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SECOND CUP INCULTURATION:

THE MEDIATING MISSION
AND SIDEWAYS POSITION
OF IMAGES AND SYMBOLS IN DIALOGUE

by

SHARON DAWN JOHNSON

A dissertation submitted to the
Institute of Mission Studies, Saint Paul University,
Ottawa, Canada, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
Degree Master of Arts in Missiology



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INTRODUCTION

A. Life Ambition

In speaking of the innocent, practicable guise with which a piece of work may be conceived, the novelist Thomas Mann wrote the following descriptive words about *The Magic Mountain*.

If a writer had before him from the start all the possibilities and all the drawbacks of a projected work, and knew what the book itself wanted to be, he might never have the courage to begin. It is possible for a work to have its own will and purpose, perhaps a far more ambitious one than the author's - and it is good that this should be so. For the ambition should not be a personal one; it must not come before the work itself. The work must bring it forth and compel the task to completion.¹

These amplifying and affirming words compelled my attention just at the time that this thesis was almost complete. Ah! How slowly and painfully I learned to acknowledge, accept and partner a story plot that had its own will and life-ambition. Such an energetic will and life-directing purpose is not the innocent guise of the original and straightforward outline plan first proposed. Instead it has become a sustained poetic-prophetic quest for the universal blessings, benefits, and bounty of a healing alternative which, in a contemporary context of Christian mission, can welcome and befriend the stranger and the enemy as a guest.² This hospitality theme is at the forefront of current concerns in Christian mission, especially seen in the increasing

-
1. Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain*, trans. H.T. Lowe-Porter, (England: Nationwide Book Service, [1924] 1979), p.722.
 2. See J. Massyngbaerde Ford, *My Enemy is My Guest: Jesus and Violence in Luke*, (New York: Orbis Books, 1984).

sensitivity to the intersection of anthropology and theology. Greater consciousness to the theme of alterity facilitates a renewed appreciation of the need to respect and honour the strangeness and otherness of diverse peoples and cultures. It is the theme of hospitality and welcome to otherness in the context of present and future-oriented Christian mission that affirms the contents and approach to mission developed in this thesis.

The scandalous and ultimate stranger and enemy is considered to be death, both theologically and anthropologically. Death is viewed as the ultimate enemy of life (1Cor.15:26). The heartfelt and playfilled concern of this thesis is to offer a poetic-prophetic and hospitable alternative view which may help to heal the split which conventional life-death oppositions entail. Giving death a room and a voice within life's habitations offers and invites a revisioning way of accommodating the reality of both. A penetrating discernment of disguises is important in knowing the identity of the strangers and enemies who seek entry. Life is full of unexpected surprises that turn habitual and conventional worldviews upside down (Acts 17:6, RSV). Alas, without any common meeting ground, the oppositions of life and death create an eternal battleground of vested interests. Whereas, a perceptive shift and enlightening, directional change of position and perspective offer the refreshing newness of justifiable hope that can reconcile opposites in a meaningful way. Hopefilled qualities may then do justice to the healing and holistic properties of *shalom*.

Within the parameters of existence, there are only two options: choose life, choose death. Choosing life is the timely middle ground option which Thomas Mann so lavishly illustrates, that place into which

one must be initiated and reborn in conscious experience. Of his hero, Hans Castorp, Mann records these telling remarks. "In the course of his experience, he [Hans] overcomes his inborn attraction to death and arrives at an understanding of a humanity that does not, indeed, rationalistically ignore death, nor scorn the dark, mysterious side of life, but takes account of it, without letting it get control over his mind."³ The inborn theological attraction to death, through the curse of original sin, is the fatal flaw and psychic impress stamped on Western civilization. Like it or not, this prevailing tribal curse is part of the historical and cultural foundations and structures of Western society, as well as being thoroughly embedded in its religious traditions. Part of the concern of this thesis will show that the problem of the denial of death so prevalent in current societal attitudes, is a rightful denial and protest against the gross injustice and suffering wrought on human nature by the tribal vengeance mentality embodied in this perpetuating curse. A shift of perspective facilitates fresh and energizing questions about the universal life and death issues at stake. People become what they are beheld to be, so a positive blessing is not to deny sin, willfulness, and weaknesses. The universal blessings and benefits of a positively reoriented focus on human nature makes a lawful, graceful and justifiable room for sin, fear and death by association, but not at the expense of all God-given life.

"Love your enemy" (Mt.6:44; Lk.6:27) and "Make friends with your enemy (accuser)" (Mt.5:25) are significant and timely reminders of the truth of Christ's way of dealing with life-threatening issues. His

3. Ibid, p.726.

method was a complete turnaround to the tribal conventionalities of his day. Friendship with death, like friendship with God, requires that we face and befriend our fears, our guilt, and our suffering, existential and ultimate. Such hospitable and compassionate friendship becomes the place for the redemptive and transformative option. Fear motivation (Gen.3:10) is more powerful but perhaps far less obvious than the guilt associated with its law-defiant kin. What is equal to the power of fear? Love making room for fear, for disguised strangers and enemies, for apparent death, mitigates and mediates the focal tendencies of self-justification and law-letter legalism with the life-giving spirit of grace, mercy and compassion.

The essential heart of this thesis, as it was first proposed, was the small and particular story of the death-to-life initiation and transformation involving two women, Leda and Rose Aaron (myself), in dialogue. Images and symbols played an important role in their interactions, and became the place where Christ revealed his disguised presence and purposes in increasing transparence, during the five months, and twenty-three visits of their journey together. This story developed in and out of the specific praxis context of side by side companionship with Leda, who was dying. Accompanying Leda to and through death's door was an intensely inductive initiation into a new conscious approach to Christian mission.

The mountain, for Thomas Mann, is his symbol for the experience of a "heightening" or "enhancement" (*Steigerung*) of consciousness which makes it possible for his ordinary and simple hero, representative of common folk, to be initiated by certain heightening or peak experiences relating to the universal themes of death and life. Quest and search,

asking, seeking, knocking - in short, being open to all kinds of "questionable" experiences - are part of the initiation of consciousness into something more wholesome and healthy than the fatal curse of a death attraction. "Sideways" is the position and word chosen in this thesis to illustrate a 'peak' initiation into an alternative consciousness-making reality, such as that indicated by Mann. The sideways position will be developed as a *leitmotif* appropriate to contemporary and future-oriented Christian mission. It will be shown to be a healthy alternative and disciplined corrective to the religious and cultural domination, denigration, and destruction that has plagued and impoverished imperialistic and colonialistic mission history.

