RELIGION AS STORY

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A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Religion

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of
the degree of Master of Arts in History and Philosophy
of Religion
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

July 1980

ABSTRACT

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Contemporary man now faces a crisis of faith, a problem which is rooted in language and secularity. The disappearance of the transcendence, historically, has its roots in the modern "shift to the subject" initiated by Descartes. Contemporary man is faced with the problem of trying to recover a sense of the sacred in an age come of reason. Two thinkers, Wallace Stevens and C. G. Jung, are examined on how they recovered for themselves a sense of the sacred in their own personal way. Their method can be characterized as myth-making or storytelling. Their answer results in a shift from the God of Reason to the God of the Imagination. The value of myth and metaphor in religion is explored and is shown to be operative in the scientific method as well. Furthermore, it is shown that experience has the quality of a narrative and therefore religion is a story whereby the transcendence is reached through parable. Storytelling, therefore, has a theological dimension, and in Stevens and Jung, the very telling of the story is identical with the story itself. Finally, theology as a story is examined in terms of literary historical styles and is shown to be in a state of crisis. For Stevens and Jung, a personal story is a way out of the problem of a demythologized Christianity.

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INTRODUCTION

The human species has been designated by many names such as homo ludens, homo sapiens, homo eroticus, homo loquens but it is man as homo religiosus that is in a serious crisis of faith.[1] The current problem lies behind basically two elements: secularity and language. Our sense of world is given in language, yet language in turn shapes the world we live in. Thus both language and world influence each other. Since contemporary man's world is secular, so is language. They both secularize each other in a vicious circle. What contemporary man lacks is a viable means of expressing the sacred. Religious language is lost when the sense of the sacred is missing in man's world. Religious language for contemporary man is alien and obscure.[2] This loss of the sacred in man shapes a language that is empty and which lacks the fullness of Being. What is missing in the world of contemporary man is a sacred poetics coupled with a divine mythos.

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[1] It is strange that a thinker like Bernard Lonergan maintains that we are in a crisis of culture rather than in a crisis of faith. See Charles Davis, "Lonergan and the Teaching Church," in Philip McShane, ed., Foundations of Theology (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1970), p. 73.

[2] Several authors have expressed this as a contemporary problem. Cf. Langdon Gilkey, Naming the Whirlwind: The Renewal of God-language (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1969), pp. 247-304; Sallie M. TeSelle, Speaking in Parables: A Study in Metaphor and Theology (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), pp. 26-42; Charles Winquist, The Transcendental Imagination: An Essay in Philosophical Theology (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), pp. 1-5.

Our secular framework is not in touch with what is ultimate and what gives us the fullness of meaning. Our secular language speaks of matter in terms of atomic particles, protons and neutrons etc. written in mathematical forms that is as alien as Egyptian hieroglyphics. Archaic man, on the other hand, talked of matter in terms of Mother Earth, which better expressed the nurturing aspect of nature as well as the close ties he experienced in his relationship to the environment. This is very different from the cold intellectual expressions of contemporary man.[3]

Contemporary man lacks a sense of the sacred while archaic man lived sacredly because everything in his life had ultimate meaning and his stories were intimately related to that fact.[4] Today man lives in a world cluttered with trivia which gives him a sense of inauthenticity because the world he experiences looks superficial. The stories of contemporary man express this alienation. But for archaic man, all aspects of his life were related to the sacred and the stories that he told expressed the totality of his life in relation to the sacred dimension.[5]

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[3]C. G. Jung, ed., "Approaching the Unconscious", Man and His Symbols (New York: Dell, 1972), pp. 84-85.

[4]Here I would argue that the distinction between the sacred and the profane is a contemporary construct. Archaic man had no sense of the profane because the totality of his life had religious meaning. See Louis Dupré, Transcendent Selfhood: The Rediscovery of the Inner Life (New York: The Seabury Press, 1976), pp. 18-26.

[5]Contemporary man can only relate a part of his life to the sacred. Religion for the most part does not constitute the totality of life.

Stephen Crites[6] has pointed out that in traditional cultures, unlike ours, stories were not ornaments that man could admire and hold up as works of art. In these societies stories are dwelling places. People lived in these stories.[7] These fundamental narrative forms are sacred stories, simply because man's sense of self and world is created through them. Thus sacred stories orient the life of man. Furthermore, those that are not lived in but, in fact, are told or heard are mundane stories. Mundane stories are stories that are told and set within a world in order to be heard. These mundane stories are the means by which people articulate and clarify their sense of the world. To initiate a child in "the ways of the world" parents tell stories but people however do not think up a sacred story.[8] In fact, people awaken to a sacred story and the goal of mundane stories is to articulate that awakening.[9] Crites maintains that between sacred and mundane stories there is a mediating form, namely, the form of the experiencing consciousness itself. Here consciousness is shaped by the sacred story to which it awakens and in turn finds expression in the mundane story that articulates its sense of reality. Crites maintains that the structure of experiences informed by such stories must in itself be in some sense

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[6]Stephen Crites, "The Narrative Quality of Experience", The Journal of the American Academy of Religion, Vol. 34, No. 3, 1971, p. 295.

[7]Ibid., p. 295.

[8]On the importance of fairy tales for the development of children, see Bruno Bettelheim, The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales (New York: Vintage Books, 1977), p. 328.

[9]Stephen Crites, pp. 295-296.

narrative. Therefore, experience has a narrative form.[10] Thus the narrative form of consciousness is temporal and sequential. There is past, present and future. Crites also points out that the narrative quality of experience has three dimensions: the sacred story, the mundane story and the temporal form of experience itself.[11] These three are interdependent. These three narrative "tracks" each constantly reflect and affect the course of others. Crites goes on to say that when these "tracks" cross it is like a burst of light. Such a luminous moment in which the sacred, the mundane and the personal are inseparably conjoined is called "symbolic". Crites believes that a religious symbol becomes alive to consciousness when a sacred story intersects both an explicit narrative and the course of a man's personal experience. The symbol is the double intersection. Thus for Crites a symbol carries into a life situation or a new story the meaning given to it in a cycle of mundane stories and the resonances of a sacred story.[12]

The theology that is most needed today is the theology that is a story. Theology in the modern era has been primarily rational and has lacked the poetics of a sacred language. Theology once again must become a story — a new mythic prose. Therefore what is needed in theology is a shift from the God of Reason to the God of the Imagination. Theology must shift God from object to subject. When God the Subject becomes the one that utters forth the poetics of the Word then one can

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[10]Ibid., p. 305.

[11]Ibid., p. 305.

[12]Ibid., p. 306.

have a sacred theology.[13]

Human growth consists of a development of consciousness into higher forms of psychological and spiritual activity through the process of differentiation. Thus we emerge into a world of meaning from the world of immediacy by making "sense" out of the world of immediate experience. Because the world is mediated we become alienated and distanced from original immediate experience. In other words, the world for us is no longer what we experience directly but rather what we have constructed. Theology has suffered the same fate. Theology is no longer the confessional sacred story (gospel narrative) to which we awaken but has become the mundane story that articulates that awakening. The shift from mythic consciousness or discourse to theoretical discourse was the movement from the sacred story of gospel to the rationalism of scholasticism. The problem of an alienated theology began with the shift to the thinking subject initiated by Descartes and climaxed by Kant's critical turn.

It has always been the task of theology to make the gospel story heard but it becomes a Herculean task in an age of alienated theology. When critical philosophy and history relativizes the sacred story can the Christian story be retold and regained? Or does contemporary man need another story or no story at all?

Theology today faces a formidable task of storytelling and it cannot advance unless the story becomes once again sacred. The great

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[13]The early church believed that their gospel theology was directly inspired by the Holy Spirit which vindicated it as the divine Word of God.

storytelling theologians have always been the ones that were seized by
the Divine Presence. Through the experience of this Divine Presence
the "new" theologian becomes captivated by the "new" God-metaphor within
him. The response then becomes an utterance — a sacred word. This
ascension of the "new" God-metaphor germinates a new vision and a new
theo-logos. Thus theology can once again become a sacred story. The
telling of this sacred story becomes the self's homecoming — the
journey back to myth.

An alienated theology, that is, a neuroticized God-image cannot
be rationalized away. The redemption of an alienated theology can only
come about when theology returns to the source of a sacred ground and
only then can it articulate the poetic interplay between God and man.
God must shift from object to subject. It is then that we are truly
informed about the divine. Theology as a systematic God-metaphor is in
need of a new mythic discourse. This new mythic discourse can be
brought about through a shift in God-metaphor. The new theo-logos of a
sanctified imagination comes about by an encounter with the sacred. It
is the sacred ground that keeps religious language alive and ready to
be "heard" anew. Secular experience can only lead to secular language
but a language that is truly poetic is uttered from the divine ground.

The basic theme underlying this thesis is that in the setting of
modernity, the recovery of the sacred ground and a sacred poetics leads
to a new mythic discourse, a new theo-logos. This new theo-logos is an
imaginative theology rather than a rational theology because the
imagination is bound to the will in the thrust of storytelling. This
is to meet the demand of tying theology with praxis in an age of

critique.[14] The second basic underlying theme of the thesis is that
theology be seen as a story. By examining experience as a story, one
lives a story as well as tells a story -- theory and praxis go hand in
hand. Therefore the thesis will examine the historical background of
the "death of God". Thus secularity and a lack of a sacred language is
the problematic of modernity. Wallace Stevens and C. G. Jung will be
examined as models of modern man, who, caught in a crisis of faith by
being heirs of a rational and technological age that is no longer
sacred, forged, by the strength of their own autonomy, their own per-
sonal myth. For them tradition had become dead and as such no longer
spoke a sacred poetics. Their life's work consisted of recovering the
lost sacred Logos. Furthermore, it will be seen that their personal.
myth is theological in nature. All life is a story; the nature of
experience is narrative, therefore story or myth as a metaphor of the
self will also be examined in relation to parable (as that which sub-
verts myth) as metaphor of transcendence. As will be shown, both
Stevens and Jung forged a theo-logos because their story not only
included the divine ground within the dimension of story but also
included the divine ground in the authorship of the story. The import-
ant point here that will be stressed is that as one's story both
includes myth and parable, so does a theology that is sacred. In
addition, to vindicate the thesis that theology is a story, it will be
shown that intellectual inquiry, science or theology, is narrative in
nature.

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[14]Charles Davis, "Theology and Praxis", Cross Currents, Vol. 23,
1973, pp. 154-168.

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF GOD

Modern rationalism has called into question the possibility of
objective knowledge in a radical manner by its shift to the subject
initiated by Descartes. Formerly the Greeks had affirmed the possi-
bility of objective knowledge because to them no sharp line separated
thought from being and cognition from reality. Medieval philosophy
also did not question the possibility of objective knowledge.

Descartes, by shifting to the subject, sought the rational jus-
tification of knowledge and promoted the existence of a substantial ego.
Through the famous statement -- Cogito, ergo sum, the absolute certainty
reached by Descartes' exaggerated doubt leads to the assumption that
things exist, for me, because I think them. Since the subject can think
only his own thinking and because he is conscious of his own conscious-
ness, the only knowledge that the subject has is nothing but the know-
ledge of consciousness. Thus we have a mind that thinks abstract and
infinite thoughts which now confronts an abstract, infinite universe.[15]
What Descartes has accomplished is that he has simply enclosed con-
sciousness in self-sufficiency which results in an ego that has gained
self-objectification but only at the price of self-alienation.[16] If man

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[15]Peter Fuss, "Modern Religious Thought", in S. A. Matczak, ed.,
God in Contemporary Thought: A Philosophical Perspective (New York:
Learned Publications, 1977), p. 542.

[16]Ibid., p. 542.

is defined as subject, everything else turns to object. This includes God who therefore becomes the highest object of man's knowledge. God becomes part of thought and in this way man becomes alienated and falls into solipsism.[17]

The Cartesian "subjective turn" is completed in Kant who tried to steer through a spreading rationalism and a skeptical empiricism. Kant rejected the traditional belief that objects disclose themselves to consciousness. He also maintained that consciousness imposes its own forms on objects prior to them being given.[18] Kant describes his philosophical programme as follows:

> Hitherto it had been assumed that all our knowledge must conform to objects. But all attempts to extend our knowledge of objects by establishing something in regard to them a priori, by means of concepts, have, on this assumption, ended in failure. We must therefore make trial whether we may not have more success in the tasks of metaphysics, if we suppose that objects must conform to our knowledge. This would agree better with what is desired, namely, that it should be possible to have knowledge of objects a priori, determining something in regard to them prior to their being given. We should then be proceeding precisely on the lines of Copernicus' primary hypothesis. Failing of satisfactory progress in explaining the movements of the heavenly bodies on the supposition that they all revolved around the spectator, he tried whether he might not have better success if he made the spectator to revolve and the stars to remain at rest. A similar experiment can be tried in metaphysics, as regards the intuition of objects. If intuition must conform to the constitution of the objects, I do not see how we could know anything of the latter a priori; but if the objects (as object of the senses) must conform to the constitution of our faculty of intuition, I have no difficulty in conceiving a possibility.[19]

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[17]Joseph L. Navickas, Consciousness and Reality: Hegel's Philosophy of Subjectivity (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), p. 5.

[18]Ibid., p. 6.

[19]Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), p. 22.

Thus Kant made the subjective <u>a priori</u> the source of intelligibility. Kantian epistemology looks back beyond objects to the prior conditions that give rise to knowledge of the objects in question. By having their source in the mind rather than in the things "out there", perceptual forms (space, time) and conceptual categories (causality, substance, etc.), we have knowledge of the nature of objects <u>a priori</u>. Universal and necessary knowledge is restricted to appearances rather than "things-in-themselves". We can have, according to Kant, certain knowledge about the basic natures and laws that govern the phenomenal world but the noumenal world is forever inaccessible to us. In addition, Kant postulated a synthetic unity of apperception as the <u>a priori</u> condition of the "I think" which accompanies all representation and cognitive acts. This Kantian unity of apperception was transformed into the absolute ego by Fichte. For Fichte the absolute is described only from the point of view of the subject. In this way the object has no ontological independence and autonomy. Schelling corrected this one-sideness by maintaining that the real absolute is apprehended as identity of the subjective and objective which opened the possibility for Hegel to try and reconcile being and thought in his philosophy of subjectivity.[20]

Prior to Hegel the idea of universal intelligibility was a natural and common place "foundational" assumption of philosophy. The suspicion that arises after Hegel's failure is that if the Great Tradition culminates in Hegel's System, then that tradition is now bankrupt.[21] The

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[20]Joseph L. Navickas, <u>Consciousness and Reality</u>, p. 12.

[21]Peter Fuss, "Modern Religious Thought", <u>God in Contemporary Thought</u>, p. 553.

tradition has come to an end in Hegel. Hegel is the absolute solipsist, the one caught up and incarcerated in his own Ego.[22]

The God of Reason eventually only leads to nihilism. When God becomes only the object of consciousness, man becomes a nihilist. J. Hillis Miller maintains that nihilism is "the nothingness of consciousness when consciousness becomes the foundation of everything".[23] By this rational method man has lost touch with the immanent God while the transcendent God has disappeared over the horizon. Thus Nietzsche writes:

> "Where did God go?", he cried. "I'll tell you. We killed him --
> you and I. We are all his murderers. But how did we do it? How
> did we manage to drink up the ocean? Who gave us the sponge to
> erase the whole horizon? What did we do when we unhinged this earth
> from its sun? Where is it going now? Where are we going? Away
> from all suns? Aren't we in an endless fall — backwards, sideways,
> forwards, every which way? Is there still an above and a below? ...
> Hasn't it become colder? .... The holiest and mightiest the world
> has ever possessed has fallen to our knife -- who'll wipe the blood
> from us? Where is the water that could wash us clean? What cere-
> monies of atonement, what sacred games shall we be forced to invent?
> Isn't the magnitude of this deed too great for us? Don't we have to
> become Gods ourselves, just to appear worthy of it?"[24]

What does man do to survive a naked immanence and a demystified transcendence? He becomes the sovereign valuer, the measure of all things. Today's technology is the devouring nothingness of consciousness which is none other than the will to power over things. Science and technology takes all things as objects for man's imaginings. Technology is the sign of our secularity. Secularity is measured by the

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[22]Ibid., p. 557.

[23]J. Hillis Miller, *Poets of Reality: Six Twentieth Century Writers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965), p. 3.

[24]Quoted by Peter Fuss (*The Gay Science*), pp. 564-565.

technology of the society and the fact that its language is non-sacred.

As Miller points out:

> ... the presence of God within the object as it existed for the early romantics is forgotten, and forgotten is the pathos of the Victorians' reaching out for a God disappearing over the horizon of an objectified world.[25]

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[25]J. Hillis Miller, Poets of Reality, p. 5.

THE RECOVERY OF GOD: THE POETICS
OF WALLACE STEVENS

J. Hillis Miller maintains that the "death of God" is the starting point for many twentieth-century writers. He states that the vanishing of the gods is the basis of all of Wallace Stevens' thought and poetry.[26] Wallace Stevens' theme of recovering a supreme fiction through the imagination using poetic metaphors or a new mythical prose can hint at a possible programme for theological method in the modern age of religious criticism. The recovery of God can come about through a new theopoetics.[27] The shift from the God of Reason to the God of the Imagination is expressed in the poetry of Wallace Stevens.

Two specific shifts or movements occur in the poetry of Stevens. The first is the recognition of the ontology of poetry as expression of reality and the second is the recognition that through this poetry of being man participates in life.[28] In this way Stevens is trying to recover for himself a sacred story.

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[26]Cited in Sarah Lawall, Critics of Consciousness: The Existential Structures of Literature (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), p. 212.

[27]Amos Niven Wilder, Theopoetic: Theology and the Religious Imagination (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), p. 106.

[28]Thomas J. Hines, The Later Poetry of Wallace Stevens: Phenomenological Parallels with Husserl and Heidegger (London: Associated University Presses, 1976), p. 298.

Although he is not entirely concerned with traditional philosophical questions as such, Stevens, nonetheless, has an interest in the poetic use of ideas. His poetry reflects his own continuous meditations on the life of the mind and its relation to reality. In addition to this he is also concerned with epistemological and ontological problems found in such ideas.[29] In a similar way, Heidegger had moved away from traditional views of philosophy. Heidegger philosophizes towards original visions of thinking and poeticizing that speak directly to Stevens' own development.[30]

During his early writings (Ideas of Order, 1935 and The Man with the Blue Guitar, 1937) Stevens' concern lies mainly with the problems of epistemology.[31] During this period Stevens is interested in the acts of the mind as it confronts and relates to the world around it. In those poems Stevens experiments with the various possibilities of a new kind of poetry, simulating some parts of Husserl's phenomenology. Here Stevens has similar notions to Husserl's concept of intentionality; the idea of the adequacy of original intuitions and the method of reduction.[32] During this time the main problem in Stevens' poetry was the separation of the mind (imagination) and the world (reality).[33] Much of the poetry

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[29]Ibid., pp. 17-28.

