IMAGE, GESTALT SHIFT, TRANSFORMATION AND METANOIA: THE STRUCTURE OF WORLD-CREATIONS– IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING THEORY

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As history approaches the Twenty-first Century the most frequent observation of human beings might be "Nothing is nailed down any more." At the simplest level the fact of change has been observed from the primitive period in the rotation of seasons, in the growth process of humans and other forms within nature, and at least where linearly conceived the historic continuum. In the present day technology has added a major impact to this level of observation relative to change. Among the pre-Socratics it was possible for Heraclitus to build an ontological principle on the very observation of change.

In the present day, however, two factors create an entirely different view of the nature of change. These are rapidation and the knowledge explosion. By rapidation is meant the speeded-up process which a technological civilization allows in the observation and experience of change; and the knowledge explosion suggests that both technology and its supporting scientific endeavors have created more information than most human brains are able to comprehend. Kenneth Burke, the literary critic, has suggested in his trilogy consisting of *A Grammar of Motives, A Rhetoric of Motives,* and *A Symbolic of Motives,* that the successful poet achieves "a mounting up of images" which provides a new metaphor of reality. Perhaps technological change in the Twentieth Century creating both rapidation and knowledge explosion have provided this mounting up of images in such a way that a new metaphor of reality is required.[1]

Robert Oppenheimer, the American physicist, has described the new situation:

> One thing that is new is the prevalence of newness, the changing scale and scope of change itself, so that the world alters as we walk in it . . .[2]

The purpose of this paper is to describe the relation of all expe-

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[1]Cf., Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives, A Rhetoric of Motives, and A Symbolic of Motives,* World Publishing, Cleveland, 1962.

[2]Robert Oppenheimer, "A Great Upheaval," in Don Fabun, *The Dynamics of Change,* Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, 1967, p. 2.

rience of such change and the learning process. Throughout most of educational history it has been assumed that in the learning process it is the learner who changes. However, there are indications from contemporary social science and contemporary learning theory that that which changes is the learner's world, i.e., that the learner's perceived world actually shifts in its reality. As a result, learning may be understood in the contemporary setting as the creation of a new world. Therefore, we propose to examine the structure of world-creations; to investigate the normative quality of the elements of such structure; and implications of such for the learning process.

It is the intent of the paper to examine this thesis through first, a structural analysis of the descriptions given by several social scientists of the process that is under examination; second, a structural analysis of a theology of learning. From these analyses it would be hoped that a model of learning could be constructed .

I

The first social scientist to be described is Kenneth Boulding of our neighboring institution, the University of Colorado. Boulding is basically an economist. However, his work in a variety of social sciences, has moved him to the position of being a philosopher of social science. In *The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society* he describes what he understands as the subjective knowledge structure of a human being.[3]

He calls this structure an image, i.e. a frame of reference. He sees the human being as finding one's self in a taken-for-granted world, that is, in a world which is assumed to persist. The earth will turn; the sun will rise; the electric light will go on when the switch is pushed; the sidewalk will hold our weight; the tram will take us to our destination; the mathematical equation will solve the problem. These and thousands of other daily, ordinary, taken-for-grantednesses compose an individual's subjective knowledge structure. Out of these one fashions an image of the world or a world picture which functions for that person as a frame of reference which enables the sorting out of information, the granting of value to some information over other, and a position of reality within the world.

There are several elements, or descriptive contructs, to Boulding's image. The first is that all behavior depends on the image. That is, when one observes that the clock has struck a certain hour, then one rises and proceeds through an orderly routine of the day. It is taken

[3]Kenneth E. Boulding, *The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, 1969.

for granted within the subjective knowledge structure of the individual that the clock is measuring not only time, but the normal ordering of one's life. Every behavior of an individual is so ordered by the taken-for-granted reference system inherent within the image. The second element is that the image serves as a filter for all messages received by the individual. Any information which comes to the individual proceeds through the filtering screen of the frame of reference employed by that individual. The third element, as stated by Boulding, is that the image is certainly quite personal; however, in order to be operational it must at the same moment be a public image. That is, there must be at least a subculture or a community of acceptance in which the same image operates. This is described as the basic Weltanschuung of western culture. Or on the other hand, it is described as the basic frame of reference of a group of biochemists; or of the basic economic views of a group of local businessmen. The subculture may be quite small; or on the other hand include vast percentages of the world population. The important factor is that the image is public and therefore that information filtered through it is being filtered in a publicly verifiable mode.