The initial sideways initiations with Leda were supplemented by a further eighteen months of reflective quest: to make greater sense of their dialogical encounters, and to understand and apply its opening significance to furthering new horizontal orientations in mission praxis and theology. These experiences of observer-participator companionship have provided a particularly concentrated and distilled reservoir of symbolic communication upon which to reflect and draw. In the course of those following two, nine month periods of time, a greater will and purpose began to exercise its own ambition regarding the compositional work, direction and purpose of this thesis.

B. Initiating Theme and Its Value

The life-death theme has taken me deeper and further than ever I intended to go at the outset. Thus the admonition in the context of the film *Field of Dreams*, to "go the distance", has encouraged, even insisted on, the investment of all my life savings in this thesis

project. The 'distance' phrase has proved to be a supportive guideline and lifeline when suffering from fearful heartburn (Jer.20:9), and wanting to abort and abandon the whole project. Can a mother forget her child, even a strange and unlooked-for one? Thus I found myself carrying and midwifing a 'child' (yes! 'she' has a name and birthdate) that was strangely conceived, which did not, and does not belong to me. Though her growth and development has been judiciously pruned and edited, yet I have been forcefully prevented and constrained from deleting any of her vital body-soul-spirit parts. The constraining reason is connected with the title and final goal of this thesis, *Second Cup Inculturation*. The process of gospel inculturation takes time, so at the outset, I acknowledge that the length of the writing herein, its depth and distance, is not of my own strict and independent choosing, but a surrender. This thesis is thus a symbiotic counterpoint composition which in the last analysis, could finally, freely and joyfully say, "Be it unto me according to Your will."

The *Second Cup Theme* appeared in a dream, the details of which can be found in Appendix 2, just a few days before a surprising whirlwind trickster spun me into mission studies, and into the unexpected yet open arms of a homecoming sensibility. At that time, I had no intention of being a missionary, and struggled for a long time with that vocational calling and placement. Thus, for two and a half years I carried and nursed an image and symbol whose unfolding meaning for modern Christian mission has gradually become more transparent as its enshrouding material layers have been carefully and contextually unwrapped. Imagine the strange yet playful irony of holding in one's hands, or rather holding in the mind's eye, the 'answer' to a quest not yet consciously

and studiously undertaken! What kind of preparation gives the answer before the problem and arising questions are known and asked? Arising out of the quest to make sense of a contemporary missionary vocation, three strands of quest come together in the braided ring quest. This quest involves the longterm search for blessings and benefits on human nature; the search for a wholesomely renewed and refreshing alternative position of integrity in Christian mission; and the question of the transformation of a death-to-love-life attraction. In the particular context of companionship with Leda, Rose Aaron and I were initiated into a new and unconventional approach to mission and sharing the good news of the gospel of Christ. Born out of this experience, some revisioning mission principles have emerged and an ancient depth evangelization precedent has been retrieved which shows the partnership of Christian and cultural imagery. These validate and verify the sideways approach to be developed herein. The trickster joke of the *Second Cup* introduces the mediating mission and sideways position of images and symbols in dialogue by expanding and enlarging the original scope of this thesis. The plot of Leda's story becomes an extended metaphor for explicating the process of initiation into a alternative sideways orientation to Christian mission.

The *Second Cup Theme*, as I have been given to understand it, is a doublesided *anthropos-theos* gift. It is a revisioning of the "best" gift and "saving word"⁴ which a renewed and refreshed Christian faith

4. For the context of "best" and "saving word", see Leroy Rouner, "Theology of Religions in Recent Protestant Theology," *Concilium* 183 (1986): 108-115, p.115. The author asks, "What is the best your religion has to offer to the problems we all face?", quoting the question about a "saving word about the future" raised by Dr. Abid

has to offer to some of the problems facing our world. The bare bones of this thesis is structured and framed by a problem, a quest and a question, and the answer disclosed in inculturating the *Second Cup*. The essential problem is connected with the denial of death as the enemy and stranger, and fear is the key to accessing situations of denial in various disguises. The braided ring quest raises the question of *how* to welcome and befriend the enemy-stranger as the guest. The answer to be found in the *Second Cup* will be given in the final chapter. The Christic authoring and finishing touches of God's grace-filled love are meant to give human being the liberating benefits and blessings of confidence and trust in God which are sufficient for the facing of death-life accounts and reckonings (1Jn.4:17). Jesus brought good news about easy and fearless access to God. The alternative contents of the *Second Cup* offer and propose a healthy symbiotic friendship between life and death. However, between the introduction and answer of the *Second Cup*, there is a certain questing distance to be travelled.

The importance and value of going to great lengths to learn some fluency in the dynamic language and communicating power of images and symbols, is of vital and timely significance for Christian mission praxis and theology. Spiritual truth is expressed in images and symbols, rituals, myths and storytelling modes. Many modern people, including Christians, have lost the conscious facility of understanding symbolic communication, though it continues to be used unconsciously and inattentively. Thus the personal, social, and collective unconscious is dangerously overburdened with apparently nonsensical and unrelatable

Hussain, the Muslim president of the Islam and the Modern Age Society in India.

symbolic and spiritual material. Ironically, at the same time as the overload, spiritual famine is rife. This is a death space in and from which many people are suffering. Leda, representative of many other contemporary people, was extremely hungry but simply couldn't swallow stale and unpalatable religious conventions. Fresh alternative expositions and interpretive re-expressions and applications of the truth of the Christian message, through sensitivity to the dynamic communicative power of images and symbols, helps to redefine spiritual reality and truth in forms and textures which are palatable and digestible. Thus an intelligible and reasoning account of the symbolically expressed truth, especially the truth of Christ's way and life, can help to renew the foundations of religious faith for modern people. Understanding symbolically expressed religious truth is also important in cross-cultural, inter-religious, and secular dialogue. It provides triaxial openings and opportunities for attending to the seemingly strange and disconcerting presentations of the reality of the other and ultimate Other with whom we wish to exchange meaningful communication.

