth century: "When they gather to plan, the universe is not there".

Psychic conversion is seen to consist in the development of the capacity for internal communication in a person among spirit (intellectual, rational, deliberative and religious consciousness), psyche (sensitive consciousness), and organism (the unconscious). The 'how' of psychic conversion is the attentive, intelligent, rational and existentially responsible and decisive negotiation of one's imaginal, affective and intersubjective spontaneity. (Without that precise manner of negotiation, concern for one's imaginal and intersubjective spontaneity ends up on an endless tread-mill of self-analysis. One is doomed to a narcissistic and romantic agony that is without purpose, without direction, without fruit. As transcendence without limitation leads one to a one-sided hypertrophy of ego-consciousness, so limitation without transcendence displaces the tension of consciousness in the opposite direction of a psychological cul-de-sac whose only issue is a perpetually renewed psychic still-birth. [Doran])

There is a straight-forward connection between the state of our psyches and the plight of the wretched of the earth:

> Historically, the neglect of the psyche, which is partly constitutive of the longer cycle of decline, has made the meeting-place of. . intentionality and body into something of a dense jungle . . . or a volcano . . . Victimized and oppressed, the modern psyche must be approached with utmost care. It is every bit as angry as are the awakening minds and hearts of the oppressed peoples of the earth, . . In fact, the social and economic systems [that have enslaved them] are nothing other than the intra-subjective neglect of the movement of life writ large and, as it were, 'projected' into the dialectic of history. . . . The approach to the psyche, as to the poor, must be grounded in an acknowledgment and avowal of injustice, in a genuine readiness, not only to change but also to learn, in a reverence for that dimension of human reality where God makes known and most directly effective his own historical but absolutely supernatural solution to the problem of evil. [Doran, 150].

So, as Moore says, the great question is: Where are the images exposed to which feeling may find again its vigour for life? And to this the answer is that there is one image which derives from the fact that God made his own the one flesh of humankind, and before the eyes of flesh was crucified: "so that we could see the life of feeling that is denied in the denial of order, see it in the tortured, bleeding body of the order enfleshed; see it, and seeing it, feel again, and know, as from eons of lost time, the soul's primal welling-up in the spirit of the resurrection."[1985: 32].

Empowered by such symbols, we may be able to reach for the cosmic vision which will help us to break with our addictions and see their stultifying effects in our lives. Bit by bit, we may recover the ability to truly evaluate our bright technological ideas. Most of our inventions have a limited usefulness. Wisdom lies in the ability to

determine the limit. Hence it is that E. F. Schumacher says: No one is really working for peace unless he is working primarily for the restoration of wisdom [1973:30]. In a recent talk in Japan, Ivan Illich gave a simple illustration. Shortly after his birth, his grandfather, living on the Island of Brac off the Dalmatian coast, expressed a wish to see his grand-child. On the same boat that brought the baby to the island in 1926 came also the very first loudspeaker to have been seen on the island.

> Up to that day, all men and women had spoken with more or less equally powerful voices. Henceforth this would change. Henceforth the access to the microphone would determine whose voice shall be magnified. Silence now ceased to be in the commons; it became a resource for which loudspeakers compete. Language itself was transformed thereby from a local commons into a national resource for communications. As enclosure by the lords increased national productivity by denying the individual peasant to keep a few sheep, so the encroachment of the loudspeaker has destroyed that silence which so far had given each man and woman his or her proper and equal voice. Unless you have access to a loudspeaker, you now are silenced. [1985:80-2]

An invention which undermines the basis of community power by blocking its dynamic of achieving meaning through consensus is not a very clever invention. But the point here as everywhere else, is not the invention but the judgment of its true usefulness. Some beginnings have been made in thinking in the mode of an emerging moral-ecological differentiation of consciousness. [Cf. Elgin, 1982; Schumacher, 1973]

* * *

Concluding Untheological Postcript:

The scope of the topics treated of in this short book is

so vast that any pointers given in this concluding chapter can be of only the most tenuous kind. But I feel that some legitimate puzzlement may have been caused by the notable absence of explicit reference to the terms of the sub-title given to the book. Where has there been treatment of hope, not to mention treatment of inculturation? Partly the answer lies in the foundational nature of my attempt, but I would like to draw attention to the implicit treatment that I would claim to have been furthering.

There is need of an explanatory perspective on hope if we are not to settle for some vague descriptive specification. Just as the prospect of imminent wipe-out through thermo-nuclear war has powerfully pushed us towards explanation in a physics, chemistry, and biology of aggression [Fromm, 1973], so we need an explanation of what we mean by hope.