The fourth element concerns feedback. It is Boulding's claim that through the receiving of messages, i.e., a feedback system, images change. New data, new information, or new experience is filtered by the image, but such data, information or experience also changes the image. This feedback system may operate on three levels. At the first level the message may be rejected or merely ignored. This would suggest that according to the hierarchy of value within the image, the message is of little import. The second level would suggest that the message would add information to the presently-held image. It would be extended, as it were, in order to receive the new data. The third level of feedback is described as occurring when the image structure itself is attacked. There is too much "noise" in the image. The image must shift in order to accommodate the new information or experience. If the message attacks a basic substructure of the image, then indeed the image itself may fall, or it may be exchanged for another image.

Boulding is quite clear that in order for such an image shift to occur there must be a new public as well. That whether the image remains intact or is changed, the identity of the person is at stake. The world-view of the holder is obviously at stake. Indeed, the world itself is at stake.

Boulding's description of the functioning of the image and of the process of image change is the basis, he would claim, of a new science which he calls Eiconics . This is a discipline born of many disciplines

and one which is primarily based on information theory and communication theory. It would be his hope that the new science would develop specialists and research programs in order to enable persons to understand their own images and the shifts that occur within them.

From the field of the philosophy and history of science comes another striking description. Thomas S. Kuhn in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*[4] has described "revolutions as changes of world-view." In this chapter Professor Kuhn has argued that a particular gestalt or pattern determines what is perceived by the scientist. He describes the functioning of a gestalt or pattern by means of simple pictures such as a set of stairs which may be perceived as descending, or as ascending, the outline of a box one square of which may be seen as the front or again as the rear of the box, an etching of an old woman which when observed from a different perspective is actually that of a beautiful young girl, or of an inkblot which contains upon a certain perception a picture of Jesus.

Changes in perspective are due to a patterning of experience or a gestalt. On a larger scale a scientific paradigm operates similarly. He claims that the paradigm which is currently operational for a scientist determines the nature of his experiment and the result of his observation. Example after example of shifts which have occurred in scientific understanding, in perceived reality, and indeed ultimately in a change in the knowledge of reality, are given. These come from astronomy, optics, electricity, mechanics, and chemistry.

The reigning paradigm of any scientific discipline first sets up the experiment, determines which instruments shall be employed, determines the type of data which are to be observed, and the form in which the results will be published. When there is "failure to fit" of data with the reigning paradigm, there are two possibilities. In some instances the data are ignored or rejected, as with the psychologist who rejects data from extrasensory perception, or a heliocentric universe rejected by church authority. On the other hand, "failure to fit" may cause a new viewpoint to come into being.

When this occurs it is not merely that a different interpretation of data has occurred. The reigning paradigm has actually been destroyed or at least replaced. Interpretation always must be given in terms of a particular paradigm. If the old paradigm does not account for the data then a new paradigm must be provided which will allow for a new interpretation.

This paradigm change or gestalt shift actually appears to create

[4]Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1962.

a new world. However, for the new world to be accepted or the new paradigm to become operational this world must also be inhabited by others. That is, there must be a community of researchers who view the world through the same paradigm; the paradigm must have a public. At times a paradigm is realigned. At times it may be expanded. But at other times the paradigm is changed. But, as the observed data cause a change in the paradigm, so the new paradigm causes a change in the world.

> Examining the record of past research from the vantage of contemporary historiography, the historian of science may be tempted to exclaim that when paradigms change, the world itself changes with them. Led by a new paradigm, scientists adopt new instruments and look in new places. Even more important, during revolutions scientists see new and different things when looking with familiar instruments in places they have looked before.... Paradigm changes do cause scientists to see the world of their research-engagement differently. Insofar as their only recourse to that world is through what they see and do, we may want to say that after a revolution scientists are responding to a different world.[5]

Reality is seen as a social construct by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann who, in using the rubrics of the sociology of knowledge, in their book *The Social Construction of Reality*[6] describe society as objective reality and society as subjective reality. Whenever institutions must be transmitted to a new generation legitimation is required. The system of legitimation of institutions follows a particular pattern.[7] At the first level this is a language structure. Words like father, cousin, brother-in-law, create a self-evident kinship system for the young child. At the second level legitimation contains the simplest theoretical content, e.g. proverbs, moral maxims, legends, folktales, etc. At the third level is a body of systematic knowledge which provides explicit theories and even specialists or professionals who transmit those theories. The fourth level of legitimation is known as a symbolic universe. This includes the entire theoretical tradition that integrates the different meaning structures of society and provides a base for the total institutional order. The social universe is seen as a social phenomenon with a history.