A second reason for learning symbolic language is that the 'modern world' itself needs to be understood as a symbol which is experiential as much as geographical.⁵ By analogy, this means that modernity is a

5. See Roger Haight, "The 'Established' Church as Mission: The Relation of the Church to the Modern World," *The Jurist* 39 (1979): 4-39. The author lists twelve salient descriptive definitions of modern self-understanding. They are used by analogy as a culture in order to descriptively define the symbol of modernity or modern culture. These are not doctrines but universal experiences and provide a common basis for a fuller exposition and integrative self-understanding of mission in relation to the world. These are the descriptive experiences of modern culture: 1. secular, relying on its own authority and values 2. this-worldly 3. conscious of time 4. human

symbol expressing a particular 'culture' and cultural experience. Inculturation, therefore, requires revamped and reoriented symbols of mission (*missio*) which are equally modern and experiential in their multivalent and multivocal capacity to appeal to and access these cultural depths of reference. Through symbols, modern mission is thereby empowered with a relational network of interconnecting references that can effectively address modern people in their own referential and cultural 'languages'. Thereby, this initiates modern consciousness with the saving benefits of communicable and intelligible good news and glad tidings. Revisioning symbols of modern mission are appropriate to the poetic-prophetic tasks associated with depth evangelization and the process of inculturation.

C. Poetic-Prophetic Task

The *ad hoc* exercises of a mercy-mission compassion called out of praxis companionship with Leda, correspond to the conceptual description of the three-faceted task of prophetic imagination. This I discovered many months after Leda had died, and those facets served to confirm the exercise of instinctive compassion called out of that situation. The three-faceted task of prophetic ministry is to offer reactivated historical symbols which are adequate to an original situation of

autonomy and creativity effect the concept of providence 5. possibility of creating a better world 6. global world consciousness 7. obvious relatives, hidden absolutes 8. healthy pluralism 9. human person is good 10. empirically minded 11. pragmatic, has values of doing and acting 12. one absolute is personal and/or corporate freedom to create self and society. Haight suggests that the reform of theological interpretation must take these into account in the inculturation of good news.

numbing horror; to give an evocative public expression of God's perspective, through metaphorical language, on a long denied reality; to speak with passion and candour, in concrete but metaphorical form, about the deathliness of onesided ego autonomy and sufficiency separated from God. These facets give a conceptual framework for understanding sideways companionship, and for making sense of the symbiotic perspective on life-death friendship. Creative language is the only tool or weapon at the prophet's disposal, and thus prophetic language games must use the lyrical and poetical language of metaphorical images and symbols to offer a viable and habitable alternative view of reality. An alternative 'prophetic' perspective in this thesis is concerned with life-giving issues, not gloom and doom. Such an alternative challenges the status quo views of prophetic ministry as well as the dominant secular consciousness in which we live. Conscious attention to the multivocal language of images and symbols is vital in order to discern and test the lyric voice of God and of conscience for its interpreted authenticity. Accurately applied discernment enables Christians to respond appropriately to the communications of the Spirit's leading in their lives and in Christian mission.

The core of the unique prophetic invitation delivered and practically enacted by Jesus is one especially issued to the weary and overburdened, - come and find rest (Mt.11:28-30). God's jubilee favour is the name of his game (Is.61:1, 2; Lk.4:18, 19). The prophetic intent of his invitation is most significant when caught in the cross referencing network of Jeremiah's retorts about lying prophets, priests and religious leaders who "scatter" and "terrify" the flock (Jer.23:1, 4), and "do not benefit these people in the least" (Jer.23:32). Jeremiah's

further comments (Jer.23:33-40) juggle the Hebrew wordplay of 'burden' and 'oracle', concluding that the mention of both words is forbidden in justifying the authority of the prophet to speak in God's name. Hence, Jesus never verbalizes the characteristic prophetic phrase, "the word of the Lord", though he does enact its spirited intent. Secondly, he actively broadcasts and promotes free and easy access to God as a considerable benefit for easing the terror, and unburdening the heavy existential loads which many religiously 'exiled', outcast and handicapped people may carry. Jesus in disguise, and with his considerable power carefully veiled, is still God glorified. Hence, the question of detecting and discovering the hints and clues to Christ's hidden presence today remains a vital one. The name of Jesus is directly connected to the life-giving and space-making option that facilitates a return to the revisioned yet ancient way of a filial covenant relationship with God. The promise of filial relationship remains an open invitation addressed to all people.

The power of the inbuilt attraction to death, and the fear and terror associated with punishment and judgment, can be transformed and rechannelled into positive and adventurous living. Jesus neither ignored nor denied the judgment theme of the 'wrath of God' so prevalent in the Old Testament. He dealt with its death-to-love-life theme in a very specific way, as will be seen in Chapter 8. His way has important implications and present-future applications based upon the covenant promise of life-giving and space-making mission. The covenantal promise of renewed and mature foundations for faith come together in a braided ring quest. Blessings on human nature, integrity in mission, and a

death-to-love-life transformation, are the crisscrossing strands of quest which frame this thesis.

D. Methodology

In order to facilitate the purpose of this thesis regarding the mediating mission and sideways position of images and symbols in dialogue, I have made and developed a series of *italicized* photoknit word pictures. They show the content and context of dialogue with Leda. Photoknit pictures take the form of a third person narrative between Leda and Rose Aaron. This focus knits together the prophetic and narrative modes which puts the emphasis on "the primacy of what is said [and done] over the inspiration of the narrator."⁶ This factor reinforces the referential network of *what* and *how* questions, and diminishes the importance of who speaks and acts (Jn.3:30). These key analytic questions are the means of accessing the symbolic significance of the literary and dramatic communication arts, and are therefore relevant to an intelligent analysis of the living arts as well.

The word 'photoknit' is a split reference metaphor to express several important concerns regarding already existing material reality, and the need to creatively and respectfully work with the raw materials which compose that reality. Photography focuses on an already existing physical and material reality, whereby the photographer seeks to enable the particular subject matter to 'speak' and disclose its own inherent theme. The disclosure or manifestation of a theme may be elicited by

6. Paul Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation," *Harvard Theological Review* 17 (1977): 1-37, p.25. Square brackets are my insertion.

consciously asking *what* theme is being expressed and how the subject matter details express and convey that theme. In speaking of his concentration on an already existing reality, Freeman Patterson, the internationally acclaimed Canadian photographer says, "all around me all the time are pictures waiting to be discovered."⁷ Good pictures are *made* (worked, produced), not taken. The making and developing of metaphoric and symbolic word pictures and word picture plays of already existing reality is one interpretive way of discovering Christ's hidden presence and purposes in the existing world, and experiencing the joy that those discoveries can bring, even in the midst of life's sorrows.