So far from being an arbitrary or groundless feeling of optimism, hope is the appropriate response engendered in human consciousness by the deep-down truth of the whole emerging process of life as gift. When the integral truth of God's gift of life is being distorted out of all recognition, then people are rendered hopeless, cut off from the ground of creativity. Only the accurate naming of the process which is bringing about the distortion can release again the well-springs of hope and creativity.

Bringing the gospel message of liberation to cultures can only be done if the integral scale of human values is respected. When, as at present, the threat to human cultures is global, inculturation can only happen in the patient struggle to counter that threat. It is on this central point that I have concentrated.

While it may be true that "actual evangelization remains substantially in the mode and haste of classical culture" [McShane, 1985:24], many are addressing that problem today in creative fashion [cf. Boff, 1985:89-107; Cadorette, 1982; Pieris, 1985; Schreiter, 1982].

In accordance with my explanatory model, I believe that hope emerges in the context of a perceived and

understood threat to life. I have tried to facilitate the perception and the understanding. In the same vein I believe that the gospel message becomes most relevant when we realize the extent to which all life is under threat of annihilation. I come to what I hope is a fitting close with this thought from Gerd Theissen:

> As a result of industrialization in some areas of England the birchwoods became grey and black. The salt and pepper moth, which otherwise had the best protective colouring and chance of survival, became more easily recognizable and a prey to its enemies. Now from time to time black mutations of it had already appeared. As long as the birchwoods were white, these fell victims to selection. Now, however, they had the better chances of survival. Gradually the moths became darker. In a different situation their dark colouring, which was once dysfunctional, gave them a chance of survival. One is tempted to add a moral to the illustration: Jesus is such a black moth. He was done away with, but his mode of existence could later offer a chance of survival. Jesus' love of his enemies seems to have been an impractical dream in world history so far. But the time could come – indeed is already here – when our survival depends on how far we are successful in reducing aggression between human beings and changing our ways of reacting to enemies. [1985:168].

* * *

APPENDIX I

LETTER OF A CIVILIZED GENTLEMEN TO ECOLOGICAL BARBARIANS

What follows is the letter of Chief Seattle to the President of the United States in 1854. It is a profoundly prophetic document and may help to illustrate the religious depth, moral superiority, and ecological wisdom of this shamanic-tribal people by comparison with the Europeans who apparently "hate the earth".

It is not, hopefully, too late even now to start listening to peoples who have a longer, richer memory of what human beings have learned through millenia of creative living with the earth.

THE WEB OF LIFE

"The Great Chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land. The Great Chief also sends us words of friendship and goodwill. This is kind of him, since we know he has little need of our friendship in return. But we will consider your offer.

For we know that if we do not sell, the white man may come with guns and take our land. The idea is strange to us. If we do not own the freshness of the air and the sparkle of the water, how can you buy them? Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine-needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every clearing, and humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people. The sap which courses through the trees carries the memories of the red man.

So, when the Great Chief in Washington sends word that he wishes to buy our land, he asks much of us. The Great Chief sends word he will reserve us a place so that we can live comfortably by ourselves. He will be our father and we will be his children. So we will consider your offer to buy our land. But it will not be easy. For this land is sacred to us.

This shining water that lives in the streams and rivers is not just water but the blood of our ancestors. If we sell you land, you must remember that it is sacred, and you must teach your children that it is sacred and that each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events and memories in the life of my people.

The water's murmur is the voice of my father's father. The rivers are our brothers, they quench our thirst. The rivers carry our canoes, and feed our children. If we sell you our land, you must remember, and teach your children that the rivers are our brothers, and yours, and henceforth give the rivers the kindness you would give any brother.

The white man's dead forget the country of their birth when they go to walk among the stars. Our dead never forget this beautiful earth, for it is the mother of the red man. We are part of the earth, and it is part of us. The perfumed flowers are our sisters, the deer, the horse, the great eagle, these are our brothers. The rocky crests, the juices of the meadows, the body heat of the pony, and man – all belong to the same family.

* * *

The red man has always retreated before the advancing white man, as the mist of the mountain runs before the morning sun. But the ashes of our fathers are sacred. Their graves are holy ground, and so these hills, these trees, this portion of the earth is consecrated to us.