The individual relates to this whole system of society seen as ob-

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[5]Kuhn, *op. cit.*, "Revolutions as Changes in World View," p. 1.

[6]Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Doublday Anchor, Garden City, 1967.

[7]*Ibid.*, pp. 92ff.

jective reality in all its levels of legitimation through a process of internalization. This produces society as subjective reality.[8] The socialization process of the society forms the subjective reality. It is transmitted through the thousands and thousands of interactions throughout the person's life. The social world provides a plausibility structure for the subjective reality held by the individual. Significant others have a prominent place in this plausibility structure. Within the plausibiilty structure the most significant vehicle of reality maintenance is conversation. But the conversational apparatus not only maintains the subjective reality, it may also modify it. Some conversational experience may be ignored; some conversational experience may cause certain items within the reality structure to be dropped and others added. Through conversation language realizes a world for the individual.

This subjective social world formed primarily through socialization processes such as conversation serves as a plausibility structure, grants self-identification, provides sanctions, and provides modes of dealing with both everyday routines and intermittent crises.

Society as subjective reality may be transformed. Such transformation Berger and Luckmann call alternation.[9] Whenever alternation occurs a resocialization process is required. Both social and conceptual conditions must be present. The primary social condition is an effective plausibility structure, including significant others. The plausibility structure rearticulates, frequently through conversational apparatus, the individual's world. It must provide sufficient social apparatus to dismantle the old world, to reinterpret the past biography, and to legitimate the new subjective world.

In alternation the identity of the individual is at stake. The very reality of the social world is at stake. The language system may be changed or at least altered. Reality itself is at stake.

Carl Jung has provided a profound description of transformation in his essay "Transformation Symbolism in the Mass."[10] This includes a brief history of the mass, a parallel of Aztec culture, a parallel from alchemical literature of the middle ages, "the vision of Zosimos", a psychological description of the mass and a model of transformation.

The eccesiastical doctrine of transubstantiation is normally concerned with the elements of bread and wine. However, on closer reading it is possible to see that there are several transformations involved

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 129ff.
[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 157-163.
[10] Carl G. Jung, "Transformation Symbolism in the Mass," in Violet S. deLaszlo, ed., *Psyche and Symbol,* Doubleday Anchor, Garden City, 1958.

in the mass. First, the gifts themselves are transformed three times before and during the mass:

> Thus the grain and wine symbols have a four-fold layer of meaning: 1) as agricultural products; 2) as products requiring special processing (bread from grain, wine from grapes); 3) as expressions of psychological achievement (work, industry, patience, devotion, etc.) and of human vitality in general; 4) as manifestations of mana or of the vegetation daemon. From this list it can easily be seen that a symbol is needed to sum up such a complicated physical and psychic situation. The simplist symbolical formula for this is "bread and wine," giving these words the original complex significance which they have alway had for tillers of the soil.[11]

The priest in the mass is transformed into Christ by serving as his representative to the congregation. God is transformed from the position of remote Creator to that of Incarnate Word, and thence to present Spirit. The congregation is transformed from a collectivity of repentant individuals into a community of faith. And the communicant is transformed in that the self is also offered as a sacrifice and made pure by the action of the service. In addition, the eschatological motif transforms the world, indeed the cosmos itself.

Other parallel structures may be found in descriptions of the ghost dance of the American indian, the fertility rites of Astarte, the worship of Reason after the French Revolution and in many other religious and secular studies. The symbol system found in the mass as described by Jung implies that transformation includes at least the following: a change from the routine patterns of everyday, a special agent or agency, a social community (which undergoes transformation along with the communicant), a language event (including a number of symbolic acts), a new identity for the self, and a new world.

In the preceding descriptions from a variety of social scientists, no claim is made that the various terms carry identity of definition. It is obvious that some are similar while others are of entirely different categories. The point to be lifted out is that each describes a human process relative to the structure of change.