Machine knitting first introduced me to a fascinating and exciting blend of technology and creativity, with its endless combinations of automatic stitch selections and hand tooling, made-to-measure pattern drafting and designing, and a world of diverse yarns, colours, and textures. Especially satisfying is the involved work-play of yarn - story. As well as garments, I am particularly interested in knitted wallhangings. The knitting world has taught me much about the triaxial host of literal, metaliteral (metaphoric), and symbolic dimensions of language expression. For various reason, machine knitting and its associated production and repair processes acts as a concrete metaphor and symbol of healing, wholeness, and completeness. As a Christian and a missionary, I am also concerned with the scriptural metaphor of body-spirit being "knit together" in the love of Christ (Eph.4:16; Col.2:2, 19, RSV), and with being "clothed" with Christ and the Holy Spirit (Lk.24:49; Acts 1:4; Rom.13:14; 1Cor.15:53, 54; 2Cor.5:2-4; Gal.3:27;

7. Freeman Patterson, *Photography for the Joy of It*, (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1986), p.17.

Eph.4:24). Photoknits express a respectful, joyful, and loving concern for the dynamic interaction of literal and historical reality in a sustaining symbiotic partnership with the metaphoric and symbolic domains of reality.

In my concern to make images, symbols and symbolic communication as accessible and as intelligible as possible, and to provide a method for learning and verifying symbolic language, I have designed a methodological tool and game called Joint Connection Networking (JCN). Its objective and goal is the quest for the missing or split reference. JCN, whose components are indicated herein with () brackets, is only of indirect importance to the main body of this thesis. These indications are important though, in providing an empirical and non-arbitrary basis for amplifying, evaluating, and understanding Leda's referential possibilities and probabilities. Leda communicated through images and symbols, but never did she explain, verify or negate any comments. Most people thought she was 'confused', especially in her last few weeks of life, but I knew otherwise. Many core references came to hand, enabling Rose Aaron to respond appropriately to Leda's deeply communicated but verbally unvoiced needs, without being intrusive. The key to a language game like JCN involves those *what* and *how* analytical questions, to determine what is going on, and how is it expressed. It's a kind of bridging game!

Some key descriptive definitions are to be found in Appendix 1, regarding image, metaphor, sign, symbol. These terms are used in a very careful way so please read them before starting Chapter 1 so that their meaning will be clear. Details of the original dream setting of the *Second Cup Theme* are found in Appendix 2. The themes and descriptive

words clustering there provided a guideline and open boundary regarding the work involved to make sense of, and be receptive to, the meaning and reference of the *Second Cup* in the context of a new approach to mission.

E. The Main Premise

In mutually transformative dialogue, the shared communication of religious and spiritual experience and its associated faith and truth perspectives, may be mutually accessed by poetical as well as mystical techniques. Mystic and mysticism tend to smack of the inaccessible and esoteric, of the other-worldly, and of an exclusivity limited to a few chosen ones let in on the closely guarded secret. This is not to denigrate the realm of encounter and experience with the mystery of presence that discloses and declares itself in the strangest guises. It is only to say that the permeable boundaries of the numinous encounter with God are both close to and distant from (Jer.23:23; Eph.2:13, 17) all that we can hope or imagine (Eph.3:20). The open secret of the Christian faith is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." In my experience, those people who learn to make friends with death, and befriend their fears, continue to visibly mature in spirit and in character, even in the midst of physical decay. Paradoxically, they are gifted with a beauty, a radiance, a peace, a glory of spirit which is manifestly visible and precious in *this* life.

Greater initiated, intelligible, and conscious attention to the triaxial parameters of reality, expressed literally, metaliterally (metaphorically) and symbolically, are important in providing a universal common ground and common wealth of accessible and existing source material references. They are both based on material resources

and creative human resourcefulness. The very universality of common ground and common wealth gives a positive and life-affirming foundation for inter-religious and inter-secular dialogue. The communicating power of images and symbols has the wherewithal to bridge the multidimensional death-life communications gaps.

In summary, the main premise of this thesis is now introduced in its concentrated and distilled essence: In the symbiotic exchange of mutually transformative dialogue, the mediating mission and sideways position of images and symbols in context, enables the universal trinitarian blessings, benefits, and bounty of Christ's opaque and concealed presence and purposes in the world, to reveal and manifest their truth and reality in increasing transparency.

Spiritual truth is expressed in images and symbols and symbolic communications which are anchored in an already existing material reality. This readily and universally accessible reality provides a renewed foundation for an intelligible and reasoning account of faith, and provides fresh ways in which people can experience the dynamics of the Christian message. Thus the mediating mission and sideways position of images and symbols in dialogue are an entwining thematic motif knitted into the life and death issues to be dealt with in the pages that follow. In sideways companionship, this thesis welcomes and invites us to 'go the distance' together.

With the drawing of this Love and the voice of this Calling

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

T.S. Eliot

CHAPTER 1

PRAXIS: THE STARTING POINT OF MEDIATING SIDEWAYS MISSION

A. Side by Side Companionship

A little boy sits with his hand gently resting on the shoulder of a little girl as they both gaze out to sea. Two similar pictures of this scene grace the Hospice of All Saints, Ottawa, where Rose Aaron is a volunteer visitor with people who are terminally ill. This side by side position says more than a thousand words ever could about the companionship role and model of a hospice volunteer. More than any of the practical services that a volunteer can render, the hospice companionship model mostly means just *being there*, present and supportive to the dying person and their family.

These experiences of observer-participant companionship have alerted and led me to some surprising and very unexpected discoveries about Christ's oft concealed but active trinitarian presence in bringing a meaningful closure to a person's life. In the present case being considered herein, the mediating mission of symbolic communication in the life of a woman named Leda played an essential part in bringing her existential life to a peaceful closure. This thesis is the attempt to let these discoveries about the mediating mission of images and symbols

speak for themselves. Active participation in Leda's situation invited much pondering - thinking, feeling, imagining, dreaming - that led to long, deep and sustained reflection about the essential meaning and significance of these events, in themselves, in life-supporting and life-affirming service, and in their relation to Christian mission themes, dialogue, evangelization, inculturation. Knowledge born of praxis is that of experience based on the interpenetration of action and ongoing reflection.