[30]Martin Heidegger, Poetry, Language, Thought, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 229.

[31]Thomas Hines, p. 25.

[32]Ibid., p. 25.

[33]Ibid., pp. 25-26.

is an exploration of what the mind and world can do. In particular Stevens mediates the possible relations that exist between the imagin- ation and reality. He incorporates a method that reduces both the exterior world of "things as they are" and the interior world of mental things (preconceptions, old ideas and old constructs of the imagination) to minimal levels. The reductive method is used in order to equalize both the exterior and the interior and both reality and imagination. To put both polarities on equal footing is done in order that interactions can occur between them.[34] In this way the poet can discover that the imagination can create and sustain itself within its own creations. Furthermore he discovers the necessity of maintaining a balance between the imagination and reality, "the blue guitar" and "things as they are".[35] Stevens' poems that describe reductive and decreative processes are dis- covered to be acts of the mind describing itself.[36] As such, each of these acts make a poem and in this way Stevens begins to develop a new definition of poetry.

The next stage in Stevens' poetry is the movement from epistem- ological problems to ontological problems.[37] At this juncture Stevens begins to reject the division between mind and world. He discovers that the clear perceptions that had become available through the

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[34] J. Hillis Miller, p. 224.

[35] Frank Doggett, Stevens' Poetry of Thought (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1966), p. 3.

[36] Miller, p. 232.

[37] Hines, p. 26.

processes of reduction developed in Ideas of Order (1935) and The Man with the Blue Guitar (1937) are quite inadequate for his aesthetic purpose. As the bridge between subject and object is closed in several of the poems of Parts of a World (1942), the poet discovers a new relation of self and the world.[38] This relation has been explained by comparing each step described in the poems with Heidegger's analysis of Dasein's relation to Being.[39] Heidegger's differentiation between Being and beings may provide a means of explaining Stevens' poems that describe the disclosure of Being as the center and source of both the mind and the world. Furthermore, the poet's sense of Being incorporated into Notes Towards a Supreme Fiction (1942) includes concepts of time and the relation of time to the experience of disclosure. Later Stevens becomes concerned with his sense of Being and his concept of temporality.[40] Heidegger's analysis of the question of Being, the ontological function of language and the relation of ontology and poetry is used to explain the temporal and ontological developments of the later poems of Stevens by Hines.[41] Stevens had included a concept of Being in his aesthetics because he wanted poetry to have a role that was at least equal of philosophy. Stevens defined poetry as "an unofficial view of being" and maintained that "this is a much larger definition of poetry than it"

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[38]Doggett, pp. 76-90; cf. Hines, p. 27.

[39]Hines, p. 27.

[40]Ibid., p. 27.

[41]Ibid., p. 27.

is usual to make".[42]   However, Stevens does not equate poetry with phil-

osophy for he says:

> To define poetry as an unofficial view of being places it in
> contrast with philosophy and at the same time establishes the
> relationship between the two. In philosophy we attempt to
> approach truth through reason. Obviously this is a statement of
> convenience. If we say that in poetry we attempt to approach
> truth through the imagination, this too, is a statement of con-
> venience. We must conceive of poetry as at least the equal of
> philosophy.[43]

Stevens' first volume Harmonium (1923) had provided a starting

point for themes that he explored in later poetry. The first poem of

Ideas of Order (1935) initiated the search for new ideas of order that

is to replace the old ideas of the past. Thus, the ideas of the past

must be purged from the mind. In "Farewell to Florida" we have the

reflections of the tropics where the experiences of an overabundant

reality has overwhelmed the powers of the imagination and left it power-

less.[44] What is to be investigated is the power of the mind and its

relation to reality. In "Farewell to Florida" the poet discovers that

the South is detrimental to the imagination. Here the power of reality

is represented as a female mind which has threatened the poet and his

imagination with oppression. The reality of Florida was like a tyrant.

It is in the South that the female figure of reality had exposed him to

a world which was not his own, a strange and foreign place. Indeed, he

had been controlled by the "mind" of this mindless chaos. The

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[42]Ibid., p. 27.

[43]Wallace Stevens, The Necessary Angel: Essays on Reality and
the Imagination, quoted in Hines, pp. 41-42.

[44]Hines, p. 37.

possibility of the interaction between the poet and his environment has
been taken away. The poet now feels alienated and out of place.
Florida is a possession of the figure of reality. In fact, it is,
indeed, "her South", "her home", "her days" and "her ocean nights".
What the imagination needs is a less complex world in order that it can
deal with a reality that is more than equal to its power. The movement
towards the north and cold climate represents a movement towards free-
dom.[45] Therefore the female reality of the South which had hindered
creativity is to be exchanged for the primitive world of the North
where there is the promise of freedom. That very freedom is experi-
enced as the release of the imagination.

So we can see that the confrontation of the mind with reality
requires the rejection of an overloaded reality of the South. In the
later poems Stevens will change the spatial movement from South to
North in favor of seasonal changes from summer to winter because it is
in time and not in space that both mind and reality change.[46] This
movement from a complex reality to a simplified one is a stripping
away to the thing itself, and the procedure corresponds to Husserl's
process of bracketing in phenomenology. Thus Stevens wishes to clear
the mind of preconceived ideas. From then on, Stevens can proceed to
some notions of possible order. Thus "Academic Discourses" represents
the reduction of all orders. Stevens also reduces all orders in other
poems such as music in "Sad Strains of a Gay Waltz", romantic poetry

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[45]Ibid., p. 39.

[46]Ibid., p. 40.

in "Sailing After Lunch", art in "Dance of the Macabre Mice" and finally religion in "Evening Without Angels". These are some of the preconceptions that preclude original intuition that are to be cleared away.[47] Throughout Ideas of Order Stevens describes the world that is left after the old ideas of order have been thrown out. In this way he clears the mind and reduces both subject and object to simpler and more accessible levels.

In "The Idea of Order at Key West" we have a poem that describes the process of ordering imagination in terms that stress the difference between the idea (the created song) and the sea (physical reality). From the beginning we have the essential separation of the acts of the mind from the objects. The poem describes the impressions of the speaker as he listens to a woman singing by the sea in Florida. The woman is a figure for the imagination who sings "beyond the genius of the sea". She creates an ordered world. The creation of order is an idea that must be achieved in words. These words are concerned with reality as well as with possibilities for opening to reality through which perception takes place. Furthermore, the words are to be concerned with the self. Nonetheless, the spirit of the song is imagination which mediates between self and reality, subject and object. Thus the creative act is a desire for order in the world of the imagination.[48] The poem prescribes and exemplifies the poetic process while at the same time it provides a tentative answer to the question asked in section IV

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[47]Ibid., p. 49.

[48]Ibid., pp. 50-57.

of "Academic Discourse at Havana".[49]

> Is the function of the poet here mere sound,
> Subtler than the ornatest prophecy,
> To stuff the ear?   (PEM, p. 88)[50]

Stevens has qualified his view of poetry and the role of the imagination in "The Idea of Order at Key West". The idea of order that is discovered is the idea of the imagination. Once this is revealed he will proceed to find what the imagination can do.

> She was the single artificer of the world
> In which she sang. And when she sang, the sea
> Whatever self it had, became the self
> That was her song, for she was the maker ....
>
> Oh! Blessed rage for order, pale Ramon,
> The maker's rage to order words of the sea .... (PEM, p. 98)

Thus the poems of _Ideas of Order_ have introduced the idea of a simplified reality. At Key West the images that are brought out are of a reality that do not resemble the tropical world of the South as in _Harmonium_. This is only the sea, the wind and the sky.[51] Stevens proceeds to reduce the _a priori_ of the mind by throwing out orders, beliefs and myths.

In the new volume, _The Man with the Blue Guitar_ (1957) he explores new possibilities as mediator between the self and reality. It marks his turning to a new style.[52] Stevens maintains that "the man with the blue guitar" would say things about reality, about the imagination, their

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[49]Ibid., p. 57.

[50]PEM designates Wallace Stevens, _The Palm at the End of the Mind: Selected Poems and a Play_, ed. Holly Stevens (New York: Vintage Books, 1972), p. 404.

[51]Miller, p. 260.

[52]Ibid., p. 260.

interrelations and his attitudes towards each of these things.[53] Each of

the 33 poems played on the blue guitar (symbol of the imagination) is a

variation on a single theme which is none other than the process of

poetry itself. Poetry is the subject of the poem.

> Poetry is the subject of the poem
> From this the poem issues and
>
> To this returns. Between the two,
> Between issue and return, there is
>
> An absence in reality,
> Things as they are. Or so we say. (PEM, p. 143)

Throughout the series, the blue guitar provides the means of

interacting with "the things as they are" (reality) as well as the means

of distorting these things in the poems. The poetic imagination becomes

conceived as the creative force that had previously provided myths. Now

poetry becomes the potential for remythologization. Poetry is to replace

the religions and the mythical that has been stripped away by abstraction

(the reduction via the imagination). Poetry is to become the secular

equivalent of the desire for belief and order.

> The earth, for us, is flat and bare.
> There are no shadows. Poetry
>
> Exceeding music must take the place
> Of empty heaven and its hymns, ... (PEM, p. 135).

Therefore fresh and new perceptions can now take place through the

imagination's power to "light the world". At first the poem begins with

sun, cloud, earth and sky (reality) and to it the imagination's distor-

tions are added, taking away the sense of reality but adding fresh

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[53]Hines, p. 60.

meaning when the sun turns green, clouds turn red and earth and sky are personified.

> Is it
> An absence for the poem, which acquires
>
> Its true appearances there, sun's green,
> cloud's red, earth feeling, sky that thinks?   (PEM, p. 144)

Stevens sees the great demand and need for a credible fiction that will present reality without distortion, by means of the imagination.[54]

One of the more important statements concerning the potential value of the imagination is found in section XIV where we have the candle whose function is to make clear perception possible. It rests in opposition to the "German chandelier" which symbolizes reason. In addition to the symbol "candle" we have the "blue guitar" which while being played throughout the poem expresses the definition of the imagination as the power of clear sight.

> One says a German chandelier —
> A candle is enough to light the world.
>
> It makes it clear. Even at noon
> It glistens in essential dark.
>
> At night, it lights the fruit and wine,
> The book and bread, things as they are,
>
> In a chiaroscuro where
> One sits and plays the blue guitar.   (PEM, p. 140)

Thus the imagination (blue guitar) clearly defines itself and its potential (candle). The definition is given within its own constructs. Indeed, for Stevens, the imagination itself needs to be imagined.

In section XVIII Stevens hints at the idea of a "credible fiction"

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[54] Ibid., p. 67.

where there will emerge a vision of reality.

> A dream (to call it a dream) in which
> I can believe, in face of the object,
>
> A dream no longer a dream, a thing
> Of things as they are, as the blue guitar. (PEM, p. 142)

Finally the dream is to become transformed into reality. Thus poetry which is the process of the imagination is itself the real.[55]

In "Of Modern Poetry" Stevens states what modern poetry will be in a new age where belief in the script of myth and religion is no longer possible.

> The Poem of the mind in the act of finding
> What will suffice. It has not always had
> To find; the scene was set; it repeated what
> Was in the script.
> Then the theatre was changed
> to something else. Its past was a souvenir. (PEM, p. 174)

Thus the old script, the old myth has to be changed. The past becomes an archaic moment of remembrance. But modern poetry must have a new script — one that is alive.

> It must
> Be the finding of a satisfaction, and may
> Be of a man skating, a woman dancing, a woman
> Combing. The poem of the act of the mind. (PEM, p. 175)

In "The Latest Freed Man" we have the poem where one finds himself as Being-in-the-World where existence precedes essence.[56] What we have is the disclosure of Being. The "freed man" is the one who is "tired of the old descriptions of the world" and "bathes in a mist like a man without a doctrine". Thus the freed man rejects doctrines and in

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[55] Ibid., pp. 59-84.

[56] Ibid., pp. 115-123.

his liberation he experiences the world as it is rather than as it is
mediated. He has become freed of the subject-object dichotomy.
Authenticity is highlighted.

Stevens' sense of Being is further developed in "Yellow After-
noon", "The Hand as Being" and "Extracts from Addresses to the Academy
of Fine Ideas". These poems express Stevens' vision of Being through
mood, discovery and revelation rather than through discourse, dialectic
and logic.[57]

>   the abstraction would
> Be broken and winter would be broken and done;
> And being would be being himself again,
> Being, becoming seeing and feeling and self,
> Black water breaking into reality. (PEM, p. 181)

Again the move away from logic to Being is emphasized elsewhere.

> The mass of meaning. It is three or four
> Ideas or, say, five men or, possibly, six
>
> In the end, these philosophic assassins pull
> Revolvers and shoot each other. One remains.
>
> The mass of meaning becomes composed again.
> He that remains plays on an instrument ....
>
>   that song
>
> Of the assassin that remains and sings
> In the high imagination, triumphantly. (PEM, pp. 181-182)

Furthermore Stevens is saying that the expression of the disclosure of
Being suffices — the unity of Being is a joy.[58] At the end of _Parts_
of the World we have the vision of the goal of poetry, namely, the
expression of the disclosure of Being. This experience according to

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[57] Ibid., pp. 135-137.

[58] Ibid., pp. 135-137.

Stevens might suffice.

> To have satisfied the mind and turn to see,
> (That being as much belief as we may have,)
> And turn to look and say there is no more
> Than this, in this alone I may believe,
> Whatever it may be. (PEM, p. 183)

Again he continues to say:

> What
> One believes is what matters. Ecstatic identities
> Between one's self and the weather and the things
> Of the weather are the belief in one's element,
> The casual reunions, the long-pondered
> Surrenders, the repeated sayings that
> There is nothing more and that it is enough
> To believe in the weather and in the things and men
> Of the weather and in one's self, as part of that
> And nothing more. (PEM, p. 183)

Finally the aesthetics of the poetry of Being comes to a climax in "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction". The characteristics of the disclosure of Being are classified into three "notes" — 1) it must be abstract, 2) it must change, 3) it must give pleasure. The thrust and implication of the "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction" is that the fiction must be abstract beyond, above and at the beginning of our experience. It must be an abstract idea of being which will take in all the meanings that we discover. The fiction must be archetypal as well as a source and initiator of myth and sense. In addition it must change in its abstractions. This process of change is the life of being which requires constant experience. But more important, it must change because change is the condition of perception, vision and imagination. Furthermore, the feelings of change and identity that carries these along gives the pleasure of access to being.[59]

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[59]Ibid., p. 140.

By abstraction Stevens means the power man has in order to separate himself from reality. This means the power to carry the image of the very thing alive and undistorted into the mind. It is the first part of "Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction" that we encounter the fact that the poet should abstract himself from the layers of interpretation which have accumulated over the years on objects in the external world. The poet must throw out what science, mythology, theology and philosophy tell him about the sun and see the sun as the first man saw the sun (in the idea of it). The main act of the imagination is to give a glimpse of the sun as seen in the first idea of it -- "the imagined thing".[60] Or to put the matter in another way, abstraction, for Stevens, is the process of transforming an intuition into the language of poetry.[61] The poem begins with the narrator saying to the young poet that the first step of the poetic process is a description of the processes of reduction and decreation.

> Begin ephebe, by perceiving the idea
> Of this invention, this invented world,
> The inconceivable idea of the sun.

> You must become an ignorant man again
> And see the sun again with an ignorant eye
> And see it clearly in the idea of it. (PEM, p. 207)

Thus the idea of the sun "in its idea" is cleansed of all mythological and religious preconceptions. The constructs of the imagination are cleared away. Once authentic imagination destroys the false, reality is captured in man and the mirror (the Mind) and the invisible becomes

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[60] Miller, pp. 248-249.

[61] Hines, p. 145.

married to the visible.[62] Therefore Stevens can say that for reality,

It must be visible or invisible,
Invisible or visible or both:
A seeing and unseeing in the eye. (PEM, p. 212)

It is Stevens' belief that the poet's task is to disclose the

Being of the thing in itself, in its immediacy. The intuition of the

first idea is the basis for each new creation of the Being of the sun.

Thus Being and the essence of things must be fully created. This cre-

ation for Stevens is cyclical -- it is the cycle of the imagination --

creation, decreation, creation, etc. Each creation is thrown away

because it is no longer alive. It is in need of renewal. The cycle of

the seasons, days and the phases of the moon are used as equivalents

for the cycle of the imagination.

In the first canto of the second part of "Notes Toward a Supreme

Fiction" the gilded seraph lives in mythic time where all acts of cre-

ation are repetitions of the original act of creation. This can be con-

trasted with simple linear time. But none of them is satisfactory as an

explanation of the human experience in the here and the now. Further-

more, we cannot impose permanence on a changing world.

The President ordains the bee to be
Immortal. (PEM, p. 216)

But in reality the bee dies and is survived by the form of the species.

For Stevens the origin of change lies in human consciousness, in the

participation of opposites and in the complementariness of the forces

of creation. Thus according to Stevens, Being in time takes part in the

changes by actively creating fictions. In this way it is not time that

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[62]Miller, p. 250.

is responsible for transformation. To Stevens this explains the relation
of Being to time. Thus there is an interrelation of Being of man and
Being of world within time.[63]

The freshness of transformation is the freshness of a world. It
is our own,

> It is ourselves, the freshness of ourselves,
> And that necessity and that presentation
>
> Are rubbings of a glass in which we peer
> Of these beginning, gay and green, propose
> The suitable amours. Time will write them down. (PEM, p. 224)

The value of any fiction is not simply a question of truth or
reality but aesthetics.[64] Elsewhere Stevens asks if he is less satis-
fied than the angel he created who is satisfied with the joy of flight
in deep space.

Am I that imagine this angel less satisfied? (PEM, p. 231)

Again Stevens asks whether the imagined is equivalent as the joy of the
self.

Is it he or is it I that experience this? (PEM, p. 231)

Indeed the source of joy in creation is fulfillment of Being.[65]

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[63]Cf. "Time is ... the present of God", John Dominic Crossan,
In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus (New York: Harper
& Row, 1973), p. 31.

[64]"The difference between Einstein's relative universe and the
Dream-Time cosmology of the Australian aborigine is not a matter of
truth or falsehood, realism or illusion, progression or regression,
intelligence or stupidity, as the naive realists have claimed. It is
a matter of esthetic choice. Each system produces results unobtainable
to the other; each is closed and exclusive". Joseph Chilton Pearce,
The Crack in the Cosmic Egg: Challenging Constructs of Mind and
Reality, (New York: Julian Press, 1976), p. 14.

[65]Hines, p. 209.