This might allow one to draw some tentative conclusions as to the structure of change relative to subjective consciousness within the human being. Such structural analysis as the following would be suggested: first, the presence of a new experience, information, or message; second, some functioning system within the human is found to

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 204.

be inadequate; third, a social plausibility structure is necessary, including a community of significant others; fourth, a new language or at least a new set of terms are developed; fifth, a resocialization and/or reinterpretation process is instituted; sixth, a change of perspective results; seventh, a change or a partial change in identity follows; eighth, a change of world may be implied.

II

Contemporary learning theory suggests that learning is a human process related to a change in subjective consciousness. It would appear that implications may be drawn therefore from the following short descriptions of learning theories.

Jerome Bruner says that the earliest thought is imagistic, i.e., iconic thinking.[12] Piaget supports this view. But Bruner goes on to say that all thought may initiate in such mental images, that changes in thought will require new images. This would appear to be a particular of the universal which Boulding has described.

Jean Piaget, the Swiss biologist, who in order to wrestle with epistemological problems produced a genetically based developmental psychology, has described learning as a product of cognitive development. As with other aspects of the human being, cognitive development begins with physical or genetic factors. The child begins to experience the world of objects and actions in such a way as to develop schemata or structures of reasoning within the brain. The first phase, or stage, of cognitive development is called sensory motor. It is during this period that the infant imprints upon the brain through multiple experiences the operation of the senses and the locomotor skills of the larger muscles. The second stage is described as prelogical or preoperational. The child is here absorbing a symbol system and operating out of an egocentric world-view. He thinks syncretistically, i.e., without cause-effect connections. Ronald Goldman,[13] a British schoolmaster who has produced a variety of curriculum materials for the teaching of religion in public schools, tells the story of his own four-year-old daughter who when being driven to nursery school kept asking why the bell tower in the distance was going up and down. Goldman began to question his daughter as to her observation of the car, the street, the hilly terrain and the fact that the car was going up and down the hills. The child seemed to understand the motion of the car and the fact that she was riding in it. However, after this complete

[12]See Jerome S. Bruner, *Toward A Theory of Instruction*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1967, esp. Chapter 1.

[13]Ronald Goldman, *Readiness for Religion*, Seabury Press, New York, 1968, Chapter 1.

explanation the child asked, "Daddy, but why has the bell tower gone down again?"

During this period it is impossible for the child to experience the conservation of amount or matter. If you hand two identical clay balls to a child and ask him to smash one into a pancake and then ask if they still contain the same amount, the child will claim that one is larger than the other. He may then put them back into ball shape and claim that they are the same amount again. The apparent illogic of his conclusions is unrecognizable to him. The process whereby the child begins to sort out relationships of size and shape can come only after the child is able to look at an object from more than one perspective.

The next major period of cognitive development is described as concrete operations. Now the child uses symbol systems which he has absorbed, letters, words, numbers, etc. in order to solve problems. He makes up sentences, uses simple arithmetic, operates upon objects in order to accomplish things with them. Simple logic, including cause-effect relationships, begins to be apparent to him. It is during this period that the conservation of amount becomes clear. He adds to this more sophisticated understandings of conservation such as those of mass and later of volume. The stage of concrete operations lasts throughout most of the elementary school years.

Finally, with the onset of puberty, and the stimulating social environment of older childhood, the child begins to enter into formal operations, i.e. begins to do simple abstract thinking. This is the normal mode of thought for adolescents and adults. Now one may think about thinking. One may operate with mental acts, rather than being bound to concrete objects. Unfortunately, a great many American adults are not able to do sophisticated formal operations, and yet a major number of decision-making processes require this type of thought.

Piaget understands the development of these cognitive structures, as just described, to come about through a process of adaptation. Adaptation is divided into two subprocesses which are happening simultaneously throughout the human being's experience. The first is assimilation: that is, information, data, experience, understanding, is assimilated into the self. At first such new understandings and experiences are merely absorbed without being integrated into that which is presently part of the child's experience and understanding. The second operation is entitled accommodation: that is, the accommodation of the self to the external environment, or to the new situation, or to the new data. In this procedure accommodation has to occur in

order that some integration with prior structures may take place or else new structures must be formed.

Lawrence Kohlberg of Harvard University has coined the term cognitive conflict to describe the procedure whereby accommodation is required after assimilation has occurred, i.e. to describe the necessary movement from one level or stage or structure of reasoning to another. There would appear to be in many instances in the child's experience satisfaction with merely assimilating new experience. However, when the "noise" is too great in the system, or there is "failure to fit" within the structure of reasoning, then the child is forced into a process of accommodation whereby a new structure begins to emerge.