The first practical challenge was to learn to trust and to respond anew to that presence myself in order to receive the loving purposes of the Holy Spirit for myself and for Leda in that particular situation. This is the love trio, love God, love self, love neighbour, and in that order, which receives love and life (Jn.20:22)¹ in order to give and be present to the particular needs of the other. The self-neighbour axis is a 'both-and' one because giving without receiving is onesided benefactor domination, and becomes very wearying (Lk.10:40).

The second challenging lessons involved a long process of learning to understand and respond to Leda and her communications with clearer insight, increasing compassion, and non-invasive treatment. This situation invited the referential quest and the life-giving and affirming service most supportive of her deepest longings and needs.

1. Cynthia Bourgault, "The Gift of Life: The Unified Vision of the Desert Fathers," *Parabola* 14 (2, 1989): 27-35, p. 35. The author notes the distance created between the earliest Christian traditions which emphasized the "receiving" of the spirit, whereas "successive Church councils hyberbolized (Jesus') divinity and postulated his "sending" the spirit." The whole article pivots on some key language issues connected with the meaning of a disciple's "oneness" (*ihidaya*, unity, wholeness) as meaning unified rather than the sinless moral perfection subsequently emphasized by many retranslations.

Side by side companionship is a paradigm of the supportive and comforting hand, a non-dominating and non-invasive 'witness' which lovingly and freely companions and serves the other as needs be.

Companionship with Leda was the crisis of risk and opportunity beyond imagination. That experience of being with Leda, and subsequent sustained wrestle and reflection during the eighteen months following her death have yielded the approach to mission which is being developed in this thesis. This particular passage of time has proved to be the culminating stages of a seven year passage of initiation into a sideways approach to mission. "The value of a work is proportional to the poignant contact of the poet with his (her) own destiny."² I trust, therefore, that the artful and poetic-prophetic approach to sideways mission presented herein may be of some value in understanding the mediating mission of images, symbols, and symbolic language, especially in the context of dialogue.

B. Call for Mediating Mission

In her own colourful way, Leda asked for mediation.

"People at the A, B, C's and the X, Y, Z's (pronounced like 'sees') need a mediator which is connected with a boiling pot and reducing the temperature."

Here is the danger of loosing or spilling the valued contents of the container, and specific instructions about what and how the

2. Jacques Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, [1953] 1981), p.116, quoting Pierre Revardy in *Le Gant de crin* (Paris: Plon, 1926, pp.48-49).

situation can be saved. Rose Aaron was silently alerted to a spiritual need and the possible split reference, of Jesus as mediator, 1Tim.2:5, and alphabetical beginnings and endings - alpha and omega - Jesus, Rev.21:6.³

What threatens to boil over and needs a lowered temperature, less heat? Who is the mediator and what is the specific nature of their task? To what is Leda referring? What does she mean? Without knowing any exact answers, the inherent danger in the situation opens up some new questions and possibilities about that which is in danger of being spilt, dissipated, or lost. In part, they seem to be issues that to open onto the "proposed world that in biblical language is called a new creation, a new Covenant, the Kingdom of God....the new being."⁴ We will pick up on these themes as we move along. At this present point, we are just making a start, gathering up various strands of possible significance, and trying to get an overview of Leda's situation.

The mediating nature of images and symbols helps the voice of the spirit to express itself. Such mediation has a very important and healing touch because it is extremely penetrating and yet profoundly discreet. Paradoxically, images and symbols reveal and conceal at the

3. The validation of this insight came to fulfillment the day before Leda died, some three and a half months after this statement was made. Its fuller significance will be dealt with in another picture. The validation and verification is important for it separates genuine sign language from the false testimony of arbitrary idolatrous language. See Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation", p.33; Morton Kelsey, *God, Dreams, and Revelation*, (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1974), p.30 ff.; John Goldingay, *God's Prophet, God's Servant*, (Exeter, Eng.: Paternoster Press, 1984), p.147 ff.

4. Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation," p.26.

same time, and thus provide a means of communicating at a safe distance. Their very veiled ambivalence is also a protection against devaluating profanity and desecration, however unintentional or ill-willed that may be. That precious spiritual centre of the human personality is like "a jewel wrapped by a veil within a veil, and guarded by jealous hands from the profane."⁵ Such wrappings may, on the one hand, serve to secure that holy jewel from a marauding ego consciousness which lives as though it were the centre of the universe rather than the trusted and indispensable servant of the whole person. History is replete with examples of marauding invaders of all sorts, who despoil and carry off the treasure of others. The physical world has important lessons to teach us here. Earth, like ego consciousness, is not the centre of our cosmic or personal solar system, let alone the centre of space, yet it has life in a unique and valuable way. The veiled treasure, on the other hand, may simply be being held in trust until the age of its heir's majority. Leda did her very best to communicate in veiled allusions!

Images and symbols, as the bearers of the poetic function of meaning-making language, are an objective and impersonal, or better transpersonal, medium for addressing an issue of personal concern which may be too enflamed, raw or painful to be touched upon directly. They become the mediating vehicle of the transcendent, through which God stretches out a healing helping hand.⁶ This mediating quality also

5. Austin Farrer, *A Rebirth of Images: The Making of St. John's Apocalypse*, (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1949), p. 13.

6. The generic Biblical catchphrase about Yahweh's "mighty hand and out-stretched arm" originates in Ex.3:19,20, and then continues through Exodus and out into many other Biblical passages. In its original

allows the communication of areas which are unconscious (in the dark) and therefore unknown to the conscious awareness of that person. In this respect, images and symbols become an opening onto multidimensional areas of an inner world. This opening acts as a mirror and a doorway for revealing many valuable and often neglected facets of character which are hidden in shadow and buried in mud. Water lilies,⁷ those most exquisite pearls, are rooted and thrive in mud but the flower quickly closes up when the stem is plucked out of the water.