> there is a time
> In which majesty is a mirror of the self:
> I have not but I am and as I am, I am. (PEM, p. 231)

The conditional "as" of the fictive mode ("as I am") can become identical
to Being itself. The sense of joy in creation is fulfillment of Being.
And this is experienced as pleasure. Therefore the creation of the self
that occurs in the creative act itself is an assertion of fulfilled
Being.[66]

In his book, The Sense of an Ending, Frank Kermode maintains that
the basis of pleasure in repetition lies in the fact that it is endless,
that there is no beginning and no ending.[67] However, it may be argued
that the kind of pleasure that one gets from such a cycle is alienated
pleasure. Again, there is no fulfillment here, only the filling of
time. Without the roots of origins and of horizon man has no story, no
sense of self. Stevens maintains that the mind creates fictions wherein
time is again made meaningful with a beginning, a middle and an end.[68]
In this way, the fiction makes sense of the experience of time. For
Stevens the fictions illustrate for us a theory of human time where the
repetition of the process of creation is always possible. In this way
the poet can take pleasure in each completed period of creative
activity because such creation makes time meaningful and satisfactory.[69]

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[66]Ibid., p. 209.

[67]Ibid., p. 209.

[68]Ibid., p. 210.

[69]"It is the view of time as man's future that Jesus opposed in
the name of time God's present, not as eternity beyond us but as advent
within us. Jesus simply took the third commandment seriously: keep
time holy!" Crossan, In Parables, p. 35.

The very essence of Being is heightened in the here and the now and therefore there is no need for a mythic-time to return to in ritual at a certain time of the year. There is no Essence to be abstracted (reasoned) out of Being. There is only being. In the poetry of Being there are no facts, no information. The great homesickness is alleviated by being-poetry. The fictions given to life by the imagination are part of man and part of his real existence. Thus Stevens finds the real to be truly imagined and the imagined to be truly real.[70]   In the "Final Soliloquy of the Interior Paramour", Stevens states that:

The world imagined is the ultimate good.

This is, therefore, the intensest rendezvous
It is in the thought that we collect ourselves,
Out of all the indifference, into one thing: (PEM, p. 367)

Heidegger uses Holderlin in promoting the notion that man "poetically dwells".[71]   For Stevens dwelling is a structure of thought, the world imagined constantly creating.[72]

We say God and the imagination are one ...
How high that highest candle lights the dark.

Out of this same light, out of the central mind,
We make a dwelling in the evening air,
In which being there together is enough.   (PEM, p. 368)

Finally Stevens reaches the heart of the matter in his last poems. In the poem "Not Ideas about the Thing but the Thing Itself" the poet knew he heard a "scrawny cry" from outside which seemed like a sound in his

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[70]Doggett, p. 106.

[71]Heidegger, pp. 213-229.

[72]Doggett, p. 138.

mind. That "scrawny cry" was part of the "colossal sun".

        It was like
A new knowledge of reality. (PEM, p. 388)

Again in "The Sail of Ulysses" Stevens implies the final direction of

his poetry.

    If knowledge and the thing known are one
    So that to know a man is to be
    That man, to know a place is to be
    That place, and it seems to come to that; (PEM, p. 388)

The final testimony in Stevens and in poetry is that Being in its fullest

sense is being fully human. It is an incarnational act in the fullest

sense. Life itself is the poem of man, being what he is and nothing

more. And for himself, Wallace Stevens is the poet of the poetry of

Being.

    After the disappearance of God, Stevens had been left in a world

split between subject and object, imagination and reality. Stevens went

beyond the metaphysical dualism to a view of ontology. He maintained

that all that exists for man is imagination-reality.[73] The unity of

imagination and reality became the central thesis of his later poetry.

The gods returned again but in a different mode. Once again the divine

becomes incarnated in imagination. For Wallace Stevens, God and the

Imagination are one. Stevens' programme consisted in demythologizing

and remythologizing.

    Thus the programme consisted of a re-imagining. A new story or

a new myth replaced the old, and in this way the divine is revitalized

and resurrected. In Stevens, the divine becomes fully incarnated in

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[73]Miller, p. 274.

language-poetry. In the end, Stevens magically re-enters the story of
the gods and becomes the story himself. The difference between the
theology of an early Church and the Being-discourse poetics of a Wallace
Stevens is that the latter had encountered the results of a critical
philosophy while the former's starting point was pre-critical.

Theology has shifted from the sacred story (mythical/Gospel/
St. Augustine, etc.) to the mundane story (theoretical/scholasticism)
and finally, in modernity, to an alienated story (critique/death of God/
secularity). Today theology stands or falls within the dialectic of a
"hermeneutics of suspicion" and a "hermeneutics of recovery". The prob-
lem with a "hermeneutics of suspicion" is that it suspects the story to
be illusory, an untruth. In this mode, story becomes false conscious-
ness. On the other hand, a "hermeneutics of recovery" wishes to recover
a lost truth but all too often the truth is articulated in an alien
language that is so foreign that the story no longer convinces us. The
oneness between language and reality cannot be recovered but can only
be re-experienced. Dead metaphors are dead metaphors. You cannot
revive a dead metaphor. What is needed is a new metaphor. A story that
is experienced as a dead story cannot come alive again by recognizing
its truths. A new story must be written. Wallace Stevens had cleared
away the debris of old metaphors and in doing so he was able to open
himself once again to the transcendence of poetry and be seized by it.
For Stevens, the story-teller was the Imagination incarnated by a Being-
poetry without which the story could have no life. In this way the
story is full of grace. Therefore, in a sense, we can say that Stevens
was not a poet but that he became poetry. The poet is the vision itself.

As creator, he contains his creation yet his creation contains him. All
the elements in the vision are one. Stevens' ultimate vision is the
reconciliation of imagination and reality in a theory of the identity of
poetry and life whose continuous development sustains the identity.[74]
For Stevens, this is all that it can ever be and it suffices because it
is.

A theology of story must begin with the post-critical transcenden-
tal philosophy.[75] In one sense it is a return towards a confessional
theology but a confessional theology that is post-critical. It has to
begin in the method itself. It begins in medias res, in the story of
theology itself. Story is the embodiment of vision. To whatever vision
one commits himself, he can simply say — "It's my story". But if the
vision is universal (true vision usually is — it is governed by uni-
versal intent), then — "It is our story", humanity's story. Further-
more, because the story "to be" is a story that includes God, it must
therefore be theological and not merely psychological (e.g. psycho-
analysis consists of "diary-making"). Therefore a theology of story is
the theological story itself.[76]

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[74]Ibid., pp. 275-276.

[75]Charles Winquist, The Transcendental Imagination: An Essay in
Philosophical Theology (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), p. 90.
Here the author examines the ontological significance of language and
the meaning of theological understanding. By doing this the task of
philosophical theology becomes a critique of the possibility of doing
theology.

[76]Because of our sense of relativity, perhaps theology should focus
on the path to horizon rather than some absolute horizon. I am suggesting
perhaps the call for a meta-theology or to use Malcolm Spicer's term,
"theological theology". See Malcolm Spicer, "The Trinity: A Psycho-
logical God", Science Religieuses/Studies in Religion, Vol. 5, No. 2,
1975, pp. 117-133.

The "coming to story" is basically the same as coming to insight or coming to discovery. The cognitive processes or the dialectic of consciousness operate in all cases. A story is vision and so is an insight or a discovery. Like a scientific discovery or a philosophical insight, the "coming to story" or the process of autobiography is based on the intentional operations of ordering manifold elements into a coherent "picture". The heuristic movement towards a "metaphor of the self" is like the heuristic movement towards "model formation" in science or the <u>Weltanschauung</u> in the humanist. Therefore, by examining the operations of method we can come to a better understanding of the structure of story in terms of a narrative. As there is in experience, so too, is there a narrative quality to scientific and the logical method.

HORIZON AND THE PERSONAL IN METHOD: LONERGAN AND POLANYI

Historically the scientific enterprise has had basically three shifts of horizon. These shifts have moved from a classical notion of reason (metaphysical/pre-critical) to modern reason (empirical/critical) and finally to contemporary reason (transcendental/post-critical). The contemporary notion of reason and science is exemplified in the works of Bernard Lonergan (Insight: A Study of Human Understanding) and Michael Polanyi (Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy).[77]

This last shift requires the inquirer to go beyond the empirical to the source of the empirical, namely, to the procedures of the human mind and thus reveal a pattern of operations which is present in all acts of knowing. For Lonergan, this pattern is an integral heuristic structure and the conception of reason is the "transcendental method". While classical science is grounded in metaphysics and modern science in empirical sense data, the transcendental notion is grounded in cognitional theory. Again, the shift is from reason in the classical sense of logos to the modern sense of logic to the transcendental sense of method. Insofar as reason understands the eternal truths in

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[77]For the analysis of the three shifts of horizon, see Joseph Kroger, "Theology and the Notion of Reason and Science: A Note on a Point of Comparison in Lonergan and Polanyi", The Journal of Religion, Vol. 56, No. 2, 1976, pp. 157-161.

the <u>logos</u> of classical science, objectivity is the result of the self-evident and necessary truths. But according to the <u>logic</u> of modern science, objectivity is the result of immediate sense experience (observations) and inferences (hypotheses). However, when conceived as <u>method</u> in the transcendental sense, objectivity results from the authentic subjectivity of being attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible. Thus Lonergan speaks of <u>method</u> as reason's appropriation of one's own conscious and intentional operations. If medieval theology is understood as reason illuminated by faith, contemporary theology can be conceived as <u>method</u> illuminated by faith.

On the side of Polanyi, his own "fiduciary programme" undoubtedly establishes the transcendental notion of reason. Polanyi's ideal of science as "personal knowledge" recognizes that, behind all formal demonstrations and specifiable procedures, there lies the informal and tacit operations of the scientist's own mind. This pattern of cognitive acts is what Polanyi calls the "structure of tacit knowing". This conception of reason is post-critical. Thus Polanyi believes that the traditional separation of faith and reason is a fallacy. Therefore reason in a post-critical age is a shift from both the classical and modern formulations to the ground of all formulations, that is, the informal and tacit operations of the human mind. Thus, according to Polanyi, objectivity in science is the result of neither metaphysical certainty nor empirical observation but rather of responsible subjectivity. This consists of the personal and passionate commitment to inquiry driven by devotion to a universal demand. What is crucial in Polanyi's position is his insistence that we must once and for all

recognize that belief is the source of all knowledge and that any inquiry, scientific or theological, rests on shared beliefs and that no intelligence can operate outside such a fiduciary framework. Such a framework can claim no evidence for its beliefs since it operates in a tacit dimension. Such are the operations of doing theology, science and "coming to story".[78]

Lonergan's intention is to ground a philosophy that is critical, methodical and comprehensive. Lonergan seems to accept the critical ideal of science inasmuch as he equates knowledge with the content of explicit formulation and reflective criticism.[79] Lonergan has the intention of critically examining propositions, thoughts and methods. Lonergan reflects the critical ideal of objective scientific knowledge when he says that:

> It is the prior and enveloping drive that carries cognitional process from sense and imagination to understanding, from understanding to judgement to the complete context of correct judgements that is named knowledge.[80]

He continues to say:

> By moving man to reflect, to seek the unconditioned, to grant unqualified assent only to the unconditioned, it prevents him from being content with hearsay and legend, with unverified hypotheses and untested theories.[81]

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[78]Thomas A. Langford, "Michael Polanyi and the Task of Theology", The Journal of Religion, Vol. 46, 1966, pp. 45-55. Also Richard Gelwick, "Discovery and Theology", The Scottish Journal of Theology, Vol. 28, No. 4, 1975, pp. 301-322.

[79]For the comparison between Lonergan and Polanyi, I have made great use of the article, Joseph Kroger, "Polanyi and Lonergan on Scientific Method", Philosophy Today, Vol. 21, No. 1/4, 1977, pp. 2-20.

[80]Bernard J. F. Lonergan, Insight: A Study of Human Understanding (London: Darton Longman and Todd, 1957), p. 348.

[81]Ibid., p. 348.

For Lonergan, cognition is a process of mental activity whereby knowledge is attained through two stages. First, understanding what one experiences and secondly, making a judgement concerning what one understands. Therefore it is a twofold process of explication and criticism. One experiences an assortment of sensory data and then seeks to come to an understanding through the articulation and formulation of the data. But this is not knowledge because for Lonergan, knowledge does not rest at the level of articulation. The articulation and formulation of the experience in question must meet critical reflection. A judgement has to be passed. For Lonergan, as long as one is not making a judgement he is merely thinking and does not have knowledge. Lonergan says that:

> Concepts and theories are the products of insight and have to be checked against the data .... The process of checking reveals in human knowledge, beyond experience and understanding, a third distinct, constitutive level that is both self-authenticating and decisive. It is self-authenticating: rational reflection demands and reflective understanding grasps a virtually unconditioned; and once that grasp has occurred, one cannot be reasonable and yet fail to pass judgement. Again, the third level is alone decisive: until I judge, I am merely thinking; once I judge, I know.[82]

Therefore Lonergan leans towards the objectives of science, namely, the move towards clarity, explicitness and objectivity.[83] In addition to this, Lonergan maintains that:

> ... the guiding orientation of the scientist is the orientation of inquiring intelligence, the orientation that of its nature is a pure detached, disinterested desire simply to know. For there is an intellectual desire, an Eros of the mind. Without it, there would arise no questioning, no inquiry, no wonder. Without it, there would be no real meaning for such phrases as scientific disinterestedness, scientific detachment, scientific impartiality.[84]

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[82]Ibid., p. 340.

[83]Kroger, p. 4.

[84]Lonergan, p. 74.

In contrast to Lonergan, Polanyi takes a stand against the critical ideal that maintains that knowledge is that which is explicitly formulated, critically established and objectively verified. Polanyi rejects the identification of knowledge with what is explicit, articulate and formalized. Polanyi's theory of knowledge rests on his acknowledgement of tacit operations that occur in human activity. According to Polanyi, no knowledge can be fully explicit. In fact we always know more than we can tell and furthermore reason can never be fully critical. As such, all knowledge is rooted in the structure of tacit operations. This fiduciary framework is unspecifiable. It cannot be grounded or reduced objectively. Scientific procedures rests on beliefs and unspecifiable axioms. In contrast to Lonergan's belief in a clear, explicit and objective ideal that can be critically grounded, Polanyi insists that science has procedures that are often vague and its method seems guided by intuitions based on a tradition which is tacitly accepted. Furthermore Polanyi maintains that the attitude of the scientific mind consists of commitment rather than that of intellectual detachment. Knowledge is rooted in a framework of commitment which is a ground structure of tacit operations. Thus against Lonergan's belief in a scientific state of detachment, Polanyi maintains that knowledge is grounded in a structure of commitment. Thus science rests on unspecifiable beliefs and axioms that are upheld through passionate commitment. Thus the difference here is between the question of critical exigence and post-critical exigence as well as the difference between scientific attitudes.

On the question of faith and knowledge, Lonergan maintains that

knowledge is immanently generated. This is done by the dynamic unfold-
ing of the pure and unrestricted desire to know. As such, knowledge is
gained at the level of judgement and this judgement rests not upon
belief but upon experience and understanding. Lonergan gives priority
to reason over faith.

Polanyi, on the other hand, maintains that "we must accredit our
own judgement as the paramount arbiter of all our intellectual per-
formances".[85] He states that "we must now recognize belief once more as
the source of knowledge".[86] Furthermore he summarizes his thesis as
such:

> Tacit assent and intellectual passions, the sharing of an
> idiom and of a cultural heritage, affiliation to a like-minded
> community: such are the impulses which shape our vision of
> the nature of things on which we rely for our mastery of things.
> No intelligence, however critical or original can operate out-
> side such a fiduciary framework.[87]

According to Polanyi, the heuristic movement towards discovery is deter-
mined by unspecifiable powers of thought. These suppositions which
guide the inquiry are not explicit but nonetheless ground the thrust of
the inquiry. This personal coefficient is upheld in confidence. With-
out it there would be no discovery. This tacit coefficient is unformal-
izable. Furthermore, since we uphold a knowledge that is not specifi-
able or explicit, it can only be held in faith. Therefore knowing is

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[85] Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical
Philosophy (New York: Harper Torchbooks, Harper & Row, 1964), p. 265.
The judgement occurs tacitly.

[86] Ibid., p. 266.

[87] Ibid., p. 266.

grounded on a prior act of belief. Thus for Polanyi faith is prior to reason.

These differences between Lonergan and Polanyi can be explained by the fact that they both have a different starting point insofar as each tries to ground his theory of knowledge on a certain kind of human mental activity. Lonergan's starting point is his theory of cognition whereas Polanyi's theory of knowledge is derived from his theory of consciousness. Analyzing cognition and analyzing consciousness leads to two different viewpoints concerning the structure of inquiry. Lonergan tends to emphasize the rational aspect of inquiry while Polanyi leans towards the unconscious element as the important aspect of inquiry.

According to Lonergan when we come to know about anything (common sense, physics, philosophy, etc.) we construct a theory to explain the data after we have attended to the data. Next we make a judgement as to whether the theory is correct and finally in making the decision we act accordingly, that is, responsibly. Thus the principal method is to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible. This process of differentiation and the heightening of mental activity is conscious and intentional. This is the way that Lonergan upholds the ideal of clarity, explicitness and objectivity as the method of inquiry.

According to Polanyi, however, the inquiry is intentional, but it is not entirely conscious. While Lonergan explicates an inquiry that is conscious, Polanyi asserts that the inquiry relies on a tacit dimension that cannot be specified. According to Polanyi, consciousness consists of two kinds of awareness: focal awareness and subsidiary awareness. Focal awareness is that awareness by which we attend to particularities.

Subsidiary awareness is that awareness upon which we rely as a clue to

the meaning of the object of our focal awareness.[88] Thus in an act of

tacit knowing we attend from something (subsidiary awareness upon parts

of the whole which act as clues to the meaning of the whole) for the

purpose of attending to something else (focal awareness). Thus "dwell-

ing" in the unspecifiable and unformalized subsidiary clues that guide

him "intuitively", the inquirer attends to the problem at hand and is

led along the way to discovery. Thus Polanyi identifies the tacit

dimension as being operative in all levels of human activity.[89]

Polanyi thus emphasizes the ambiguous and unformalized procedures, held

in faith, to be of great importance, for it is these procedures upon

which we depend in the knowing process. However, there is a similarity

to Polanyi's tacit dimension in Lonergan's notion of the transcendental.

Lonergan says:

> ... transcendentals are contained in questions prior to the
> answers. They are the radical intending that moves us from
> ignorance to knowledge. They are a priori because they go beyond
> what we know to seek what we do not know yet. They are unrestricted
> because answers are never complete and so only give rise to still
> further questions. They are comprehensive because they intend the
> unknown whole or totality of which our answers reveal only part. So
> intelligence takes us beyond experiencing to ask what and why and
> how and what for. Reasonableness takes us beyond the answers of
> intelligence to ask whether the answers are true and what they mean
> really is so. Responsibility goes beyond fact and desire and
> possibility to discern what truly is good and what only apparently
> is good. So if we objectify the content of intelligent intending
> we form the transcendental concept of the intelligible. If we

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[88] Michael Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension (New York: Doubleday &
Co., Anchor Books, 1967), pp. 9-10.