This process is called equilibration. That is, each step in the assimilation-accommodation routine in response to a cognitive conflict prepares the child for a new stimulation or for the structuring of a new possibility of learning. This model of eqilibrium is an organic model based on a maturational scheme. It is therefore quite different from the apparently static model of equilibrium employed in the functional theories of Parsons and Merton. Each step in the process of building the blocks of cognitive development is more complex, more highly differentiated, and more adequate than those that have preceded. Building on this cognitive schema, Philip Phenix[14] has developed a general curriculum of education which begins with symbolics, moves through empirical problem solving, toward the more complicated and formal operations requiring abstract thought, such as aesthetics, ethics and those integrating disciplines which require advanced ability in abstraction.

Both Bruner and Piaget claim that learning takes place according to the presence of the following factors: there is first a genetic structure to the brain itself; second, there is experience, Bruner would add enactive experience, in which the materials are as nearly as possible confronted physically; third, there is social stimulation, that is, either direct or indirect intervention from the social environment which indicates that the presently operating structures are inadequate and that change or restructuring must take place.

To this Bruner would add a specific verbal note. Although Piaget studies language and would claim that the social stimulation is frequently verbal, Bruner suggests that the use of a symbol system in each concrete act of learning internalizes that learning and allows the learner to make it his own.

Very little research has been done relating cognitive development to personality development. There are some implications that are

[14]Philip H. Phenix, *Realms of Meaning*, McGraw Hill, New York, 1964.

fairly obvious, but others that need thorough research. Learners do not have to learn. Experiences may not stimulate. Messages may be refused. Interactions may be ignored. Personality factors may inhibit normal learning. However, when the environment is appropriate then learning may take place and cognitive maturation may proceed.

Combining the several strands of learning theory just described would suggest that a composite model of learning would include at least the following factors. Each learning starts with an image, i.e. with a mental picture. Each learning is or may be related to a symbolic representation or verbal naming of the event. Each learning may occur because of social stimulation or a change in the social environment. Each learning requires a social plausibility structure, i.e. at least a small community of significant others who reinforce the learning process or enable it to proceed. And finally, each learning requires an action or a decision or a movement by the learner. If these five factors are present, then internalization may be said to take place and learning is achieved. Where this has occurred, the identity of the learner has been affected.

One footnote in learning theory might be added. Paulo Freire of Brazil in his volume the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*[15], adds another factor to the learning process. This is called consciousness raising. Although this process is obvious in the area of liberation politics and social action, it is perhaps not quite as obvious in the routine and academic areas of learning. It should also be apparent, however, that unless the learner has had his subjective consciousness aroused whatever learning takes place may remain latent or potential. In order to move to the level of action or decision about learning, then it would appear that consciousness would be a necessary part of the process. When approaching the problem of learning theory relative to adults, it would seem that Freire's contribution would be a positive one.

A further factor, which though complicating enhances the learning process, is found in the distinction which most learning theorists make between cognitive development and conceptual development. It is possible for persons to assimiliate a concept, to verbalize about it and to appear to make use of that concept, perhaps even act upon it. However, if cognitive learning as well as conceptual appropriation has not occurred, that is if cognitive restructuring has not taken place, then there will be short retention of the concept and perhaps a distortion of the conceptualization. Bruner gives one insight into this particular process. Conceptualizations that are primarily verbal and

[15]Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Herder & Herder, New York, 1970.

do not reach into a restructuring of the situation may leave the original image untouched, so that persons may memorize or in other ways internalize a new definition for God, they may be able to regurgitate this definition at appropriate moments, they may even "understand" the meaning of the definition and its application. However, because of the strong affective relationship to images and to actions in the learning process, an older image of God may be retained, and in addition may be the primary operational image which the learner uses. This would indicate that any learning process must do more than teach concepts or conceptual patterns. Modes must be found whereby the learner may relate at an affective level, i.e. at the level of feelings, values, attitudes, personal understandings, in order that the attachment to older images or habituated patterns of action may be overcome. That is, the failure to fit must be on more than a mere mental level, as important as that level may be. The noise in the computer must reach to the emotive or value level, or to the more primal level of mental images in order that significant change or permanent restructuring take place.