C. In the Shadows

In the mediating mission quest for Leda's missing or split reference, the shadow of death is one obvious reference point which looms large on the immediate horizon. However, in the experiences of companionship with dying people, the most profound paradox (JCN, *transapparency*) may occur. This is the intense beauty and honesty of spirit that manifests itself even in the face of physical decay. This kind of paradox lends itself to the further musings on other kinds of

and subsequent contexts, two key elements emerge. God responds to the cries of the oppressed by a double action of stripping the enemy of its wealth and delivering his people. The people's response is trust and willingness to be helped. When Jesus stretches out his hand in various N.T. scenes (Mk.1:41; 5:41; 7:33; 9:27; see the reverse in Lk.8:44-48) awareness of O.T. connections and connotations enriches the meaning of his actions.

7. See Job 40:22 NIV, for the lotuses that hide *behemoth* (the hippo) in their shadow, and the same theme by T.S. Eliot, "The Hippo," in *A New Anthology of Modern Poetry*, ed. Selden Rodman, (New York: Literary Guild of America, Random House, 1938), pp.245-246. The hippo's struggles and limitations are neatly summed up in the last verse. "He shall be washed as white as snow,/ By all the martyr'd virgins kist,/ While the True Church remains below/ Wrapt in the old miasmal mist."

opposites which contradict the status quo opinions about death, and about other human concerns. Symbols have the tensile strength to creatively hold together the two apparently contradictory sides of paradox. In the reconciling tension of this union there is one essential and unequivocal meaning which may emerge, but there are no shortcuts to the birth and disclosure of that meaning. Death is not beautiful in itself, but the vales of the shadow of death may bring with it the most unparalleled opportunities for growth and maturation in spirit, opportunities that are of priceless value.⁸ Therefore, the enriching reality of shadow needs to be integrated into consciousness and not denied its rightful place.

Shadow, in the analytical psychology of C.G. Jung, is an important, though mostly unknown, and very precious part of the human being. It is the dark, seemingly primitive and undeveloped aspects of personality,⁹ and often seen, at least from the conscious viewpoint of the ego, as a repressed, unwanted, shameful, neglected, primitive and undeveloped part of the personality. In carrying a lot of blame and shame, the shadow may appear, to the ego at any rate, to be very deformed and ugly.¹⁰

8. For instance, in 1901, Gustav Mahler had a brush with death from which he recovered, and which led to one of the most creative and productive outpourings of music, including his 5th Symphony.

9. C.G. Jung, "The Shadow and the Syzygy," in *Aspects of the Feminine*, (London: Ark Books, [1959] 1982), par.13 ff; also in *The Collected Works of C.G. Jung*, vol 9ii, trans. R.F.C. Hull, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1959), par.13 ff). The shadow is usually portrayed in dreams as of the same sex as the dreamer. The Syzygy are the contrasexual components of male and female qualities in one's personality, respectively called animus and anima. They both represent the encounter with one's own inner otherness.

10. Jung, "Woman in Europe" in *Aspects of the Feminine*, par.271. Also in CW 10, par.271. Jung mentions the step down to the "Ugliest Man" and speaks of the importance of facing one's fear of this

Shadow resides in the unconscious and is therefore unknown to the ego, but is usually very well known indeed to everyone but its owner! The seeming inferiority of the shadow often carries and reveals itself as a profound affective nature whose very lifegiving energy is blocked and distorted thereby. This happens in part because of the ego's attitude toward the shadow contents. Though it carries a lot of negativity and some evil, it is usually 90% gold¹¹ waiting to be mined and refined by its integrated connections with consciousness.

Dreams are one doorway or window for accessing an objective inner perspective of one's reality. In dreamwork, the shadow characters which populate one's inner world give some clues to issues and attitudes which are unknown, and in the dark as far as consciousness is concerned, and which need an expansive integration into consciousness. Such integration involves considerable moral effort and achievement. However, Jung points out that there are some important exceptions which reverse the usual pattern and axis of ego-shadow development. These are the cases "where the positive qualities of the personality are repressed, and the ego in consequence plays an essentially negative or

undeveloped side, whose meaning and value is greatly misunderstood. He urges the demanding moral task of integrating the shadow into consciousness. If a person can retain their individual and distinctive identity whilst at the same time, taking a step down to the lowest human levels, i.e. - one's own "ugliest" parts - then a person may experience a sense of selfhood for the first time. This brings a healing release from too much lofty and inner isolation based on virtue, by creating a bond of common humanity with the masses. "For where is there a height without depth, and how can there be light that throws no shadow? There is no good that is not opposed by evil."

11. See Wm. A. Miller, *Your Golden Shadow: Discovering and Fulfilling Your Undeveloped Self*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989).

unfavourable role."¹² In these special cases, and by midlife and beyond, the ego-shadow axis begins to manifest another dimension named the Self.¹³ It carries the seed potential for bringing, and even demanding, greater wholeness to a person, and acts as a redemptive inner god-image. However, like the jewel of divine sanctity, the Self is often veiled in shadow material and needs careful and conscious discernment of its intent and direction. The precious value of the conscious experience of the shadow archetype mediates a spiritual event in a completely new sense. This corresponds to the existential situation of the human being in front of the All Holiness of transcendent power and Love.¹⁴ Though it may seem frightening and chastening, the power of Love is healing. In companionship with dying people this curious reversal of shadow/Self-ego axis often seems to be the case. As a result, one of my foundational premises in companionship is to be alert and responsive to the unseen and unvalued treasure in a

12. Jung, "The Shadow and the Syzygy," par.13.

13. Self is the term Jung uses to designate the totality and unity of the personality, conscious and unconscious, which carries a healing and integrating power to be reckoned with. See Jung, *Psychology and Religion*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, [1938] 1966), p.100; see also, *Psychological Types*, CW 6, Definition 46; this parts-whole integration involves a centre-circumference relationship which embraces the unconscious and conscious aspects; the ordering of the whole personality may be symbolized by a circle, square, quaternity, child, mandala, stone; see also, Ann Belford Ulanov, "The Self as Other", in *Carl Jung and Christian Spirituality*, ed. Robt. L. Moore, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), pp.38-65. This outstanding article extracts some of Jung's best descriptions of the Self, and deals with them through specific analytical examples. Of special significance to the theme of hospitality and the welcoming of otherness, Ulanov has many wise comments to make on the religious impact of the Self-Other axis.