We know that the white man does not understand our ways. One portion of land is the same to him as the next.

for he is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother, but his enemy, and when he has conquered it, he moves on. He leaves his fathers' graves behind, and he does not care. He kidnaps the earth for his children. He does not care. His fathers' graves and his children's birthright are forgotten. He treats his mother, the earth, and his brother, the sky, as things to be bought, plundered, sold like sheep, or bright beads. His appetite will devour the earth and leave behind only a desert.

* * *

I do not know. Our ways are different from your ways. The sight of your cities pains the eyes of the red man. But perhaps it is because the red man is a savage and does not understand. There is no quiet place in the white man's cities. No place to hear the unfurling of leaves in spring or the rustle of an insect's wings. But perhaps it is because I am a savage and do not understand. The clatter only seems to insult the ears. And what is there to life if a man cannot heart the lonely cry of the whippoorwill or the arguments of the frogs aroung the pond at night? I am a red man and do not understand. The Indian prefers the soft sound of the wind darting over the face of a pond, and the smell of the wind itself, cleansed by a mid-day rain, or scented with the pinon pine.

* * *

The air is precious to the red man, for all things share the same breath – the beast, the tree, the man, they all share the same breath. The white man does not seem to notice the air he breathes. Like man dying for many days, he is numb to the stench.

But if we sell you our land, you must remember that the air is precious to us, that the air shares its spirit with all the life it supports. The wind that gave our grand-

father his first breath, also receives his last sigh, and the wind must also give our children the spirit of life. And if we sell you our land, you must keep it apart and sacred. as a place where even the white man can go to taste the wind that is sweetened by the meadow's flowers.

* * *

So we will consider your offer to buy our land, if we decide to accept, I will make one condition – the white man must treat the beasts of this land as his brothers. I am a savage and I do not understand any other way. I have seen a thousand rotting buffaloes on the prairie, left by the white man who shot them from a passing train.

I am a savage and do not understand how the smoking iron horse can be more important than the buffalo that we kill only to stay alive. What is a man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, man would die from a great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man. All things are connected.

* * *

You must teach your children that the ground beneath their feet is the ashes of our grandfathers. So that they will respect the land, tell your children that the earth is rich with the lives of our kin. Teach your children what we have taught our children, that the earth is our mother, Whatever befalls the earth, befalls the sons of the earth. If men spit upon the ground, they spit upon themselves.

* * *

This we know, the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. This we know, all things are connected, like the blood which unites one family. All things

are connected. Whatever befalls the earth, befalls the sons of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.

* * *

But we will consider your offer to go to the reservations you have for my people. We will live apart and in peace. It matters little where we spend the rest of our days. Our children have seen their father humbled in defeat. Our warriors have felt shame, and after defeat they turn their days in idleness and contaminate their bodies with sweet food and strong drink. It matters little where we spend the rest of our days. They are not many.

A few more hours, a few more winters, and none of the children of the great tribes that once lived on this earth or that roam now in small bands in the woods, will be left to mourn the graves of a people once as powerful and as hopeful as yours. But why should I mourn the passing of my people? Tribes are made of men, nothing more. Men come and go, like the waves of the sea.

* * *

Even the white man, whose God walks and talks with him as friend to friend, cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all, we shall see. One thing we know, which the white man may one day discover – our God is the same God. You may think that you own Him as you wish to own our land, but you cannot. He is the God of man, and His compassion is equal for the red man and the white. This earth is precious to him, and to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its Creator. The whites too shall pass, perhaps sooner than all other tribes.

* * *

Continue to contaminate your bed, and you will one night suffocate in your own waste. But in your perishing you will shine brightly, fired by the strength of the God who brought you to this land for some special purpose, gave you dominion over this land and over the red man. That destiny is a mystery to us, for we do not understand when the buffaloes are all slaughtered, the wild horses are tamed, the secret corners of the forest heavy with the scent of many men, and the view of the ripe hills blotted by talking wires. Where is the thicket? Gone. Where is the eagle? Gone. And what is it to say good-bye to the swift pony and the hunt? The end of living and the beginning of survival.

So we will consider your offer to buy our land. If we agree, it will be to secure the reservation you have promised. There, perhaps we may live out our brief days as we wish. When the last red man has vanished from this earth, and his memory is only the shadow of a cloud moving across the prairie, those shores and forests will still hold the spirits of my people, for they love this earth as the newborn loves its mother's heartbeat.

So if we sell you our land, love it as we have loved it, care for it as we have cared for it, hold in your mind the memory of the land as it is when you take it. And with all your strength, with all your mind, with all your heart, preserve it for your children, and love it . . . as God loves us all.