III

Theological learning like any other learning must be involved in the variety of steps, factors, and restructurings, as described above. If one is to learn to tie a shoe, do a multiplication problem, or write a constitution, then one is following a process which will not change when one is appropriating professional skills of ministry, or theological self-understandings. There is however a further complication in the field of theological learning which may or may not be present in other forms of learning experience. Theological subject matter relates to world-views, overall frames of reference or major paradigms. Therefore, the insights of the social scientists described in the first portion of this paper become acutely important for those involved in theological learning. If one is to order the learning environment for those engaged in theological reflection, then there must be some attention to terms such as image, paradigm shift, alternation, and transformation. It would appear that although these processes have many implications for any form of learning, the implications relative to theological self-understanding become paramount.

However, rather than discussing the specific structure of theological learning, this paper will close with a discussion of the theology of learning.

There are two key terms in the Christian tradition which indicate the primary understanding for a theology of learning in a Christian

context. The first is metanoia and the second is transfiguration. Metanoia is a change of one's mind, a turning around, a repentence. It is, if you will, in the biblical tradition an objective act rather than merely a subjective psychological feeling. It requires a change of life style, a commitment which is observable in its fruits.

> For the Christian, the heart of change is repentance. The imperative to change involves a decision to turn from one way of living to another. That turning, as the poet would put it, makes "all the difference." Proud man does not take this road until a broken spirit has been transformed into a contrite heart. His education, therefore, is located in all these areas of his life where the claims of mind, body, and spirit are in conflict. One "learns" in and through such conflicts that to be a person requires sacrifice. A troubled spirit is the first step in transformation. Every transition in the life cycle is achieved by a resolution requiring something very much like repentance and rebirth.[16]

This description sounds very similar to that provided by Kohlberg and Piaget. It is therefore not surprising to note that Stinnette goes on to suggest that such learning provides a new identity which offers a "new cognitive pattern for understanding reality"; that the covenant community provides the social plausibility structure whereby a person receives power for change; and that the specific means for change is identification with significant role models.[17]

If metanoia is the requirement for learning to take place within a theological context, then transfiguration might be seen as its result. When learning has been achieved within a Christian theological context, then the person is transfigured, that is, is changed and with the change is empowered. Dorothy Lee, the noted anthropologist, suggests in her volume *Freedom and Culture*[18] that the cognitive side of knowing should be called consubstantiation. It is this kind of learning which may be called participant-observation learning. The individual participates in the action, in the encounter, in the event, which may be described as the learning environment. But at the same time, the individual is observing both the process and himself in order that as he faces the social documents of the learning situation, rather than only interpreting them to himself, he finds himself interpreted by them. Thus consubstantiation, participant-observatioin, action-reflec-

[16]Charles R. Stinnette, Jr., *Learning in Theological Perspective,* Association Press, New York, 1965, pp. 70-71.

[17]*Ibid.,* p. 71.

[18]Dorothy Lee, *Freedom and Culture,* Spectrum, New York, 1957, p. 83.

tion, are modes of symbolization that give flesh and blood to the transfigurement that Christian learning might accomplish.

A third note on a theology of learning would suggest that Nouwen, the Dutch priest, is correct when in *Creative Ministry* he suggests that teaching most often in the western situation takes place under the context of "getting things under control."

> As long as teaching takes place in this context it is doomed to be a violent process and evoke a vicious cycle of action and reaction in which man faces his world as new territory that has to be conquered but is filled with enemies unwilling to be overruled by a stranger. The teacher who enters this area is forced to enter into a process which by its nature is competitive, unilateral, and alienating. In short: violent.[19]

If a man is not to be in conflict with his environment, then neither is he to be integrated into it. The Greek understanding of Paideia requires that man be integrated into cosmic nature. Rudolf Bultmann has noted, however, that the biblical mode of transfiguration is man's consciousness of himself as a participant in history. Man stands over against cosmic nature.[20]

If theological learning is for the Christian an historical process, then a theology of learning must be in the last sense incarnational. The flesh and blood of idea and the flesh and blood of skill are that which are to be taught and the infleshment within the teacher of the metanoia, the transfiguration, the consubstantiation, and the participant-observation mode should be those factors which allow a theology of Christian learning to show forth an incarnation.

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[19]Henri M. Nouwen, *Creative Ministry*, Doubleday, Garden City, 1971, p. 5.

[20]Rudolf Bultmann, *Essays, Philosophical and Theological*, Student Christian Movement, London, 1955, p. 124.

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