[89] Michael Polanyi, Science, Faith and Society (Chicago: The
University of Chicago Press, 1964), pp. 21-63.

objectify the content of reasonable intending we form the trans-
cendental concepts of the true and the real. If we objectify the
content of responsible intending we get the transcendental concept
of value, of the truly good.[90]

Polanyi himself argues that there are unaccountable elements in science
when he says:

> Let me start by recalling that even a writer like Kant, so
> powerfully bent on strictly determining the rules of pure reason,
> occasionally admitted that into all acts of judgement there
> enters, and must enter, a personal decision which cannot be
> accounted for by any rules. Kant says that no system of rules
> can prescribe the procedure by which the rules themselves are to
> be applied. There is an ultimate agency which, unfettered by any
> explicit rules, decides on the subsumption of a particular
> instance under any general rule or a general concept. And of
> this Kant says only that it 'is what constitutes our so-called
> mother-wit' (Critique of Pure Reason, A 133). Indeed at another
> point he declares that this faculty, indispensable to the exer-
> cise of any judgement, is quite inscrutable. He says that the
> way our intelligence forms and applies the schema of a class to
> particulars 'is so deeply hidden in the human soul that we shall
> hardly guess the secret trick that Nature here employs'.[91]

Polanyi continues to ask how

> One may wonder how a critique of pure reason could accept the
> operations of such a powerful mental agency, exempt from any analy-
> sis, and make no more than a few scattered references to it. And
> one may wonder too that generations of scholars have left such an
> ultimate submission of reason to unaccountable decisions unchal-
> lenged. Perhaps both Kant and his successors instinctively pre-
> ferred to let such sleeping monsters lie, for fear that, once
> awakened, they might destroy their fundamental conception of know-
> ledge. For once you face up to the ubiquitous controlling position
> of unformalizable mental skills, you do meet difficulties for the
> justification of knowledge that cannot be disposed of within the
> framework of rationalism.[92]

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[90] Bernard Lonergan, Method in Theology (New York: Herder &
Herder, 1973), pp. 11-12.

[91] Michael Polanyi, Knowing and Being: Essays by Michael Polanyi,
ed. Marjorie Grene (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974),
p. 105.

[92] Ibid., p. 106.

The transcendental method and tacit knowing goes behind the
scientific ideal to the subject himself as "the source of ground of all
objectifications, and find in the structure and operations of 'insight'
and 'discovery' respectively a common foundation upon which all know-
ledge rests".[93] Lonergan and Polanyi both maintain that insight and
discovery involves a strenuous effort while at the same time occurs
spontaneously. There is a paradox here since inspiration comes from
effort yet no amount of effort can produce inspiration.[94] The problem
can be posed in another way — How do we acquire insight when we do not
know what we are looking for? Lonergan and Polanyi emphasize the anti-
cipatory knowledge or the heuristic thrust. Lonergan states that:

> Of themselves heuristic structures are empty. They antici-
> pate a form that is to be filled ... whether one likes it or not,
> heuristic structures and canons of method constitute an a priori.
> They settle in advance the general determinations, not merely of
> the activities of knowing but also of the content to be known.[95]

While Lonergan acknowledges the presence of anticipatory powers of the
mind, Polanyi justifies our reliance upon them. He maintains that when
we dwell in our clues and confidently rely on them, then we are guided
when we integrate them. When this occurs insight comes about. Thus,

> In science the process of guessing starts when the notice
> feels first attracted to science and is then attracted further
> towards a certain field of problems. The guesswork involves
> the assessment of the young person's own yet largely undis-
> closed abilities, and of a scientific material, yet uncollected
> or even unobserved, to which he may later successfully apply
> his abilities. It involves the sensing of hidden gifts in

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[93]Kroger, p. 12.

[94]Ibid., p. 13.

[95]B. Lonergan, _Insight_, pp. 104-105.

himself and hidden facts in nature from which the two in combina-
tion, will spring one day his ideas that are to guide him to dis-
covery. It is characteristic of the process of scientific con-
jecture that it can guess, as in this case, the several consti-
tutive elements of a coherent sequence — even though each step
guessed at a time can be justified only by the success of the
further unguessed steps which it will eventually combine to a
final solution .... In order to guess a series of such steps, an
intimation of approaching nearer towards a solution must be
received at every step. There must be sufficient foreknowledge
of the whole solution to guide conjecture with reasonable prob-
ability in making the right choice at each consecutive stage.
The process resembles the creation of a work of art which is
firmly guided by a fundamental vision of the final whole even
though that whole can be definitely conceived only in terms of
its yet undiscovered particulars — with the remarkable differ-
ence, however, that in natural science the final whole lies not
within the powers of our shaping, but must give a true picture
of a hidden pattern of the outer world.[96]

For Lonergan, the method is an "integral heuristic structure"
because there are anticipatory elements that are operative yet it cannot
be known explicitly. These operations progress through cumulative
moments of differentiation rising to a final act of grasping the uncon-
ditional. Thus knowledge, grounded in the subject, is arrived at
through the operations of unformalizable procedures immanent in the
subject. Lonergan maintains that "the questions we answer are few
compared to the questions that await an answer".[97]

For Polanyi, the bridge that ties together the question and the
answer is the structure of tacit knowing. We rely upon anticipatory
knowledge without being able to specify that knowledge. Focal and sub-
sidiary knowledge are integrated in the act of tacit knowing. Accord-
ing to Polanyi, we comprehend a thing by dwelling in our subsidiary

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[96]M. Polanyi, Science, Faith and Society, p. 32.

[97]B. Lonergan, Insight, p. 477.

awareness of its particulars. By integrating those particulars as clues
or guides to a focal awareness we come to know a thing. It is the
unspecifiable inner conditions that guide the inquirer to the solution
of a problem.[98]

Lonergan furthermore maintains that there is an isomorphism
between what one seeks to know and what is known. Thus the structure of
knowing is isomorphic with the structure of the known.[99] Lonergan's
cognitional theory becomes metaphysics. Here philosophy, as free self-
understanding begins as "an understanding of all understanding to a
basic understanding of all that can be understood".[100] Hence "meta-
physics is derived from the known structure of one's knowing".[101] If
inquiry is an act of intentionality or a movement towards horizon, that
horizon must be articulated as the intention of the knowing subject in
the process of doing the knowing. Therefore metaphysics as horizon
underpins an ontology of method. Lonergan states that the notion of
being

> ... underpins all cognitional contents ... penetrates all
> cognitional contents. It is the supreme heuristic notion.
> Prior to every content, it is the notion of the to-be-known
> through that content. As each content emerges, the 'to-be-
> known through the content' passes without residue into the
> 'known through the content'. Some blank in universal anti-
> cipation is filled in, not merely to end that element of

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[98]Richard Gelwick, The Way of Discovery: An Introduction to the
Thought of Michael Polanyi (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977),
pp. 61-64.

[99]B. Lonergan, Insight, p. 399.

[100]Ibid., p. xxviii.

[101]Ibid., p. xxix.

anticipation, but also to make the filler a part of the partici-
pated. Hence, prior to all answers, the notion of being is the
notion of the totality to be known through all answers. But
once all answers are reached, the notion of being becomes the
notion of the totality known through all answers.[102]

Therefore the "God ahead" is the full and final anticipation of the

unrestricted desire to know. As such, the notion of horizon of "future-

anticipated" is a hermeneutical key to a theology of story.

As with Polanyi, the hermeneutical key is grounded in the view

of the "question" as epistemology. In philosophy a discrepancy exists

between the search for truth and the truth itself. But if we follow

Polanyi the question or the kind of groping, which constitutes the

recognition or anticipation of an answer must be included in our epis-

temology. Polanyi makes the assertion that "we know more than we can

tell".[103] This refers to our awareness of unspecifiable elements which

serve as a heuristic guide in the anticipatory process by which we come

to the recognition of a coherent pattern. This nexus of unformalizable

procedures is part of the epistemological foundation. As such, know-

ledge is included in the questions asked that leads to further questions.

For Lonergan, the unrestricted desire to know is the notion of being.

The very activity of being is constituted by a past that we dwell in

(Polanyi) and acts as a guide to future anticipations (Lonergan).

Therefore reason in the contemporary mode of method contains the

elements of past (the push of the question), present (the intention-

ality of the subject) and the future (the pull of horizon). Therefore,

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[102]Ibid., p. 356.

[103]M. Polanyi, The Tacit Dimension, p. 4.

method is structured like a narrative. Dwelling in the past and anti-
cipating the future is the narrative of being which to Lonergan is the
unrestricted desire to know. Lonergan maintains that "it is one and
the same thing to understand what being is and to understand what God
is".[104] In this way history is story. It is the unfoldment of the
narration of being. Thus history is the narrative disclosure of God
and is articulated as theology when the narration is sacred (when
history and myth are identical) or mundane (when history and myth are
separated). Thus the separation of history from myth is the movement
from gospel and patristic thinking to scholastic thinking, hence, from
myth to theory.

In Wallace Stevens the reverse occurred whereby he sought to
bridge the dualism between God and imagination to arrive at a vision of
the oneness of things. Stevens returned to a view that life is poetry
and that this poetry is not only the interplay between God and imagin-
ation but that it clearly articulates that very ontological fact. The
method that Stevens used to achieve this poetic vision of "things as
they are" is the method of metaphoric utterances (live metaphors are
uttered while dead metaphors are recited). Thus to appreciate "method
as metaphor" we need, first, to examine the theory of metaphor.

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[104]B. Lonergan, _Insight_, p. 658.

THEOPOETICS OF METAPHOR AND MYTH

The theory of metaphor has been handed down to us from ancient
Greek rhetoricians. In fact, in Aristotle's Poetics we find that a
metaphor is "the application to a thing of a name that belongs to some-
thing else, the transference taking place from genus to species, from
species to species, or proportionally".[105] In his Rhetoric a metaphor
is defined along the lines of a comparison. Thus a comparison is an
expanded form of metaphor.[106] From there Cicero and Quintilian main-
tained that a metaphor is an abridged comparison. Thus according to
the ancient rhetoricians, a figure of speech, where one word was sub-
stituted for another, was used to fill a semantic gap or to embellish
discourse and in this way made it more pleasing. Furthermore, since
we have more ideas than can be matched by words to express them, the
point of the rhetoricians was to stretch the significance of the words
beyond their immediate use. Furthermore, the ancients believed that
the use of figurative words may seduce an audience. Thus the whole
strategy of the use of figurative words reflected the general function
of rhetoric, namely, that it was used for persuasion. Thus metaphor
was a rhetoric figure of speech whereby a figurative word was

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[105]Quoted in Paul Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory: Discourse
and the Surplus of Meaning (Fort Worth: The Texas Christian University
Press, 1976), p. 47.

[106]Ibid., pp. 47-48.

substituted for an absent literal word because the word bore a resemblance to the other word.

Paul Ricoeur[107] has schematized six propositions which are the presuppositions of classical rhetoric: 1) "metaphor is a trope, a figure of speech that concerns denomination", 2) "metaphor represents the extension of the meaning of a name through deviation from the literal meaning of words", 3) "the reason for this deviation is resemblance", 4) this function of resemblance is to ground the substitution of a figurative meaning of a word in place of the literal meaning, 5) this substitution does not create any semantic innovation, 6) a metaphor does not give any new information about reality.

The above six presuppositions have been called into question by contemporary literary critics such as I. A. Richards, Max Black, Monroe Beardsley, Colin Turbayne and Philip Wheelwright.

The first proposition is called into question simply because a metaphor is a phenomenon of predication and not of denomination since a metaphor makes sense only in the context of a sentence or utterance rather than a word. Therefore Ricoeur points out that we should not speak of a metaphoric use of a word but rather speak of a metaphoric utterance.[108] Therefore, simply, a metaphor is the result of the tension between two terms in a metaphoric utterance.[109]

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[107]Ibid., p. 49.

[108]Ibid., p. 50; also Paul Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor: Multidisciplinary Studies of the Creation of Meaning in Language (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), p. 65.

[109]Paul Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 247; see also Interpretation Theory, p. 50.

The second proposition of classical rhetoric is incorrect because
the tension in a metaphoric utterance does not occur between the two
terms but rather between two opposed interpretations of the utterances.
As Ricoeur points out, it is "the conflict between these two interpreta-
tions that sustains the metaphor".[110] Absurdity occurs only if the
utterance is interpreted literally. A literal interpretation results in
a contradiction of terms but the "metaphoric twist" allows a transform-
ation of meaning to occur by which we make "sense" of the utterance.

The third proposition maintained that deviation of meaning rested
on the notion of resemblance. But in a metaphoric statement we have
terms that do not go together, in fact, the metaphor is a "category
mistake". By this "calculated error", a new and previously unnoticed
relation of meaning springs up between the two contradictory terms.

Furthermore, according to the ancient rhetoricians a trope was
the simple substitution of one word for another but it could not account
for the fact that the tension between the literal interpretation and
the metaphoric interpretation on the level of the sentence results in
the emergence of a new creation of meaning. Therefore, what occurs is
a semantic innovation which does not exist in an already established
language. This semantic innovation comes only from "live" metaphors,
not "dead" metaphors.[111]

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[110]Ibid., p. 50.

[111]"... a metaphor is an instantaneous creation, a semantic
innovation which has no status in already established language and
which only exists because of the attribution of an unusual or unexpected
predicate". P. Ricoeur, Interpretation Theory, p. 52.

Finally we can say that "tension" metaphors are not translatable and that furthermore it does not offer us new information but tells us something "new" about reality.[112]

From here we can proceed to examine the parables of Jesus from the point of view of the tension theory of metaphor. In this way, Jesus became a precursor of contemporary writers and poets as paraboler.

For centuries, beginning in the New Testament and up to modern times the parables of Jesus were treated as allegories. They were seen as mysterious stories of which every element in the story referred to something other than itself. To interpret the parable as such one needed a key to identify the various elements in the story. By possessing the key of interpretation, an exegete could demystify and unravel the inner meaning of the parable. Otherwise the parable remained an inaccessible mystery.

It was Adolf Jülicher (Die Gleichnisreden Jesu) who maintained that Jesus' parables were not allegories. In distinguishing between allegory and parable, he maintained that the parables of Jesus were parables, not allegories and sought to understand the parables as a literary entity. Basically Jülicher argued that the parables are not mysterious and foreign but rather vivid simple pictures of everyday life. Taking his lead from Aristotle, Jülicher argued that the basic element of a parable was a comparison which for allegories there were

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[112]"This tension guarantees the very transference of meaning and gives poetic language its characteristic of semantic 'plus-value', its capacity to be open towards new aspects, new dimensions, new horizons of meaning". P. Ricoeur, The Rule of Metaphor, p. 250.

many comparisons. Accordingly, Jülicher maintained that the single point of comparison of a parable was a general universally applicable religious or moral principle.[113] Thus the parable is a pedagogical device.

Paul Feibig (The Parables of Jesus in the Light of the Rabbinic Parables of the New Testament Period, 1912) maintained that rabbinical parables stood closer to Jesus in cultural proximity than Aristotle's categories. Furthermore, he maintained that they were closer in style to Jesus' literary form and function and that they contain metaphors.[114] Later scholars (Cadoux, Dodd, Jeremias and Linnemann) maintained that the parables of Jesus were not intended to teach some ethical truth applicable for all times (which was Jülicher's thesis) but that each parable must be set in the ministry of Jesus or, they must reconstruct the specific situation in which a parable was first uttered to correctly interpret it.[115]

Recently Dan Via[116] has attempted to examine the parables as works of literature. He maintains that parables, unlike allegories,

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[113]Madeleine Boucher, The Mysterious Parable: A Literary Study (The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 6, Washington: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1977); p. 4. Also Norman Perrin, Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom: Symbol and Metaphor in New Testament Interpretation (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), pp. 92-95.

[114]N. Perrin, Jesus and the Language of the Kingdom, pp. 95-96. Here metaphor is understood in terms of the substitution theory.

[115]M. Boucher, p. 8.

[116]Dan Otto Via, Jr., The Parables: Their Literary and Existential Dimension (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), p. 217.

have a coherent structure. By this he means that the elements of the
parable relate to each other while in the case of allegories the
elements would relate to an outside text. Thus, for Via, parables are
aesthetic objects that stand on their own. In this way parables are
"autonomous", that is, they are independent of the author, the readers,
philosophical thoughts and society. As an art form, the parables are
autotelic. They are an end in themselves. They are not to be inter-
preted along the lines of what the author intended (intentional fall-
acy) or how they affect the reader (affective fallacy).

Since the parables are basically autonomous, Via maintains that
they should be detached from their setting in the ministry of Jesus.
From this point of view Via criticizes the historical method of Dodd
and Jeremias. Therefore Via believes that the best interpretative
framework should be along existential and secular lines. Finally the
aestheticness of a parable gives it the possibility of becoming an
"event".[117]

In his critique of aesthetic consciousness, Hans-Georg Gadamer
maintains that if we stop viewing a work of art as art and see it as
world, then art is not sense-perception but knowledge. This is because
as we encounter a work of art we become present. In fact, a work of
art puts a question to us — it interrogates us. Thus as in Polanyi
the question is knowledge or world.[118] When we encounter a great work

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[117]Ibid., pp. 88-107; M. Boucher, p. 9.

[118]The quest always begins with the "guiding" question which
serves as the foundation of the knowing process.

of art, by entering its world we do not leave home but "come home".
The artist has really said — This is so! Art reveals being. Further-
more, by being autonomous, a work of art mediates knowledge in a deep
sense — it is truly shared.[119]

By comparing art to a game Gadamer maintains that a work of art
is viewed as a dynamic thing. Here the position of a subjective-
centered aesthetic is transcended. The traditional subject-object
scheme is inadequate in understanding a work of art. Thus the conse-
quence of this thinking is that we begin to view art as the subject
itself and we are its object. In this way art addresses a person in
an encounter and announces Being.[120] Thus if we view parables, with
Via, as aesthetic experiences, we can say that a parable does not make
a point. Rather it seizes us and we participate in the parable. Thus
we do not get the point of the parable — we are the point.[121]

Via also extends the scope of parables to narratives by examin-
ing parables as metaphors extended to narratives. Thus by seeing
parables as stories, Via opts for literary criticism as the starting
point for interpreting parables.

But it is John Dominic Crossan that sees parables not simply as
stories but as poetic metaphors.[122] He states that metaphor can appear

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[119]Hans-Georg Gadamer, _Truth and Method_ (New York: The Seabury
Press, 1975), pp. 59-90.

[120]Martin Heidegger, _Poetry, Language, Thought_, pp. 15-87.

[121]Sallie M. TeSelle, "Parable, Metaphor and Theology", _The
Journal of the American Academy of Religion_, Vol. 42, No. 1, 1974, p. 632.