14. See Louis Beirnaert, "La dimension mythique dans le sacramentalisme chrétien," *Eranos* 17 (1949): 255-286, pp.272 & 281.

person's personality of which they and others may be completely unaware, i.e. in the dark, but which is part of God's redemptive hope for them. To bloom and blossom in the face of death is a transformational wonder to be beheld and treasured.

Jung's lifelong observer-participant work was a pioneering effort in understanding the essential human need for the psychological development of a religious attitude. A religious attitude occurs when ego consciousness is changed and transformed by a numinous encounter with a power which takes hold of a person. Such an converted attitude gives "careful consideration and observation of certain dynamic factors...(variously named, and which are) powerful, dangerous or helpful enough to be taken into careful consideration, or grand, beautiful and meaningful enough to be devoutly adored and loved."¹⁵ The reality of a religious attitude means that a person must come to relationship and to terms with a power and purpose greater than herself or himself. This relationship can of course have a destructive and neurotic side based on the ego's overwhelming fear of being overpowered. But relationships based on and solely motivated by fear are ultimately non-productive and fruitless. The healing and positive counterpart involves the two sides, of a numinous experience with God's power and a attitude transformed by trust, loyalty, confidence, and love. Only love is supple and powerful enough to transform neurosis into health and wholeness. The true horizon of a fruitful religious attitude is one vulnerable, trusting, and open to energy from beyond the ego-Self axis, and its conventionally boundaried world.

15. Jung, *Psychology and Religion*, p.5.

Shadow also appears in a profoundly original sense and setting in the New Testament Epistle to the Hebrews (8:5, 10:1; cf. Col.2:17). In commenting on its author's use, J. Gamble notes that this new understanding has a very significant part to play in the understanding of the evolution of religious experience.¹⁶ The author of Hebrews uses the Platonic view of an upper and lower world - being and becoming, eternal and temporal, changeless and in flux, real and apparent - and transforms these notions into the basis for a fresh alternative view of reality. The lower, phenomenological world of the senses receives from him the name "shadows", and is meant in a way which is very positive, rather than disturbing and unsubstantial.

In the illuminating view of the writer of the Hebrews epistle:

The "shadows" are such as a luminous body casts before when it approaches. We see the shadow long before we see the luminary itself. It grows in size and power as the luminary draws near. The real world announces its presence by a succession of these revealing shadows, which indicate the reality with greater force and vividness as the ages pass. But in no case are the shadows misleading or treacherous. They are Divinely given, and as such to be valued and cherished, although to the end they are only symbols of unseen realities.¹⁷

16. J. Gamble, "Symbol and Reality in the Epistle to the Hebrews," *JBL* 45 (1926): 162-170; see also F.F. Bruce, "A Shadow of Good Things to Come," in *The Time Is Fulfilled*, (Exeter, England: Paternoster Press, 1978), pp.77-88. Here Bruce contrasts image (*eikon*) and shadow (*skia*), giving a slightly different flavour than Gamble's comments. The differences may highlight Gamble's clear grasp of the significance of *eikon* as a symbol of the unknown approaching the known and becoming manifest through it. The important note they both sound is that of free access to God; *skia* is translated as 'shadowed resemblance' in W.E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, (London: Oliphants, 1940), s.v. image, p.247.

17. Gamble, "Symbol and Reality", p.165.

As most delightful picture of just such an approaching shadow was taken by Freeman Patterson in his book, *Photography for the Joy of It*. In the midst of a sandy dune, the beautiful shadow of some backlit blades of grass moves toward the front of the picture.¹⁸ In the ever-unrolling script of reality, the past is valued for what it contained, and even though superseded by a more encompassing view of reality, its value and meaning are not destroyed but fulfilled. It is true, for example, that the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. led to the redundancy of the literal priesthood and sacrificial system of the Jews. In face of this material downfall, the Hebrews' author is endeavouring to emphasize a fresh immaterial reality which shows that certain religious elements like law (Torah = guidance), sacrifice and priesthood have, in fact, been spiritually transformed, and that their meaning has not been altogether destroyed. Their themes continue to live but in a transfigured sense. In the face of physical destruction, the Hebrews' author is offering substantial spiritual hope to counter "the tyranny of the visible."¹⁹ Tyranny is the operative word, for visible and material reality is precious for its transparency potential in communicating invisible and metaphorically expressed realities. Dogmatic and onesided materialism is the tyrant's problem, not visibility per se. One of the sustaining resources in the struggle for the maintenance of an invisible but substantial hope is "the sense of companionship. The present runners in the race of life are surrounded by a large number of

18. Patterson, *Photography for the Joy of It*, p.70.

19. Gamble, "Symbol and Reality," p.168.

consenting witnesses, near though invisible."²⁰ It is certainly the case with dying people, that visible companionship can bespeak and betoken a spiritual and invisible hope, in drawing one's life to a peaceful sense of closure.

Jesus Christ, as the transfigured high priest, brings substance to the shadow and reality to the symbol. And now, just as Jesus the filial high priest has free and unrestricted access into God's presence, so too is this available to those who follow after him. "The intervening veils - whether they are thought of as fleshly or spatial - for the writer makes use of both conceptions (9:19; 4:14), are penetrated or overcome. The spirit approaches God, feels its oneness with Him, and enjoys the sense of pardon, and the peace of eternal life."²¹ Shadow and substance, symbol and reality, are part and parcel of a revitalizing religious and spiritual script, open and accessible to permanent view, for those with initiated eyes and ears.

As Rose Aaron observed, listened and shared in Leda's projected contents, she became aware of a quality of double-sided exposure onto the two sides of a transparency or slide. (JCN, *transapparency*) God's presence was like backlighting which came from behind the subject matter of Leda's projected pictures, illuminating them from the far side with a particular numinous quality. This holy presence sought to address and dress Leda in her very own transfigured material, and to nourish and refresh her spirit in the face of physical decay and death. Rose Aaron's sideways part was that of learning, supporting and facilitating

20. Ibid, p.169.

21. Ibid, p.168.

the mediating mission of Leda's own images and symbols. Such participation is not ego identity with the life-giving centre and space-making source of a mediating power and purpose. Without a takeover bid, this sideways assignment shares and participates in the good news gift of fulfilling perspectives complementary to Leda, and with the compliments of the Holy Spirit waiting on the sidelines.