One thing we know. Our God is the same God. The earth is precious to Him. Even the white man cannot be exempt from the common destiny. We may all be brothers after all. We shall see.

Chief Seattle, 1854

APPENDIX II

PARABLES

Pierre Pradervand has wrtiten what must constitute the most delightful governmental report ever written [1982]. He concluded it with a parable which illustrates our deep need for psychic conversion through mirroring back to us what questions we consider to be alone significant today.

The late William Clark, international civil servant and author of the all-too-credible policy-fiction book *Cataclysm: the North-South Conflict of 1987,* composed the second parable just before he died in 1985.

Both parables may stimulate reader's thinking more than my own analytic attempts to understand our situation.

THE GIFT

The woman had the air of someone from another world, as she walked with her two cupped hands uplifted, and a green silk cloth covering the gift she carried.

"I have a gift'. she said, facing them, "that surpasses all gifts".

"It will be given to the one who asks the only really important question about it".

"I know, I know", Mr Power Man stepped forward. "What is it useful for? Things have to be useful".

"I know better", Mr. Money Man interjected, "How much does it cost? Things are only valuable if they are expensive".

"Is it efficient?" Tech Nocrat hurled at her with an air of finality, which would have made Moses resemble a Sunday School teacher fumbling for a reply to a tricky question.

"They are all fools", said Mr. Busy Man, "Time is money. How much time does it save?"

"Of what use all these questions if I can't acquire it", exclaimed Owner Ship, "My question is, can I possess it?"

Then a little child came forward, and the five very Important Men, their briefcases popping with outworn, useful, expensive, tired, clever, time-saving ideas, tried to push the child back rather angrily. But their big, bumbling bodies were no match for the child's lithe adroitness, and she stood looking into the woman's clear blue eyes, so limpid and deep, twin pools of transparent gentleness.

"Will it enable me to love more?" asked the child.

As she spoke these words, a smile of winsome beauty illumined the woman's face.

And suddenly the five briefcases shrivelled, shrivelled into the utter nothingness they came from, and the clothes of the five Very Important Men just dissolved. They vainly tried to cover themselves with the hollowness of their empty pursuits.

Mr. Busy Man grabbed after time, but it was just ahead or just behind him, because he had never learned to live in the now.

Tech Nocrat, for the first time in his life, felt inefficient with a wrinkled fig leaf in his hand.

Owner Ship cried out, "Possession, cover me", but the idea one could ever possess a thing was so flimsy you could see right through it.

"I'll buy your green silk cloth", Mr. Money Man cried out to the woman, in desperation. But the minute he

touched it, it disappeared, because nothing of substance can money buy, and the cloth was woven of hope.

Mr. Power Man, a haunted look in his eyes searched in vain around himself. And the child, full of compassion, ran to him and gave him her handkerchief.

In the woman's hand sat a simple jar filled with earth and she said to the little girl, "E'en you see it not, this jar containeth the seed of a flower of unsurpassable beauty. Tend for it, love it, water it every day. And if you are faithful, the plant will grow, and your eyes will open. And when it is in full bloom, you will realize the jar is your heart and the full-grown flower of love was always there".

THE PARABLE OF THE BAD NEIGHBOURS

The story of the Good Neighbour (Samaritan) encapsulates a whole sociological treatise in about 400 words. This, then, is the parable of the Bad Neighbours:

Two families moved into a semi-detached house with a rather thin dividing wall, which permitted them to hear, but not understand, everything that went on in the other's abode. Both families became convinced that the other was attempting to break through the wall, and murder them in their beds. So they each built up a battery of alarm signals, and more and more sophisticated booby traps and explosive devices, which would enable them utterly to destroy the neighbours if they ever attempted to break through.

The cost of this burglar proofing was so great that neither family had any cash to spare to fix up the cellar and basement. There, in damp, overcrowded squalor, a large number of poor coloured tenants lived. In mid-winter the basement became so cold that the tenants used their axes to chop off bits of the joists in their ceiling to build

fires to keep warm. Messages came from upstairs forbidding them to shake the building, lest the alarm systems were activated and everyone blown up; but as a concession, upstairs did promise to turn up the electric heating so that some warmth could trickle downstairs. But heat does not trickle down. So the blacks quietly and carefully sawed away the wood. After a time the joists gave way, the floors sank, the dividing wall tottered and fell, thus exploding all its defensive devices and killing everyone on both sides of the building.

* * *

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