[122]John Dominic Crossan, _In Parables_, pp. 10-16.

as either parable or myth. The distinction is that in a parable we may have "imaginary gardens with real toads in them" while in myth we may have imaginary gardens with imaginary toads in them.[123] The metaphor is appropriate for a parable tells a story which on the surface level is probable in everyday life while a myth tells a story which is improbable on both levels. In addition, Crossan insists that the function of metaphor is "to illustrate information about the metaphor's referent" and "to create participation in the metaphor's referent".[124]

Parables, then, are stories, the kinds that set the familiar in an unfamiliar way. As such we are moved to see the ordinary world in an extraordinary way. Sallie M. TeSelle tells us that:

> The world of the parables, then includes, it is, both dimensions -- the secular and the religious, our world and God's love. It is not that the parable points to the unfamiliar, but that it includes the unfamiliar within its boundaries. The unfamiliar (the Kingdom of God) is the context, the interpretative framework for understanding life in the world. We are not taken out of this world when we enter the world of a parable but we find ourselves in a world that is itself two-dimensional, a world in which the "religious" dimension comes to the "secular" and re-forms it.[125]

By contrasting parable with myth in the context of story, Crossan maintains that parables subvert world. The difference between myth as story and parable as story is that myth establishes world while parable subverts world. Thus Crossan states that "to live in parable means to dwell in the tension of myth and parable".[126]

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[123]Ibid., p. 15.

[124]Ibid., p. 14.

[125]Sallie M. TeSelle, "Parable, Metaphor and Theology", p. 632.

[126]John Dominic Crossan, The Dark Interval: Towards a Theology of Story (Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications, 1975), p. 60.

Crossan has identified the tension in parables as being opera-
tive in the plot-structure. This plot-structure allows the story-line
to move in a familiar way until the unexpected occurs. Thus the ten-
sion is between the familiar and expected element of the parable-story
and the unfamiliar and unexpected ending. Thus we have basically two
plots. First we have a real life situation that we anticipate accord-
ing to the norms of the culture. Next the plot unfolds into the
unfamiliar. Thus the parable is structured narratively as a tension
between what is expected and the unexpected that actually takes place.
It is the tension that occurs between two contradictory sub-plots that
makes the parable a metaphor. The parable issues a semantic innova-
tion at the level of story and thus discloses something "new" about our
story-narrative.

Thus Crossan has shown that a parable is a story of the everyday
life wherein something strange and unfamiliar occurs which has a
shattering effect. For example, in the Parable of the Good Samaritan,
the hearer's expectations would be that the Priest and Levite would
come to the aid of the robbed traveller. But they do not aid the
robbed traveller; it is the Samaritan who comes to the rescue. The
expectations of Jesus' cultural world are reversed in the parable. In
Jesus' culture a Samaritan was not considered one who was good, quite
the contrary, yet in the parable he comes out being the opposite of
what he was viewed in real life. Thus the mythic-story of world is
shattered by the reversal of expectation. Similarly, in the Parable
of the Great Feast, one would expect the host to have his friends at
dinner and not strangers, but as it turns out, the strangers become

present and the friends are absent. What is expected does not happen
and what is not expected happens. Again, in the Parable of the Talents
we would expect the "conservative" servant to be commended for not
risking losing money entrusted to him yet he is not commended. In the
Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard we would expect the owner to
pay his workers what they earned, according to the amount of work that
they did, but he does not. Those who worked all day long got the same
wages as those who worked for only one hour. This had a shattering
effect on those hearers of Jesus because they were bounded by legalis-
tic thinking. The parable shatters the economic world-view that
equates wages with the amount of work done.

Amos Wilder had stated that art-forms are connected with basic
assumptions about existence.[127] What he means to say is that the forms
of literature in any society are governed by world-attitudes. With
regards to Jesus and his hearers' culture, the unconscious assumption
is simply this -- that all life has the character of a story and of a
plot. This is similar to what Stephen Crites had said, that life has
the quality of narrative. According to Wilder, the world-story has
many characters in it, including sub-plots and episodes each of which
reflects the significance of the whole. What Jesus does in the parables
is to carry this Jewish unconscious outlook to a further development.
As Wilder puts it:

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[127]Amos N. Wilder, _Early Christian Rhetoric: The Language of
the Gospel_ (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 71.

> The denouement of the world-story is come; the characters
> and their little stories are now in Act V; in fact, we hear
> twelve o'clock beginning to strike.[128]

Thus in Wilder we have one of the earliest recognitions of the parables

as narrative stories and that these stories are human and realistic.

This was Jesus' linguistic approach. He told stories, indeed, realistic

ones. Jesus' method of storytelling was not imaginative in the sense of

telling incredible tales but rather in the sense that he brought images

drawn from the ancient world of Israel and used tropes or extended

images to mediate reality and life in an unusual way.[129] Wilder points

out that the naturalness and secularity of the parables is only one

aspect of them. There is also Jesus' own original application that sets

them apart from the general linguistic mode of the times in which he

lived. The stories of Jesus are real but they are only spring-boards to

something more important. By storytelling Jesus leads man to make a

judgement and come to a decision. Parabolic stories compel men to see

"things as they are", arousing what lays dormant. The parables make men

come alive.[130] Wilder states that the "Gospel proposes not to substi-

tute another world for this one, but to redeem and transfigure the pre-

sent world".[131] Likewise, did Jesus, through the parables, attempt to

subvert, transform and re-order the mythic elements (in that world-story)

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[128]Ibid., p. 71.

[129]Ibid., p. 72.

[130]Ibid., pp. 74-75.

[131]Ibid., p. 75.

of his culture.[132]

We can, therefore, say that parables are extended metaphors articulating Jesus' experience of God's presence and God's breakthrough into the mundane. In parables, religious and poetic experience are fused together because they represent Jesus' experience verbalized poetically. The parables disclose the transcendence because they break the everyday pattern of Jesus' culture. Parables are the starting point of a theology of story, simply because they disclose the beginnings of a new story within the already existing story. They shatter the very story of Jesus' culture. Crossan sums up his position on the matter by saying that:

> The parables of Jesus are not historical allegories telling us how God acts with mankind; neither are they moral example-stories telling us how to act before God and towards one another. They are stories which shatter the deep structure of our accepted world and thereby render clear and evident to us the relativity of story itself. They remove our defences and make us vulnerable to God. It is only in such experiences that God can touch us, and only in such moments does the kingdom of God arrive. My own term for this relationship is transcendence.[133]

Therefore we can say that a parable is a metaphor of the transcendent. It is in parables that the religious dimension is disclosed. The parables point to the limit dimensions of the everyday life -- the story that we live. David Tracy makes the category of "limit" the forefront of his revisionist theological model. He states that:

> The parables, as stories, take the reader to the point where the course of ordinary life is broken; an intensification of the

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[132]Cf. James G. Hart, "Mythic World as World", _International Philosophical Quarterly_, Vol. 15, No. 1, 1975, p. 69.

[133]John Dominic Crossan, _The Dark Interval_, p. 122.

everyday emerges; the unexpected happens; a strange world of meaning is projected which challenges, jars, disorients our everyday vision precisely by both showing us the limits to the everyday and projecting the limit-character of the whole.[134]

Again, it is important to emphasize that the parable as an extended metaphor is not simply a metaphor of images which lead to an aesthetic or intellectual insight.[135] As they are dislocated from their usual context, the parables work only because the participants have been interpreted.[136] The security of the everyday world has been shattered. TeSelle points out that:

> They have seen another story — the story of a mundane life like their own moving by a different logic and they begin to understand that another way of believing and living — another frame or context for their lives — might be a possibility for them.[137]

Jesus had announced the arrival of the Kingdom of God and disclosed its reality by telling stories. The parable as story is an embodiment of that very vision which Jesus lived. The parable is a metaphor of the transcendence and discloses the kingdom of God as operating according to a logic that is not familiar to the everyday narrative experience of Jesus' culture. Those that became seized by the ontological elements of the story that Jesus told were to embody

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[134]David Tracy, Blessed Rage for Order: The New Pluralism in Theology (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975), p. 130.

[135]Sallie M. TeSelle, "Parable, Metaphor and Theology", p. 634.

[136]"There are metaphors in which information precedes participation so that the function of metaphor is to illustrate information about the metaphor's referent; but there are also metaphors in which participation precedes information so that the function of metaphor is to create participation in the metaphor's referent". John D. Crossan, In Parables, p. 14.

[137]Sallie M. TeSelle, "Parable, Metaphor and Theology", p. 634.

that mythic vision. The stories that Jesus told challenged all exist-
ing options; he shattered the existing mundane story with a new story.

We have already seen with Gadamer that true art seizes us. By
entering a work of art we "come home". Storytelling is a heuristic
movement towards possibility, the possibility of "coming home". In
parables we "come home" to the divine. Homecoming here is the process
whereby man and the sacred reach for each other. It is in parables that
man truly "comes home". Furthermore, it is in parables that man is
ontologically seized by the transcendence, for parable is the House of
God.[138]

As pointed out before, sacred stories are dwelling-places where
people live and they are sacred because it is through them that man's
sense of self and world is created. In parables the myth of God that
acts as king comes alive! The kingdom of God is in operation in the
parables of Jesus. The divine is not only disclosed in parables but
the divine is ontologically parabolic. One is easily awakened by the
storytelling of Jesus. The very shattering of one's mythic world
shakes one out of dogmatic slumbers. Parables address the imagination
and sets it in motion. With an "awakened" imagination one sees an
horizon opening up. Through parables Jesus opened what had been pre-
viously closed and challenged his hearers to a new horizon — a new
story, a new way of "seeing". A story is an invitation.[139] Parables,

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[138]John D. Crossan, In Parables, p. 33.

[139]James B. Wiggins, "Within and Without Stories", Religion as
Story, ed. J. B. Wiggins (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 20.

as stories, invite one to a new horizon. We become more present and less alienated. Things become "as they are". The invitation of parable is towards a new mode of being-in-the-world. The challenge to the limits of our narrative experience discloses a religious dimension that goes beyond our mundane story. Metaphor tells us something "new" about reality and allows us to "see" things in a new way. This is what parables do. We become, at least in potential, ready to be seized by a gap or void that is to be filled up by a new story.

Our own narrative-story is addressed to by the parables and is destroyed in the process. Truly, "the denouement of the world-story is come" as Wilder says. The structure of experience collapses when we encounter the parable. Thus parables are eschatological reversals of one's own story-myth. This demands a new decision and a new mode of being-in-the-world. Parables subvert the very world that myth establishes and in so doing, they invite us to a new ontological position if we are truly seized. Once seized, the believer begins his new story.

The early Christians were imaginative and quite capable of vision and this is the reason why they were so profoundly captivated and seized by Jesus the storyteller. The poetic elements, the parables as metaphors of transcendence seized the ontological structures of Jesus' community and they surrendered completely to its transformative powers. Jesus, the poet, restructured the particular mythic elements of that culture and made it into a matrix ready for resynthesis. Jesus did not offer intellectual explanations for his ways. He was unwilling to give signs, for logic and reason are but the surface structures of the psyche. Jesus aimed above the surface of the psyche, at the level of

imagination and vision and in this way his followers "brought to life" the story that Jesus told.

. John Crossan maintains that the primitive church changed the parables into moral example stories or historical allegories. As such, the transition from the historical Jesus to the kerygma of the primitive church is described by Crossan when he says that "the parabler becomes parable".[140] Thus Jesus had announced the kingdom of God in parables while later, the primitive church announced Jesus as the Christ, the Parable of God.[141] Thus, if Jesus is the parable, this frees the parables to become allegories and because of this they have not been lost. They became imbedded in the post-Easter mythic consciousness. Their transformation occurred because the death of Jesus, as parabolic event, replaced them, as the central parable that discloses the transcendence. In this way the "aliveness" of the parables became the "aliveness" of Christ. The early church was now seized by the Christ-event and not by the parable stories. The parables had lost their metaphoric power to disclose the transcendence once the primitive church understood the meaning of the Cross as "the great Parable of God".[142] Therefore the mystery of the transcendent became disclosed with the assertion that "Jesus is the Christ". Thus Jesus of Nazareth, through belief and imagination of the primitive church in contact with alien cults, evolved from a Palestinian Rabbi to the divine Lord of a

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[140]John D. Crossan, The Dark Interval, p. 123.

[141]Ibid., p. 124.

[142]Ibid., p. 125.

Hellenistic Savior cult. It was belief and imagination that "brought
to life" the story that Jesus told and lived. In a sense, we can say
that a metaphor of transcendence became myth. Once the old stories were
shattered, a new story arose. Thus the critique of Jesus (against the
options of his culture) became transformed into a mythic-consciousness
of a post-Easter primitive church. This mythic consciousness (i.e. a
sanctified consciousness) arose because the symbol, the kingdom of God,
became an ontological reality, whereby a lived experience was identical
with a sacred poetics. The Christian poetic became wed to a holy
physics.[143] Thus imagination and experience (reality) became identical
after Jesus as being-parable became Christ as Being-God. In this way
it is right that the Church became symbolized as the Mystical Body of
Christ. Thus the primitive church, as theologians of reality, echo the
poetic vision of a Wallace Stevens.

Kierkegaard spoke of imagination as "what providence uses in
order to get men into reality, into existence" and Coleridge maintained
that the imagination brings the whole soul of man into activity.[144]
Similarly Newman maintained that man rises to action when belief seizes
the imagination.[145] According to Coulson, Newman believed that "the
movement from probability to certitude occurs when what is probable
becomes credible.[146] Indeed vision sustains the thrust of the will to

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[143] James G. Hart, "Mythic World as World", p. 69.

[144] John Coulson, "Belief and Imagination", Downside Review,
Vol. 90, No. 298, 1972, p. 1.

[145] Ibid., p. 2.

[146] Ibid., p. 6.

action. Coulson notes that:

> What we ask from the Church ... is Faith — an assent which
> in some part of its character is like a political assent. In
> each case a primary condition is a responsiveness to people — a
> form of self-awareness to an unseen world as if we saw it. We
> can assent to many 'worlds' — to the world of the novelist as
> much as to that of the Gospels and parables. But what these
> worlds have in common is that they are where we are 'claimed';
> we do not merely claim them.[147]

Again, vision is an embodiment of faith. In fact, William Lynch main-
tains that "faith ... has a body".[148] In addition, faith "provides a
structure or a context" and it is "a way of experiencing and imagining
the world".[149] And like the imagination it is "a constantly active,
shaping, re-shaping and creative principle".[150] Therefore in agreement
with Wallace Stevens, Lynch states that "the task of the imagination is
to imagine the real".[151] But the real is what is credible or what is
believed to be true. Thus it is through the dynamic operations of
belief (credibility), faith (seizure) and imagination (vision) that

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[147]Ibid., p. 12.

[148]William F. Lynch, _Images of Faith: An Exploration of the
Ironic Imagination_ (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1973),
p. 13. Cf. "The propositions of a theological system are comparable to
the subject matter of a work of art, but the work of art can discard
subject matter and concentrate on its own structural energies, whereas
the system can hardly discard propositions .... The subject brings to
the work of art its own characteristic energies from the experienced
world, but the decisive thing for the work of the human imagination is
the structural form in which these energies are embodied or, to be more
theological, receive their incarnation". John W. Dixon, Jr., "The
Matter of Theology: The Consequences of Art for Theological Method",
The Journal of Religion, Vol. 49, No. 2, 1969, pp. 171-172.

[149]William F. Lynch, _Images of Faith_, p. 17.

[150]Ibid., p. 53.

[151]Ibid., p. 63.

metaphors are transformed into myths or an event is transformed into a story.

Earl R. MacCormac maintains that when scientific or religious metaphors are accepted as literal truths or when absolute finality is claimed by the heuristic explanatory device known as the metaphor, then metaphors become myths.[152] Thus by attributing reality to metaphors we end up creating a myth. MacCormac states that:

> Most often the suggestive metaphors that become myths are first employed as root-metaphors. These are the basic hypothetical metaphors that underlie a single explanation or a whole field of endeavor or even a description of the nature of the entire world. In creating root-metaphors, men make assumptions about the nature of the world and experience that stem from an analogy to their own experience. Successful theories build upon the basis of these metaphors, come into vogue, and are so familiar that the speculative metaphor upon which they were built is forgotten. The theory becomes a myth in that its details are considered to be accurate descriptions of the world and the world is given the reality that the root-metaphor only suggested. This is how men could believe that the world actually was created in six days out of nothing; they forgot that the author was speculating about how God could do such a thing. Similarly Newtonians could be shocked by relativity because they too thought that the world really was composed of absolute length, time and mass. In both cases, men had allowed a root-metaphor to beguile them into the creation of a myth. So useful were these underlying root-metaphors that they very quietly and insidiously became myths when their suggestive and speculative qualities were overlooked. This can happen in a single explanation itself within a discipline like science or theology.[153]

The basic problem is that a metaphor has an _as if_ quality about it and when this quality is taken _literally_ then it turns into myth. Perhaps it can better be stated if one could say that the power of the metaphor

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[152] Earl R. MacCormac, <u>Metaphor and Myth in Science and Religion</u> (Durham: Duke University Press, 1976), p. 167.

[153] Ibid., pp. 104-105.

as a "live metaphor" becomes lost when myth is created. When a metaphor is to be read literally, then it becomes dead. The tragedy of myth lies in the ossification of a metaphoric utterance. Truth lies in the metaphor rather than in myth, but it is an existential poetic truth.

To be true, a poetic has to be uttered and it is only through utterances that one speaks truly poetically. Real poetics is uttered while other forms of discourse cannot disclose that kind of being-in-the-world that is truly authentic. Poetry that is grounded in true being is sacred language. Live metaphors are the results of true poeticizing.

Poetry (Dichtung) in its original sense, according to Heidegger, is the linguistic creation or allowing-to-be of things. Verse-making or poetry in the narrow sense (Poesie) depends upon Dichtung and is derived from it. Dichtung is the original poeticizing which precedes all Poesie. Thus poetry is language in its pristine form. Language is the primordial poetry in which a people speak Being.[154] To put it in another way, verse-making (Poesie) employs Dichtung while Dichtung creates this language itself. As such, Dichtung is the actual creation of language by letting things be. It is primordial poetic language (Dichtung) that names the thing for the first time whereby each name first brings the thing to the word and to appearance. Thus the "things as they are" make their appearance through Dichtung. Thus Dichtung designates things in its Being. This way of naming is a departure from the name-activity of

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[154]George F. Sefler, Language and the World: A Methodological Synthesis Within the Writings of Martin Heidegger and Ludwig Wittgenstein (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1974), pp. 146-147.

representational language. In everyday depictive language a name already refers to something already designated. But in poetic use (<u>Dichtung</u>) the "name" creates the entity as named. Thus Being, as the subject matter of poetry, cannot be named. As such, Being (the Holy) cannot be named and "holy names are not names".[155]

According to Heidegger, the purpose of poetic language is to make things manifest. It is to make things appear in their unconcealment. Poetic language is that "departure into Being, as a configuration disclosing the thing".[156] Therefore poetic language is non-representational. In poetry there is simply <u>no-thing</u> to represent. As Heidegger maintains, we only 'get' to know a mystery by guarding it as mystery. In this way mystery is "shown" in poetic language rather than pictured in representational language. Thus language in its primordial sense is a manifestation of Being. <u>Dasein</u> becomes the owner and guardian of that what manifests itself in language.[157]

For Heidegger, "language is the House of Being". It is the philosophers and the poets who are the guardians of the House of Being. It is there that they dwell. Poetry is the primal form of building. Heidegger states that:

> Poetry first of all admits man's dwelling into its very nature, its presencing being. Poetry is the original admission of dwelling.[158]

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[155]Ibid., p. 147.

[156]Ibid., p. 147.

[157]Ibid., p. 149.

[158]M. Heidegger, <u>Poetry, Language, Thought</u>, p. 227.

The poetic is the basic capacity for human dwelling. Man, indeed, is capable of poetry only to the degree to which his being is appropriate to that which itself has a liking for man and therefore needs his presence. According to Heidegger, poetry is authentic or inauthentic according to the degree of this appropriation.[159]

Thus for Heidegger the primary mode of revelation of Being through beings is language. Man's access to Being is primarily linguistic. Furthermore, the pre-predicatedness of man's encounter with Being is pre-representational or pre-literal encounter, as it occurs within the language of poetry. However, this encounter is linguistic.[160] Therefore it is language in and through poetry that makes Being appear. Poetry is the establishment of Being by means of the word. In another way poetry founds Being through the word and language, thus, becomes the "clearing and concealing advent of Being itself". Language at times makes Being appear and at other times it conceals Being. As such, language is that indwelling by which man relates himself to Being. In fact, Being can be discerned by mediating upon the language of the poetics.[161] Thus for Heidegger, the primary given is the world and language is understood through this given.

This excursion into Heidegger is necessary because it is helpful

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[159] Ibid., p. 228.

[160] George F. Sefler, Language and the World, p. 154.

[161] Ibid., p. 155. See also Ronald Bruzina, "Heidegger on the Metaphor and Philosophy", Michael Murray, ed., Heidegger and Modern Philosophy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978), pp. 184-200.

in determining what it was in the poetics of metaphor that gave rise to myth. As MacCormac points out, metaphors become myths once they are interpreted literally. This is similar to the lines that John Hick takes when he says that:

> Thus it was natural and intelligible both that Jesus, through whom men had found a decisive encounter with God and a new and better life, should come to be hailed as son of God and that this poetry should have hardened into prose and escalated from a metaphorical son of God to a metaphysical God the Son, of the same substance as the Father within the triune God:[162]

As pointed out earlier, the primitive church, seized by the poetics of Jesus, "brought to life" the story that Jesus proclaimed. It was through the dynamic operations of belief, faith and imagination that the original metaphorical utterances became the myth of God incarnate. Hick, in distinguishing between a literal and a metaphorical statement, maintains that it was the intention of the Nicene formula to be understood literally.[163] In this way Jesus was literally a man, yet at the same time, he was not as if God, but literally God. The paradoxical nature and the metaphysically untenable position seems to be a stumbling block to modern man. Hick states that:

> It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that the real point and value of the incarnational doctrine is not indicative but expressive, not to assert a metaphysical fact but to express a valuation and evoke an attitude. The doctrine of the incarnation is not a theory which ought to be spelled out but ... a mystery. I suggest that its character is best expressed by saying that the idea of divine incarnation is a mythological idea. And I am using the term "myth" in the following sense: a myth is a story which is told but which is not literally true ... but which invites a particular attitude in its

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[162]John Hick, "Jesus and the World Religions", ed. John Hick, The Myth of God Incarnate (London: SCM Press, 1977), p. 176.

[163]Ibid., p. 177.

hearers. Thus the truth of a myth is a kind of practical truth
in consisting in the appropriateness of the attitude to its
object. That Jesus was God the Son incarnate is not literally
true since it has no literal meaning, but it is an application
to Jesus of a mythical concept whose function is analogous to
that of the notion of divine sonship, ascribed in the ancient
world to a king.[164]

The shift from the metaphorical son of God to the metaphysical
God the Son is a shift from the God of the Imagination to the God of
Reason. When MacCormac states that a metaphor turns into myth when it
is read literally, he really means to say that a "live" metaphor
becomes a dead metaphor. I would maintain that myth is a narrative form
of metaphor and not simply a literalization of a metaphor. A myth can
be just as alive as a metaphor. Its function is the same as a metaphor.
What Hick and MacCormac should be saying is that myth no longer holds
poetic power over man and therefore falls prey to a literal reading
which renders it false. Modern man has lost the sense of poeticizing.

To isolate the Incarnation (as does Hick) from other dogmas that
forms the whole Christian story is not necessary in the discussion
because in the story there is a network of mythologies with a common
root-metaphor, namely, that Jesus is God. At the 'ground-root of all
Christian assertions lies that particular mode of being-in-the-world
(the encounter with the healing poetics of Jesus) that gave rise to the
God-man metaphor. Thus the question of truth is not literal, meta-
physic or ontological but existential and linguistic. Hick says:

> I see the Nazarene, then, as intensely and overwhelmingly
> conscious of the reality of God ... living in the unseen pre-
> sence of God and ... his life a continuous response to the

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[164]Ibid., p. 178.

> divine love as both utterly gracious and utterly demanding. He
> was so powerfully God-conscious that his life vibrated ... to.
> the divine ... and the 'poor in spirit' were kindled to a new
> life in his presence .... Thus in Jesus' presence, we should
> have felt that we are in the presence of God — not in the sense
> that the man Jesus literally is God, but in the sense that he
> was so totally conscious of God that we could catch something
> of that consciousness by spiritual contagion.[165]

The engagement of the eye-witnesses and the primitive church to Jesus was

utterly numinous. They were seized by the divine through him. The

answer to this divine calling was uttered in an authentic-mode-of-being

which resurrected that kind of poetry (Dichtung) which speaks Being.

We know a mystery by guarding the mystery as mystery and it was through

the authentic poeticizing of the primitive church that the God-Jesus

mystery was concealed for all times and yet made alive by resurrecting

it to dogma and story. Thus, access to Being is through language and

through the medium of a true poetics, God becomes incarnated (Word

becomes flesh). Thus the God-man metaphor is an existential-linguistic

truth, not a biological truth. Therefore, we can say that myth has as

much poetic truth as metaphor since it is the dynamic operations of

belief, faith and imagination, grounded not on a literal or meta-

physical appropriation but on an existential-linguistic appropriation,

that keeps it alive. Otherwise, without the power of a healing poetics,

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[165]Ibid., p. 172.

early Christianity could have easily succumbed to a rational critique.[166]

Thus the existentially, linguistically incarnated God became the "new story". As the divine Logos entered history through an authentic poetics and disclosed Being to man, the Christian story became its appropriation and theology expressed this in a confessional story. Thus theology became a sacred story because it did-not stand apart from the main story itself. As such, theology was divinely inspired. Theology was part of the very story itself, thus it remained sacred. But the sacred story reached the level of the mundane in medieval theology when abstract reason allowed one to step back outside and view the story as a datum.

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[166] Concern with verbal therapy had its beginnings in the Homeric epics. But it was Plato who went beyond the "cheering speech" of Homer in recommending that physicians use proper words on their patients either to convince them by dialectic or persuade them by rhetoric in order to produce a harmonious ordering of the elements of the psyche. But Plato stopped at the level of conscious appeal and response because poetry stirs the emotions. Aristotle transcended dialectic and rhetoric through tragedy by promoting the healing effects of catharsis. The failure-of logotherapy occurred when the Greek physicians failed to integrate this new knowledge in their naturalistic medicine. The curative word soon became a superstition. See Pedro Entralgo, The Therapy of the Word in Classical Antiquity, trans. L. J. Rather and John M. Sharp (London: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 253.

STORYTELLING AND THE SELF'S HOMECOMING

Charles Davis has already pointed out that "the distinction between theology and religious studies has served its purpose".[167] The medieval movement towards the theoretical led directly to the critical turn in epistemological thinking (Kant) and ontological thinking (Heidegger). In this way the presuppositions and the principles of Christian theology must justify itself in the face of the critical questions. Thus critical theology becomes philosophy. From this position, philosophy has lost the auxiliary status it had in the Middle Ages and now can stand apart from theology as an autonomous discipline.[168]

The question remains -- If the Christian faith, once thematized, now lacking epistemological support, succumbs to critical thinking, where does this leave the faith? Does Christianity crumble at the feet of critical thought?[169]

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[167] Charles Davis, "The Reconvergence of Theology and Religious Studies", Science Religieuses/Studies in Religion, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1974-1975, p. 205.

[168] It is the task of theology to become critical of its method and presuppositions. Philosophical theology now has the task of becoming a critique of the possibility of theology. See Charles E. Winquist, The Transcendental Imagination: An Essay in Philosophical Theology (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1972), p. 90.

[169] This fear is expressed in the preface of the reactionary response to The Myth of God Incarnate, Michael Greene, ed., The Truth of God Incarnate (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1977), pp. 9-16.

Critical thinking has left us with a plurality of options. There are no straight and clear-cut answers anymore. Things are no longer well-defined and this is especially so in religious matters. Since the nineteenth century, a vast amount of information has been gathered on the religions of the world and the consequent comparative studies have relativized tradition to a point of confusion. Contemporary man finds himself living in a world that lacks solidity and a sense of belonging. He feels no longer on solid footing. His alienated self either wavers between a faddish religious orientation or a life that has no sacred ground. Modern man has lost touch with the sacred and can no longer utter its language. Prayers have become dead relics and modern man no longer quivers at sacred names. He has lost touch with an incarnated God because that God is demythologized and dead. God has become technology.

Carl Jung had expressed the situation quite well when he said that:

> Modern man does not understand how much his "rationalism" (which has destroyed his capacity to respond to numinous symbols and ideas) has put him at the mercy of the psychic "underworld". He has freed himself from "superstition" (or so he believes), but in the process he has lost his spiritual values to a positively dangerous degree. His moral and spiritual tradition has disintegrated, and he is now paying the price for the break-up in the world-wide disorientation and dissociation .... We have stripped all things of their mystery and numinosity; nothing is holy any longer.[170]

Jung himself had experienced the loss of myth in his life.

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[170]Carl G. Jung, "Approaching the Unconscious", in C. G. Jung, ed., Man and His Symbols (New York: Dell, 1972), p. 84.

I had explained the myths of peoples of the past; I had
written a book about the hero, the myth in which man has always
lived. But in what myth does man live nowadays? In the
Christian myth, the answer might be, "Do you live in it?" I
asked myself. To be honest, the answer was no. For me, it is
not what I live by. "Then do we no longer have any myth?" "No
evidently we no longer have any myth". "But then what is your
myth -- the myth in which you do live?" At this point the dia-
logue with myself became uncomfortable, and I stopped thinking.
I had reached a dead end.[171]

For Jung the rational consciousness had reached its limits. It was his

engagement and confrontation with his unconscious, his entry into the

inner life, that finally gave him a new myth -- a personal story. At

the end of his life in the prologue to his autobiography he writes:

My life is a story of the self-realization of the uncon-
scious .... What we are to our inward vision, and what man
appears to be sub specie aeternitatis, can only be expressed
by the way of myth. Myth is more individual and expresses life
more precisely than does science .... Thus it is that I have
now undertaken ... to tell my personal myth. I can only make
direct statements, only "tell stories". Whether or not the
stories are "true" is not the problem. The only question is
whether what I tell is my fable, my truth.[172]

When mythic consciousness succumbs to critical consciousness it

is doubt and unbelief that takes hold of man. The question that arises

is this: Do we await for a new religion that will be global in scope

and therefore overstep all other traditions or do we forge ahead with

our own individual myth?

Arthur Koestler has used the concept of "holon" as a way of

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[171]C. G. Jung, Memories, Dreams, Reflections (New York: Vintage
Books, 1965), p. 171.

[172]Ibid., p. 3.

defining man.[173] In this manner, man is defined as an entity that possesses characteristics of both autonomy and dependency. Thus man has basically two tendencies within him, namely, a tendency of self-assertion, autonomy and freedom while on the other hand, he is self-integrative, dependent and determined. In other words, he is a part-whole dynamic entity. He is dependent on the whole yet within that whole he displays a sense of autonomy. As such, man's individual story is part of a greater story. Historically, either the focus has been in the large story (the Christian myth) whereby we are at its mercy or with modern man the focus is turning towards the individual (the personal self — the shift to the subject). With the rise of critique the shift that is taking place is towards self-autonomy away from the self-integrative tendency of traditionalism. The great story to which man once integrated no longer speaks with the same conviction it once had. Modern man yearns for a new story because the old one no longer convinces him and no longer possesses him. Thus there is a calling for an individual faith and a personal myth in the face of a "death of God" consciousness in a secular world. The journey towards the personal myth begins with the examination of the interior.[174]

Louis Dupré insists that the most pressing task today is the

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[173]The term "holon" is derived from the Greek holos meaning "whole" with the suffix "on" as in proton or neutron, suggesting a particle or part. Thus man is whole in the sense of being autonomous and a part in the sense of being dependent. Holon suggests the dynamics of freedom and necessity. See Arthur Koestler, The Ghost in the Machine (London: Pan Books, 1971), p. 421.

[174]Richard E. Creel, Religion and Doubt: Toward a Faith of Your Own (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1977), p. 160.

recovery of the inner life rather than social reform, philosophical action or technical progress.[175] He states that:

> Nothing would be gained by the blind unquestioning "turn to God" which evangelists so peremptorily demand. First we must be able to acknowledge the loss of transcendence. This is particularly painful to the believer who tends to hide his head in the sand of a past spiritual tradition in order to avoid the sight of his own atheism .... What is needed most of all is an attitude in which transcendence can be recognized again.[176]

Dupré points out that the link between art and faith has disappeared in our secular culture. Gone is the aesthetic expression that once played the role of making us aware of religious transcendence.[177] To Dupré, the abandonment of the ontological meaning of art is the aesthetic heresy of our culture.[178] He maintains that "ever since art ceased to coincide with religion ... its own ontological vision had ceased to be adequate for the expression of Being as transcendent".[179] Dupré insists that "no artist can create genuine religious art, unless he is seriously acquainted with, and works out of, a transcendent vision".[180] But today that kind of vision is lacking. Modern man no longer feels he has a place in the universe. In short, he is unrooted and lacks a story. In archaic societies, tales and myths gave primitive man a place in the

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[175]Louis Dupré, _Transcendent Selfhood: The Rediscovery of the Inner Life_ (New York: The Seabury Press, 1976), p. 118.

[176]Ibid., pp. 16-17.

[177]Ibid., pp. 50-51.

[178]Ibid., p. 52.

[179]Ibid., p. 52.

[180]Ibid., p. 54.

order of things. Historical meaning was given in the narrative story
and in this way, primitive man had a foundation which served as a home-
base to which he returned for spiritual renewal. Dupré sees this lack
of foundation in our very culture when he says that:

> We find ourselves in a presence without a history and without
> world ... and without transcendence .... Only in recent years has
> literature attempted an equally radical negation of humanness and
> coherence in the so-called anti-novel which is, in fact, an anti-
> narrative .... Nowhere does the nihilist quality of absolute free-
> dom appear more clearly than its contemporary literature. Here
> the loss of transcendence undermines the continuity of the time
> structure itself and thereby the very essence of the narrative ....
> Frank Kermode has shown how the absence of inner connection between
> the stages of existence is symbolized in the modern storyteller's
> inability to find an appropriate ending. But as Virginia Woolf
> once remarked, if there are no beginnings and endings, there are no
> stories. Life then becomes a cycle that turns around itself.
> French modern writers have followed this state of mind to its
> ultimate consequences. In Robbe-Grillet time itself has been
> reduced to a mere sequence of independent moments without inner
> coherence, while Beckett's entire work may be read as an expres-
> sion of discontinuous selfhood in which personal identity dis-
> integrates into a series of isolated states.[181]

From this we can see the importance of narrative insofar as it
can give us a sense of identity. This notion of identity of selfhood is
discerned if we have a past, a present and a future. The question of
origins and horizons formulate the basic parameters of human living --
the narrative quality of experience. The narrative story is a metaphor
of the self -- this is the foundational belief of storytellers. This
kind of thinking permeates our daily lives. In psychoanalysis, for
example, Freud reduces the neurosis to its origins while Jung amplifies
it to discern its teleological operation; creation and eschatology are
the end-points of a thorough theology; in the method of science the

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[181]Ibid., pp. 62-63.

question of the past and the horizon as future are central structures
necessary for the creative act; in Jungian thought, the tail-eating
serpent (ouroborous) symbolizes both the beginning and the end of the
individuation process. Archaic man's sense of self developed because
his stories had a beginning and an ending. Metaphors themselves have a
beginning and an end -- the sense of the metaphor is the past (its
ground) and the reference is the future (its horizon).

Modern man, no doubt, is born into a story, but where he differs
from archaic man is that he quickly loses the story. Modern man's
story crumbles quickly at the onslaught of critical thinking. His story
collapses because it is not blessed with a sacred foundation. Modern
man's elevations of consciousness has driven him out of the garden of
Eden and once more feels the need to be redeemed. But in the critical
age, it is in his own story that he will find a sense of redemption.

Modern man must once again recognize the notion of transcendence
that operates at the parameters of his story-narrative for that is where
the parable begins. The parameters of man's story-narrative is birth
and death. Birth and death are modern man's parables, between them
lies man's myth. But man's story must include the limits of his myth,
namely, the dark edges that surround his life story. Modern man must
recognize that his life-story is a parable because it is surrounded by
the dark unknown. We are born into a story and we die out of that
story. Outside the boundaries of our story lies another story and to us
it is a dark story because it is the great unknown -- outside time and
outside space. Our story collapses in those regions -- our world is
subverted at those dark edges. Modern man needs to recognize the

parable of his life, to see that the beginning and the end are not definite like they are in stories. In man's story there are no real beginnings or endings like in a story because we cannot grasp it like we can grasp it by reading a work of literature. If our modern literature has no beginnings and no endings it is because modern writers are beginning to sense that life is a parable. At the edges of our story-myth begins the parabolic event, the dark unknown. It is also there that another story begins. It is on the dark edges that the story of God begins. Beyond our story-plot lies the greater story — God's story. It is at the edges that man stands trembling before the transcendent. It is there that man experiences his own cross. It is there that man becomes a parable — he stands at the mercy of that Great Storyteller, God Himself. The ultimate revelation comes when we recognize that it is not our life that we live but God's life. Indeed, it is God's story and we are in it! To recognize that we are living God's story can be the grace that can give man a sense of the sacredness and ultimacy of life. Life no longer is trivial when we realize that we are at the mercy of another story. Life becomes serious and not trivial. In this way life becomes once more a numinous event — a sacred event that is given as a gift from the grace of God. Because we are allowed to participate in God's story we owe our gratitude to the Great Storyteller Himself. This gratitude is displayed by a new theo-logos, the telling of a new sacred story. For modern man, this theo-logos becomes autobiography.

Meaning is acquired through living and not in abstract thinking. Modern man was led away from the sacred by the cold calculus of reason.

Secularity is the aesthetics of the rational man. God is technology.
The meta-critiques of Marx and Freud have become ideologies. Jung once
said that he was glad that he was Jung and not a Jungian. Rationalism
has erased away man's sense of ultimacy. Jung puts the problem in this
way:

> ... once metaphysical ideas have lost their capacity to recall
> and evoke the original experience they have not only become useless
> but prove to be actual impediments on the road to wider development.
> One clings to possessions that have once meant wealth; and the more
> ineffective, incomprehensible and lifeless they become the more
> obstinately people cling to them. (Naturally it is only sterile
> ideas that they cling to; living ideas have content and riches
> enough, so there is no need to cling to them). Thus in the course
> of time the meaningful turns into the meaningless. This is unfor-
> tunately the fate of metaphysical ideas .... The world — so far as
> it has not completely turned its back on traditions — has long ago
> stopped wanting to hear a "message"; it would rather be told what
> the message means. The words that resound from the pulpit are
> incomprehensible and cry for an explanation. How has the death of
> Christ brought us redemption when no one feels redeemed? In what
> way is Jesus a God-man and what is such a being?[182]

For modern man the meaningfulness of the metaphorical event
becomes a meaningless metaphysics. What was once a meaningful meta-
phorical son of God has become for modern man a meaningless metaphysical
God the Son. What modern man has forgotten is that "metaphor is essen-
tially a way of knowing".[183] It is the God of the Imagination that
modern man needs if he is to find redemption. For modern man the
recovery of ultimacy begins with the recovery of the self and its
appropriation in terms of a relation to the transcendence.

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[182]C. G. Jung, Aion: Researches into the Phenomenology of the
Self, 2nd ed. Bollingen Series XX, Vol. 9, II, Collected Works
(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 34-35.

[183]James Olney, Metaphors of Self: The Meaning of Autobiography
(Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 31.

Metaphysical and psychological theories of the self have been somewhat unappealing and somewhat of a failure due to the rational abstractions employed in the inquiry. The question as to what is the self and what is man have best been expressed in stories, especially in biographies and autobiographies. We learn more about ourselves by reading life-stories than by reading psychology texts. It is not an abstract theory that resonates the essence of man but a story that reaches out and touches the whole soul of man and not just the cerebral part of him. The question is answered when we recognize that we <u>are</u> stories. I AM A STORY — that is the central conviction that modern man needs if he is to recognize his proper relationship to the transcendence. This is the submission to a story greater than his. This is the submission of man's story to God's story. But man's story must include God's story — that is the paradox — the image of God in man. The difference between archaic man and modern man in terms of his religiousness is that the former was born into a sacred story that shaped him while the latter needs to create a sacred story that <u>will</u> shape him. In fact, for the modern man, it is his own autonomy that makes this demand on himself.[184]

For modern man, coming to belief is none other than coming to one's own story. John Dunne maintains that by "passing over" to other

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[184]It is interesting to note that Freud's programme consisted in liberating man from the collective neurosis of the Oedipal situation. In this way he aimed at autonomy — thus he is seen as a critique of religion. Jung, on the other hand, understood neurosis (at least in middle life) as a religious problem of autonomous man. Thus liberation for Jung consisted in the re-appropriation of the collective (universal) man within. Thus, with regards to religion, unlike Freud, Jung stands in a positive light. However, Jung stands as a gnostic with regards to Christianity.

stories and by sympathetically understanding them we can come back to
our own stories.[185]   In this way, we may broaden our horizons and put our
life's events in a proper perspective. This is done by looking for
parallels in the lives of great people. James McClendon believes that by
using biography one can do theology.[186]   He maintains that biographical
subjects can contribute to theology by showing how certain archetypal
images of a faith may apply to our own lives. He states that "by images,
I mean metaphors whose content has been enriched by a previous, proto-
typical employment so that their application causes the object to which
they are applied to be seen in multiply-reflected light".[187]   McClendon
further states that "to speak truly and faithfully of God is indeed to
speak in models, images, analogies".[188]   The vindication of vision is
dependent upon the quality of that life that is called forth by that
vision. In this way he says:

> I believe that we have in the vision of Dag Hammarskjold and
> that of Martin Luther King a oneness, a wholeness, a holiness not
> otherwise available to them or to us. Their lives witness to
> their vision, even as they challenge the depth of our own. So
> there comes the question, not so much of the suitability of their
> vision to their own circumstances, but of the justification of our
> present way of life when held against theirs. Thus theology is
> drawn by its biographic material to face a challenge not only to
> its propositions, but also to the selfhood of its practitioners.[189]

[185]John S. Dunne, _A Search for God in Time and Memory_ (London:
Sheldon Press, 1975), p. 237.

[186]James William McClendon, _Biography as Theology: How Life
Stories Can Remake Today's Theology_ (New York: Abingdon Press, 1974),
p. 224.

[187]Ibid., p. 96.

[188]Ibid., p. 110.

[189]Ibid., p. 110.

The early church had read the oral biography of Jesus from within the context of the post-Easter events and from that point proceeded to write the gospel narratives. Similarly, contemporary man can read back biographies from within the context of his own lived life. Thus the course for contemporary man is to write his own theology, his own "confessional" or "narrative" theology. The early church had rewritten the oral Jesus biography from within the sense and reference of underlying cultural myths. Today modern man has a new mythos -- science. Perhaps it is in the mysteries of life and nature that modern man will use as a backdrop that will shape his theology. The very world of theology can indeed provide the means for discerning intelligence that operates in the universe. The scientific exploration of the universe, man and nature can perhaps allow man to be once more enchanted into a breathless wonder of awe.[190]

The autonomous man of the post-Christian era is able to grow towards God in the telling of his story. In telling his story he is able to "come home" to God, in the sense that Wallace Stevens came home to "the things as they are". Man's quest is directed towards the God

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[190]On the television program *Man Alive* (Monday, February 19, 1979) which dealt with the question "Is Life Sacred", Malcolm Muggeridge maintained that it is somewhat of a perversion that a society which allows some 50,000 abortions a year to take place, nonetheless are still fascinated and awed at the news of a test-tube baby. It is interesting to note that the notion of the numinous (tremendum-fascinans) can be applicable to moral ethics. The notion of conscience takes on a new meaning in the face of modern science. Technology has replaced God as the ground of ultimate power in world affairs, yet man's power of arbitration remains weak in comparison. Genetic engineering, nuclear power and so forth are in the hands of a sacredless culture. Cf. Thomas Szasz, *The Theology of Medicine: The Political-Philosophical Foundations of Medical Ethics* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p. 170.

"ahead". The archaic man finds his god in the past, in illo tempore, at the beginning of time while modern man seeks him in the future, on the horizon. This is because archaic man is born out of a sacred story while modern man is born out of a secular story and must discover a sacred story in the future.

In a strict sense an autobiography is one's life. James Olney says that:

> A man's lifework is his fullest autobiography and, he being what he is and where and when he is, neither the lifework nor the autobiography could be otherwise.[191]

Elsewhere he pursues the matter further by saying that:

> A theology, a philosophy, a physics or a metaphysics — properly seen, these are all autobiography recorded in other characters and other symbols.[192]

Olney believes that a person's autobiography is like a magnifying lens that focuses and intensifies the creative thrust that informs a life's work. He states that:

> The focus through which an intensity of self-awareness becomes a coherent vision of all reality, the point through which the individual succeeds in making the universe take on his own order is metaphor; the formal conjunction of single subject and various objects.[193]

Meaning occurs when elements take on a relation to one another or when a pattern emerges. The connecting principle which allows a gestalt to

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[191]James Olney, Metaphors of Self, p. 3.

[192]Ibid., p. 5.

[193]Ibid., p. 30. Polanyi's notion of subsidiary and focal aware-ness corresponds to the notion of tenor and vehicle of I. A. Richards. In this way method in autobiography is metaphorical. Michael Polanyi and Harry Prosch, Meaning (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp. 66-81.

emerge is the metaphor. Here a metaphor is that agent which connects the elements into a discernible whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. Thus Olney concludes that the emerging pattern is a metaphor of the self. In a sense, autobiography is a metaphor of the self. Autobiographies are merely psychological diaries unless they include a wider and bigger story, namely, the transpersonal events. It must include the story of God as well. In this way, Augustine initiated the true autobiography because in his self he included the image of God which allowed him to expand beyond the regions of a human story. This expansion included the Christian story which was greater than his story or at least it was more important. Thus Augustine's Confessions is true theology, a sacred story.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND THE METAPHOR OF THE SELF:
THE STORY CRISIS OF C. G. JUNG

Modern man because of his critical reason does not submit his
story to a greater story like Augustine. The story of autonomous man
results in the solipsism of the Hegelian tower which then collapses.
Modern man, if he is to find a redemptive story, must become humble
once more. Thus autobiography is not a story about the ego but about
the totality of man that includes his relation to "the Other". True
autobiography encompasses a movement towards authentic being whereby
the metaphor becomes the self. Again, the true poet of reality
utters — "I am a story" or "I am a poem". This is the return to the
divine Logos or as Stevens says, "to the things as they are". The
story is simply this: I am a story, a Supreme Fiction.

As a literary genre autobiography is difficult to define but
Olney has defined autobiography in terms of two loose groups — auto-
biographers of the single metaphor and autobiographers of the double
metaphor — the latter including Montaigne, Jung, Eliot and sometimes
Newman, while the former includes Fox, Darwin, Mill and sometimes
Newman. Olney describes the differences in this way:

> Each of the autobiographers simplex had his daimon, his
> personal genius and guardian spirit, a dominant faculty or func-
> tion or tendency that formed a part of the whole self and from
> which there was no escape, even had he wished it: Mill's daimon
> was the rational mind and Fox's the intuitive Inner Light.
> Darwin's was nature as objective fact and Newman's religious con-
> science. For the autobiographer duplex, on the other hand, the

daimon, in every case, can only be described as the self: for
Jung, it is the self as a psychological concept and an experi-
enced fact; for Montaigne, the self as a particular individual
and a human being; for Eliot — or, more properly, for the
voice of the Quartets — the self mediating on its own nature.
The whole self as it lives symbolically complete in the meta-
phors of the Essays of Montaigne, the Quartets of Eliot and
Memories, Dreams, Reflections of Jung, is revealed to be greater
than the sum of all its various parts, as those live more or
less in the Journal of Fox, the Autobiography of Mill and the
Autobiography of Darwin even the Apologia of Newman.[194]

The distinction between the two kinds of autobiographies lies in the fact

that for Darwin, Mill, Newman and Fox a "clearly defined end point in

development" was reached and beyond a specific date no change occurred.

This defined date occurred before the composition of the autobiography.

While for Jung, Eliot and Montaigne, "in the metaphors they created for

the whole self, there would be change and development until the metaphor

itself, sustained first by the author's and now by the reader's life,

should die".[195] Therefore, autobiography, in the case of Darwin, Mill

and Newman, is "a point of view of the writer's own past life" while in

Montaigne, Jung and Eliot the point of view is transcended through the

point of view. Thus they continuously took up a critical standpoint

against the assumed point of view. Olney puts it this way:

> Fox and Darwin, Mill and Newman, all in one way or another,
> tried to get out of their skins, tried to separate entirely their
> former from their present selves and to relate the events of a
> lifetime as if the relation were or could be, after the fact.
> For Montaigne and Jung the autobiographic process is not after
> the fact but a part and a manifestation of the living, and not
> only a part but, in its symbolic recall and completeness, the
> whole of the living. In the whole image of the man, in the com-
> plex metaphor or the symbol-union of conscious and unconscious

[194]James Olney, p. 39.

[195]Ibid., p. 42.

of the individual with humanity — these two succeed, as does Eliot in his poem, in being both inside and outside, beyond because entirely within, living and simultaneously capturing in symbolic form.[196]

We can say that Fox's development stopped at the age of eleven, once the Light of the Lord shone onto him. From that moment on he was set for life.[197] Jung, on the other hand, forged ahead throughout life and was continuously changing and developing until his last days. Thus, according to Olney, autobiography either begins with a point of view or a mythos and continues on that basis throughout life or it begins with no point of view and reaches a perspective only at the end. Or to put it differently, Fox was awakened to a sacred story that shaped him while Jung had to forge himself a story. It was Jung's own critical thinking and desire for an unmediated God that liberated him from the bondage of tradition.

Jung is an example of one who underwent the kind of religious experience that shaped him throughout a lifetime. Because he was awakened, not to an already existing story, but to experiences that had no story, Jung had to shape a life that poetically coincided with these primordial experiences of his. Jung did not awaken to a sacred story because his father and many uncles, all parsons, did not live their sacred stories. To Jung, the story they lived was nothing but meaningless words. What frustrated the early Jung was his father's insistence on believing something that had gone stale and no longer was an animated

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[196]Ibid., p. 40.

[197]Ibid., pp. 40-41.

poetics of the soul. Religion, at least experienced by his father, was
nothing but adherence to empty words.

Jung's early life experiences were decisive in determining his
view of religion. His first numinous experience was the phallic dream
he had at the age of three, which he associated with Lord Jesus and the
Jesuits. This "initiation" into "the realm of darkness" left him dis-
trustful of Lord Jesus.[198] A few years later Jung carved a wooden
mannikin which gave "shape" to the "secret" of the God-like phallus
that lies buried in the ground. In fact, Jung never spoke to anyone
about the phallus dream until he was sixty-five years old.[199] Thus
Jung's early secret relationships to the unknown via dreams and loss of
self made him reserved and somewhat distrustful of religion in the
Christian sense. Indeed, he possessed the secret that there is more to
religion than is apparent on the surface, or at least in the Christian
tradition as it was handed down to him. With regards to his experi-
ences Jung could not find parallels in his father's theological
library.[200] Finally, when he was around eleven years old, he experi-
enced the thought of God defecating on his grand Church. This unholy
thought erupted into Jung's mind only after Jung had tried to suppress
it for three days, but once Jung allowed this "wicked" thought to take
hold of him, he felt this as experiencing the will of God.[201] This

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[198]C. G. Jung, _Memories, Dreams, Reflections_ (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), pp. 12-15.

[199]Ibid., p. 41.

[200]Ibid., pp. 22-23.

[201]Ibid., pp. 36-40.

experience would shape Jung's problem of evil throughout the rest of his life.

We can see that Jung always gave priority to experience over blind belief in matters of religion. Jung expressed the matter in the following manner:

> I felt an enormous, an indescribable relief. Instead of the expected damnation grace had come upon me and with it an unutterable bliss such as I have never known. I wept for happiness and gratitude. The wisdom and goodness of God had been revealed to me now that I yielded to His inexorable command. It was though I had experienced an illumination. A great many things I had not previously understood became clear to me. That was what my father had not understood, I thought; he had failed to experience the will of God, had opposed it for the best reasons and out of the deepest faith. And that was why he had never experienced the miracle of grace which heals all and makes all comprehensible. He had taken the Bible's commandments as his guide; he had believed in God as the Bible prescribed and as his forefathers had taught him. But he did not know the immediate living God who stands, omnipotent and free, above His Bible and His Church, who calls upon man to partake of His freedom and can force to renounce his own views and convictions in order to fulfill without reserve the command of God. In this trial of human courage God refuses to abide by traditions, no matter how sacred.[202]

Jung's alienation during his school years intensified after his first communion which to him was "the pinnacle of religious initiation". The humdrum formalism of religious practices such as communion "had been a fatal experience" for him. It was after this hollow experience that he was "seized with the most vehement pity" for his father. Jung remembers that "at once I understood the tragedy of his profession and his life".[203] Jung describes his loss of faith in this way:

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[202]Ibid., p. 40.

[203]Ibid., p. 55.

My sense of union with the Church and with the human world, so far as I knew it, was shattered. I had, so it seemed to me, suffered the greatest defeat of my life. The religious outlook which I imagined constituted my sole meaningful relation with the universe had disintegrated; I could no longer participate in the general faith, but found myself involved in something inexpressible, in my secret which I could share with no one. It was terrible and — this was the worst of it — vulgar and ridiculous also, a diabolical mockery.[204]

The Christian heritage no longer spoke a sacred language to Jung. He felt himself to be an outsider. He was outside of the myth of his community. He took a critical stand against the formalism of the tradition which, according to Jung, no longer spoke the word of God. Yet Jung was deeply committed to his own God — the God that spoke directly to him in his private experiences which he could share with no one. This God-image was more real to Jung than the God of the rationalists or the God of his community. Jung's God was an experience of grace which liberated him yet it alienated him from his immediate community. Jung, stood alone against the Christian God that had become dead. Jung says:

God had been absent. For God's sake I now found myself cut off from the Church and from my father's and everybody else's faith. Insofar as they all represented the Christian religion, I was an outsider.[205]

From then on, Jung searched in his father's library for a description of the God he knew from his own personal experiences. But Jung found his search to be unsuccessful. He states that:

This weighty tone in dogmatics was nothing but fancy drivel; worst still, it was a fraud or a specimen of uncommon stupidity whose sole aim was to obscure the truth. I was disillusioned and even indignant, and once more seized with pity for my father, who had fallen victim to this mumbo-jumbo.[206]

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[204]Ibid., p. 56.

[205]Ibid., p. 56.

[206]Ibid., p. 59.

At the request of his mother, whose religiosity seemed more authentic and less banal than his father's, Jung read Goethe which led him to philosophers who were suspect to Jung's father simply "because they thought" rather than believed. Jung contented himself with Krug's General Dictionary of the Philosophical Sciences (second edition, 1832) and was not satisfied with the philosopher's God as well. Jung maintains that the philosophers

> ... know of God only by hearsay. The theologians are different ... at least they are sure that God exists, even though they make contradictory statements about Him. This lexicographer Krug expresses himself in so involved a manner that it is easy to see he would like to assert that he is already sufficiently convinced of God's existence. Then why doesn't he say so outright? Why does he pretend — as if he really thought that we "engender" the idea of God, and to do so must first have reached a certain level of development? So far as I know, even the savages wandering naked in their jungles had such ideas. And they were certainly not "philosophers" who sat down to "engender an idea of God" .... Of course God cannot be proved, for how could, say, a clothes moth that eats Australian wool prove to other moths that Australia exists? God's existence does not depend on our proofs.[207]

For Jung, God was one of "the most certain and immediate of experiences" that bestowed a liberating grace. This parabolic experience of the divine gave Jung a foundation for his critique of the Christian myth.[208] Jung's experience of God destroying His church was a

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[207]Ibid., pp. 61-62.

[208]Although Jung is looked at in a favorable light in matters of religion, because he is not atheistic like Freud, nonetheless, he can and perhaps must be read as a critic of Christianity. Jung has always maintained that statements about God are really statements about the God-image because that is the psychological fact of religion. Jung stands in the Kantian tradition as far as the knowability of God is concerned. Secondly, Jung initiated the psychological grounding of theistic and Christological symbolism. Thirdly, Jung's notion of the problem of evil is clearly Eastern and opposes the Thomistic notion of evil as being the absence of good. Finally, Jung's notion of the Trinity is psychologically Hegelian.

parabolic event that shattered Jung's mythic world. The heritage of
Christianity crumbled at his feet and he found himself without a myth.
Therefore, like the modern man, Jung had to resurrect a new God-image
and forget his own myth. His myth became the God of the Unconscious.
He says that:

> It is only through the psyche that we can establish that God
> acts upon us, but we are unable to distinguish whether these
> actions emanate from God or from the unconscious. We cannot tell
> whether God and the unconscious are two different entities. Both
> are border-line concepts for transcendental contents. But empir-
> ically it can be established, with a sufficient degree of prob-
> ability, that there is in the unconscious an archetype of whole-
> ness which manifests itself spontaneously in dreams etc. ..., and
> a tendency, independent of the conscious will, to relate other
> archetypes to this center. Consequently, it does not seem improb-
> able that the archetype produces a symbolism which has always
> characterized and expressed the Deity .... The God-image does not
> coincide with the unconscious as such, but with a special content
> of it, namely, the archetype of the Self. It is this archetype
> from which we can no longer distinguish the God-image empirically.[209]

If Wallace Stevens shifted from the God of Reason to the God of
the Imagination, then Jung has shifted from the God of Reason to the
God of the Unconscious. Furthermore, as Stevens reached an ontology of
Being-poetry, Jung reached a psychology of the Self-myth.[210] In each
case there is an immanent sacred ground that is indistinguishable from
the very myth itself. In Stevens, "God and the Imagination are one"

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[209] C. G. Jung, Psychology and Religion: West and East (2nd ed.,
Vol. II, Collected Works, Bollingen Series XX, Princeton University
Press, 1973), pp. 468-469.

[210] For Jung the self is the center of both consciousness and the
unconscious. In this way it is so elusive a concept and yet a real
psychological fact that it best can be rendered accessible by way of
mythic language.

while in Jung the divine ground is equated with the unconscious.[211] In
Wallace Stevens, the Supreme Fiction is created by the imagination while
in Jung the archetypes of the unconscious are the creators of myth.
Furthermore, while for Stevens, the imagination has to be imagined,
Jung's myth of the unconscious is a product of his unconscious. For
Jung, the God-image is the Supreme Fiction, indistinguishable from the
divine source and this is satisfactory for him because all God experi-
ences are psychological and therefore real. For Stevens, the Supreme
Fiction is satisfactory because to be is to be real and things are as
they are.

We cannot pass judgement on the truth-value of Stevens and Jung
inasmuch as they redressed a dead myth in a new garb. Remythologizing
an incarnational myth or re-imagining the God-man story (cf. Teilhard
de Chardin's incarnational evolution) is no easy task. But modern men
like Stevens and Jung are symptomatic of an age come of reason that
yearns for a new tale simply because reason itself no longer suffices.

Theology could do well by taking Stevens and Jung as examples of
the modern man to whom tradition no longer addresses itself. It is not
that Stevens and Jung are atheists, quite the contrary, but that a
tradition is alive only when its language utters a soul-poetics and
when it fails to do so then man becomes not atheistic but Godless.
Changing the liturgy to the vernacular, for example, does not redeem

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[211]Again, the God-image for Jung is a primordial archetype that
is universal. Jung's notion of archetype has been argued to be iso-
morphic with Kant's notion of "idea". See Eugen Bär, "Archetypes and
Ideas: Jung and Kant", _Philosophy Today_, Vol. 20, No. 2/4, 1976,
pp. 114-123.

modern man from alienation. What redeems modern man is a new story altogether. It is not a commentary on a dead metaphor that moves the lover of poetry but a new live metaphor. It is a new gospel that modern man needs today. Today's gospels are novels and fictions. But the gospel that really satisfies modern man is his own gospel. This is his own testimony of faith — his own theology. "I am a story" is the modern act of faith. Modern man is a story within a greater story — that one which begins on the edges of our mythic world. Man's personal confession is to be a discourse of his relations to that greater story, the overarching story. It is in the sanctuary of the heart that modern man can find an inner secret, a guiding image to shape his story and foster his growth. It is in the inner sanctuary of the heart that vision truly seizes modern man rather than the inside of a cathedral. To Jung, the church was the absence of God while in the chamber of his psyche God reigns supreme. The voice of tradition was at best a mild whisper compared to the voice within the heart to which Jung submitted. In the same way, theology must heed to the inner voice of conscience if it is to overcome the stiff mumbo-jumbo that so alienated Jung.

Theology is a systematic God-metaphor but to a modern like Jung, it is a dead metaphor. The "death of God" is none other than the death of a sacred language that once vibrated the poetics of true Being. This has occurred in the modern era because language has become technique whereas for archaic man language was divine — it had power. When religious language becomes a dead language, then theology or properly speaking, discourse on God becomes a voice in the wind and God becomes a museum artifact. True theology begins with divine speech.

The early church had understood the fact that the word of Jesus was the word of God. They experienced a continuity between the divine Logos and the preaching gospel of the church. God-language was sacred. They experienced a oneness between language and Being which modern man has split apart. Today the God-metaphors are no longer experienced as they once were in all its depth and intensity. The shift in theology from the "confessional" to the theoretical has desacralized the poetics of God. As Jung pointed out, modern man does not want to hear a story but wants to be told what the story means. Modern man wants a commentary rather than the story because the story no longer makes sense to him. And to make matters worse, modern man demands a critique after the commentary. The modern shift from gospel to commentary to critique has left modern man with no story. For someone like Jung the Christian story is over.

The upshot of the existential crisis of modern man is that someone like Jung substitutes the concept of Self in place of Christ as the point of departure for his personal myth. For Jung, the myth of the Self has replaced the myth of Christ.[212] For Jung, it is merely a substitution of experience although Jung cannot connect the myth of Christ with the Lord Jesus. He connects the myth of Christ with the Self.[213] Whether Jung exemplifies a Christian perversity or serves as an example

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[212]"Modern psychology is therefore confronted with a question very like the one that faced the alchemists: Is the self a symbol of Christ, or is Christ a symbol of the Self?" C. G. Jung, Aion, p. 68.

[213]C. G. Jung, Psychology and Alchemy (2nd ed., Vol. XII, Collected Works, Bollingen Series XX, Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 345-431.

of a new religious development, to come in modern man, is unanswerable
at present.[214] In all honesty, Jung was shaped by a sacred ground and
by his experiences which to him were sacred enough and real enough to
be taken in all seriousness. He refused to be shaped by the mundane
story into which he was born. He did not submit to traditional
religion but to those numinous experiences which he felt to be truer
to authentic religion. Jung had submitted to his inner God rather
than to the God mediated through scripture, culture or the authority
of the church. Because of his erudition and his critical faculties,
Jung did not interpret his experiences within the Christian hermeneu-
tics.[215] Jung opted for the God of the Imagination rather than the
God of Reason of scholasticism.

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[214]Jung is Gnostic and his particular brand of psychoanalysis
is supported at least theoretically by his alchemical findings which
he himself believed to be the unconscious of the Christian story in
symbolic form.

[215]Jung's thought is firmly grounded in the critical orienta-
tion of the nineteenth century.

THEOLOGY AS STORY

We can say that Jung's personal myth is one of those "stories to the dark" that William James O'Brian explores in his book, Stories to the Dark.[216] The dark that O'Brian refers to is the darkness of our origins and the darkness of our destiny. We have seen earlier in Polanyi and Lonergan the importance of the starting point and the point on the horizon to which we intend in the process of our operations that will shape and guide the story or the journey of our inquiry. Our narrative life-story begins to darken at the edges — at the edge of our origin, at the beginning, and the edge of the unseen horizon. Our story moves from a dark past to a dark future — the dark edges of parable which begins the story of God. The past pushes us forward while the future pulls us onward. The parable is an invitation into the dark land of God's Kingdom. The story that is told to the dark is the story of God's absence, yet it holds promise.[217] Autobiography is the story of the darkness of origins and the darkness of our destiny. The question of questions is the question of origins while the question that ends all questions is the question addressed to us through parables. The experience of parable is the encounter of the "dark

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[216]William James O'Brian, Stories to the Dark: Explorations in Religious Imagination (New York: Paulist Press, 1977), p. 163.

[217]Ibid., p. 3.

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interval". It is that activity of God that breaks the pattern of our
journey -- those moments of "dark intervals", the religious conversa-
tion that summons a new faith and a new story. As such, theology
begins with parable and in its thematization it renders the dark
interval accessible by a sacred poetics. Theology is "a story to the
dark" -- it addresses itself to that greater story that begins on the
borders of darkness, the Great Invisible. When autobiography incorpor-
ates these mysterious dark corners of our narrative story as part of
our story and our story as being part of that Greater story, then it
truly becomes theological. And it is God of the Imagination that
lightens up the dark edges on the Journey to the Unknown Horizon -- to
that other story, which is God's story.

William James O'Brian maintains that stories have a tendency to
fall in a pattern that corresponds to certain modes of imagining and
has defined five modes:

1) the mode of imagining called "innocent" which is discerned
in most myths.

2) the mode of imagining called "fallen" which is prevalent in
gnostic stories.

3) the modern mode of imagining called "alienated" found
generally in fiction.

4) the mode of imagining called "purged" which contains a
critical component.

5) the mode of imagining called "sanctified" whose example is
Dante's Divine Comedy.[218]

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[218]Ibid., p. 4.

In the mode of "innocent imagination", the story as myth lays bare the structure of the world. Furthermore, it tells its adherents how they are to locate themselves in the world. These stories are the sacred stories to which we awake. In this mode of being one is in the story. The imagination that is used in the telling of this story belongs to one already in the story. The storyteller of this kind of story does not offer explanations because he is undifferentiated as to what moves and shapes him. Truly he is in the story. He is seized by the story and responds in a poetic way. He is possessed by the story and this seizure allows the imagination to operate in a poetic way making the storyteller "sing songs" and "shadow reality".

The mode of imagining that is called "fallen" is the mode of the gnostic storyteller who has fallen out of innocence. In this respect the storyteller no longer has a direct immediate relation to things and events. The storyteller has fallen from the naive relationship to things and events. Unlike naive storytellers of the innocent mode, he does not mistake "the shadows for realities". O'Brian points out that the gnostic is not free because he does not realize that what he faces are fabrications or imitations of things in themselves. He is similar to one who defines a table in terms of its atomic structure which is an imaginative construct and not the final explanation of the table.[219] O'Brian states that "if the simple soul faces shadows, if his imagination 'shadows forth' dazzling things, the gnostic beholds a world of projections, mistaking his projections for revelations".[220]

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[219]Ibid., p. 24.

[220]Ibid., p. 25.

Furthermore, Q'Brian maintains that "if the myth tends to leave things in shadow because the storyteller has not been enlightened, the gnosis will disclose how the myth should have been told."[221]

Again, the innocent imagination does not attempt to give a comprehensive explanation because it is simply involved in what it is attempting to solve. The storyteller of the innocent mode is satisfied to celebrate what he "takes to be an awesome fact" and tries to awaken others to its meaning. Thus the strivings of the innocent imagination is "embodied in the shadowy figures and stories it fashions".[222] On the other hand, the fallen imagination constructs explanations. The storyteller of the fallen imagination does not want to live without an intelligent understanding of the underlying reality. The innocent storyteller sees reality as awesome and prefers not to explain anything.

O'Brian agrees that the Kantian revolution to Nietzsche's death of God is the starting point of the alienated imagination. These are stories about people telling stories.[223] This is the mode of nihilism. If the innocent imagination is in the story, then the alienated imagination is so dislocated that even the self it addresses is a stranger. In John Barth's volume of short stories, Lost in the Funhouse, each story is another mirror and one is lost in a labyrinth of mirrors. The story, "Auto-biography: A Self-Recorded Fiction", is concerned with

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[221]Ibid., p. 25.

[222]Ibid., p. 48.

[223]Cf. Ted L. Estess, "The Inerrable Contraption: Reflections on the Metaphor of Story", The Journal of the American Academy of Religion, Vol. 42, No. 3, 1974, pp. 415-434.

"the auto-biography of a taperecording whose last words are its last
words".[224] This is an example of an alienated mode of storytelling.
One becomes lost in the labyrinth of mirrors and cannot emerge out. As
such, alienated imagination that is conscious of its own activity. It
is aware that its stories are fictions but cannot see beyond them. It
is excessive self-consciousness and the imagination is wrapped up in
itself. But when the alienated imagination reaches its limits, it
approaches the domain of purged imagination.

The mode of purged imagining is that activity which allows the
listener to become present to the infinite space of the "soul's dark
night". This mode of imagining refuses to fill that space with fancy.
The imagination is used to free oneself from the folly of the imagina-
tion. This activity is the activity of silence. One must not fill
the void with imagination. When one has maintained the void and
ascended to the fullness of emptiness then the imagination restored is
the sanctified imagination.[225]

Thus the mode of sanctified imagination is the acceptance of an
image that comes from a source other than one's own creativity.
O'Brian says that:

> The poet's decision to let one's poetry be shaped by an image
> that is experienced as received rather than that as controlled or
> contrived parallels the religious decision to let oneself be trans-
> formed by an image that opens onto the love that satisfies the
> heart's desire.[226]

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[224]William J. O'Brian, _Stories to the Dark_, p. 85.

[225]Ibid., p. 111.

[226]Ibid., p. 143.

The image that shapes the "new storyteller" is experienced as trans-
personal. Wallace Stevens is the storyteller whose imagination was
incarnated by Being-poetry. Carl Jung is the storyteller whose uncon-
scious was incarnated by the divine God-image. Jung was shaped by
experiences that to him were unprecedented simply because they did not
fit into the dogmatic picture-box of his tradition. The poetics of
Jung was correspondingly religious. His poetics was the poetics of an
unconscious-psychology which Jung regulated to the religious sphere.
With regards to the decision of the poet and the religious person to
allow himself to be swept away by some image that comes to him from
some other source, O'Brian says that:

> Neither decision is comprehensible apart from a fundamental
> trust in the graciousness of an other to open the way.[227]

The typology of the imagination that O'Brian gives us is useful
when we view the kind of consciousness that operates in the history of
theology. Theology can be seen as operating from specific kinds of
imagination that corresponds to the classification given by O'Brian.

In this way theology can be viewed as storytelling -- the story
of God.

The innocent imagination mode refers to the mythical level of
theological poetics. This would correspond to the Gospels, Patristic
theology and so forth. Here theology was connected to the word of God --
to divine inspiration. From the divine Logos to Christ and through the
workings of the Holy Spirit in the Church, theological writing was
within the realm of myth. Theology in this historical era is located

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[227] Ibid., p. 143.

and locked in the very Christian story itself. In the mythic realm of
the Christian story, theology becomes a celebration of that very story
which moves and shapes the telling of that story.

The shift to the fallen imagination occurred in scholasticism
when theology reached the literary level of theory. Here we have the
flowering of a detached scientific theology which articulates the story
of faith from a metaphysical position. Thus we have the shift from
theology as myth to theology as metaphysics. At this level the story-
teller needs an intelligent explanation of an awesome reality. There-
fore, rather than the celebration of a first-order language, medieval
theology shifted the storytelling to the level of theory.

Finally with "the Kantian turn", theology begins with the liter-
ary style of critique. The neuroticized God-image corresponds to a
theological mode of alienated imagination. The lack of epistemological
support combined with a critical quest for the historical Jesus has,
since the nineteenth century, led to the rise of "religious studies" in
the academic world as opposed to the traditional theological studies.
These religious studies are stories (many stories) about a Story.
Apologetics has given way to philosophy of religion. The Christian
story is no longer defended and articulated from within its own story.
Instead, we have stepped out of the story in order to study it like any
other human phenomenon.

The disappearance of God was the starting point for Wallace
Stevens and the loss of the Christian myth corresponded to Carl Jung's
starting point. Their starting point corresponds to O'Brian's "purged
imagination". This is the loss of story and the loss of a sacred

poetics. For Stevens, the poet becomes silent and for Jung, the tradition was silent. But the silence of God that Stevens and Jung experienced was the purged imagination taken to its limits which for them shifted to a sanctified imagination. The result was that for Stevens, poetry once again became holy, while for Jung, life was once more a sacred ground. In terms of literary style the mode of a sanctified imagination corresponds to a mythical consciousness but one that is decisively post-critical. It is nothing other than the self's home-coming and the re-enchantment of the soul. Thus the shift from a naive myth to a second naiveté is the shift from an old story to a new story. As in Jung's case the shift was the modern shift from the Christian myth to a post-Christian personal myth. But in any case it always remains God's story.

CONCLUSION

The recurring and nagging conclusion that reaffirms itself
throughout the thesis is simply this: modern man needs a sacred story.
Religion in the traditional sense will not suffice an age come of reason.
In a secular age, where technology reigns supreme and has replaced the
hand of God, modern man finds himself at the mercy of forces which he
cannot control. Just as archaic man needed a myth which told him how to
live and where he stood in a chaotic universe, so too does modern man
need a myth to live by. However, for modern man, religion has become
obsolete, theology has lost its epistemological support, the churches
are emptying, tradition has lost its binding power, scripture is no
longer the voice of God, etc. What man needs in a religionless age is
a story that will render to him a sense of place in the universe. As
the God of Reason gives way to the God of the Imagination, so too
religion gives way to story. The words of wisdom are best written in
fairy tales.

Therefore, in a sense, the notion of story for modern man
replaces the notion of religion. Story contains the fact of history and
the fact of linguisticality. In our discussion of religion,
Christianity as example, has an historical dimension fused with a
linguistic dimension ("Word became flesh"). In this way, the notion of
story becomes a fundamental category of religion. As such, the notion
of story replaces the notion of myth insofar as we can speak of

"theology as story". In this sense we have seen that Christianity is a sacred story while theology is a' secular story. Fundamentally, the notion of story becomes an option for the notions of history and language. Life is history and world is language but when one speaks of life-world, then one is speaking of "story". Therefore, the notion of story opens up the possibility of a theopoetics. If the notion of story becomes a categorical option for the concept of religion, then theo-poetics becomes an option for theology.

    We have seen how religion in the traditional sense lost its sacredness for modern men like Wallace Stevens and C. G. Jung. Reason destroyed for them what was holy. The shift from reason to the imagination recovered for them a sense of the sacred and the way that they expressed this was through a theopoetics rather than through traditional theologizing. This is so because the very process of articulating their religiosity was part of their religiosity. In other words, their articulation of their experience was identical with the experience itself. Ontologically, their storytelling was identical with the story itself in the same way "confessional theology" (e.g. Augustine, St. John's Gospel, etc.) did not stand apart from the Christian story itself. But for Stevens and Jung, their theologizing is post-critical, that is, it occurs after the examination of the limits of reason. If Kant removed the God of Reason to give way to the God-morality of practical reason, Stevens and Jung removed the God of Reason to give way to the God of the Imagination that was able to reinstate for them a sacred poetics. For Stevens, Being-poetry is theology and religion simultaneously. For Jung, alchemy is theology and the individuation

process (i.e. transformation of self correlating to the alchemical process) is religion. Thus for modern men like Stevens and Jung, religion and story are one and the same, in the same way that for archaic man myth and history were one and the same thing or in the case of Christianity, myth and kerygma were one and the same. Therefore, by ontologizing history and language, Stevens and Jung closed the gap between being and thought — hence religion becomes story.

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