D. Historical Anchoring Points

"[A symbolic attitude] is the outcome of a definite view of the world which assigns meaning to events, whether great or small, and attaches to this meaning a greater value than the bare facts."²² The interplay between the bare facts of a literal and historical door and a poetic, imaginative door, to be seen in a photoknit to be presented shortly, will show the creative interaction which works with and is receptive to a greater interpretive value embedded in factual material. This type of assignment of meaning toward a given phenomenon is the product of the observing consciousness. The meaningful product is derived from asking what the "bare facts" can metaphorically communicate about an unknown and concealed symbolic element. Interpretive work is usually the means to an end or goal, not the end in itself. In order to appreciate the networking association process used to understand and make sense of symbolic communication, some further relevant details of Leda's setting follow. This is done to anchor her story in its

22. Jung, *Psychological Types*, CW 6, s.v. symbol, par.819. In the context of this remark, Jung makes it clear that this 'assigned meaning' comes from consciousness which is receptive to the unknown dimension of a symbol. He is careful to distinguish between sign and symbol, as Appendix 1 does.

historical context which finds its completion in "the hermeneutical circle" of event-fact, interpretive response, and application back into the historical process.²³ Meaning and significance are derived from a fruitful conjunction of historicity and symbology.²⁴ Without doubt, each needs the other. An observing consciousness may then acknowledge, devoutly and respectfully, the various types of vehicles used for carrying, expressing, relating, and applying symbolic-factual truth and reality to its conscious observer-participants.

For all her brilliant intellect, Leda was not an easy person with whom to get along. She had always been very dynamic and determined, and carrying very high expectations, as her family, friends, and business colleagues well knew. She was intense, lively, and witty, but with a sharp and caustic edge. A driving personality describes her very well.

23. My initial inductive experience and understanding of event-interpretation comes from dreamwork, its revelations of poetic, symbolic and linguistic meaning, and its subsequent applications of meaning back into waking life contexts. This approach means being dependent on the serendipitous disclosures of history to provide amplifying material. This historical process is in partnership with the observing and actively integrating consciousness. I recognize these same issues being pondered in Gadamer's, Ricoeur's, and Pannenberg's nuanced approaches to event-interpretation and issues of history in a parts-whole configuration of known reality. See the following network of articles, Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation."; Joseph Grunfeld, "Gadamer's Hermeneutics," *Science et Esprit* 41 (1989): 231-236; Ted Peters, "Truth in History: Gadamer's Hermeneutics and Pannenberg's Apologetic Method," *Journal of Religion* 55 (1975): 36-56; Clark H. Pinnock, "Theology of Wolfhart Pannenberg: A Critical Evaluation," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 1 (1, 1977): 21-34.

24. This conjunction may be named *historiopoiesis* or historiography, see the excellent article by J.B. Wiggins, "The Release of History Through Myth," *Anglican Theological Review* 59 (1977):151-161; for a helpful application of historiography to mission issues, see E.J. Sharpe, "Reflections on Missionary Historiography," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 13 (2, 1989):76-81.

People tend to die as they lived and so these characteristics remained true of her but were gradually tempered and refined to some degree.

To shop for her own fresh fruit and vegetables was Leda's greatest and most persistent desire. How she longed to go to a certain spacious supermarket characterized by three aspects of vivid and intense black-cherry red and eggplant-purple type "colourfulness"! The selection of fresh produce was particularly appealing, "strongly and brightly coloured", plentiful, and varied. The layout design was creative and artistic, and well displayed, "colourfully" arranged. The display was well-ordered in its appeal to all the physical and aesthetic senses. The other shoppers and staff also wore "colourful clothing." In other words, the market was wholly integrated and extremely appealing, an immensely satisfying place to be.

That such a place exists was never at all in doubt for Leda. What was doubtful was finding a suitable means of getting there, for her car (her drive) had broken down. "Do you know how to convert a car?", she asked her companion, Rose Aaron.

Leda had had a mastectomy (i.e. no second cup), and then seven years later, brain and lung tumours were detected. She had been in a slow state of deterioration for some three years when Rose Aaron first met her. Having previously spurned the further disfiguring "red-hot promises" of healing from a doctor who was going to give her two more years to live, she was gleeful to have passed his deadline. At a much earlier time in her life she had also walked away from the traditional religious establishment in her search for wholeness and unity. She no

longer had faith in any health-giving "red hot promises." However, Rose Aaron suspected that for all her courage and integrity, Leda was terrified of the lurking curse of hell-giving "red hot promises." Having come this far, what further goal was now left to Leda?

The Hospice of All Saints became involved in order to provide some family respite. So Leda and her companion, Rose Aaron, journeyed together for a period of five months and twenty-three consecutive visits, #9 and #22 being extra ones slipped into that ordinary pattern. The day before visit #22, Leda had been at death's door, but this situation unexpectedly and inexplicably turned itself around and proved to be a false alarm. Two door incidents, in the weeks prior to this one, had prompted much careful consideration and observation, and much personal soul-searching on Rose Aaron's part.

Historically and literally speaking, Leda and Rose Aaron had faced a number of doors. Leda's wheelchair could be manoeuvred through the connecting doors between the bedroom and chapel areas. But after she was weaker and needed the wider support of the armchair, Rose Aaron couldn't manage the door and armchair at the same time. After a number of foreshortened excursions over a number of weeks, the religious sister on the ward happened to give them a little prayer card to use together, entitled "Jesus, Help Me!" (Help me in times of great loneliness, disappointments and failures of my plans and efforts, illness, weakness, troubles, sorrows. "In spite of everything, Jesus, help me and never forsake me".) Sister Marie also showed Rose Aaron the location of the magnetic catch [attraction of opposites] that could hold the door. It was on the far side of the door up above eye level of the wall. Voilà!!

"You have the key and you won't give it to me. I wish you'd drop dead!" These were the fiery and stinging words Leda addressed to Rose Aaron, on the next and 19th visit. They were an abrupt finale to Rose Aaron's hesitant, gentle but definite refusal to open a newly unlocked, poetic door which Leda saw in imagination and wanted to go through.²⁵ At that time though, the door seemed to be an exit leading to death, and the only key which Rose Aaron could produce was that of David (Rev.3:7), an acknowledgment that only God has the power to open and close doors. She was later reminded of the keys of Mt.16:19 & 18:18, keys held by Peter-of-the-denial. [Is fear the key to the problem?]

What and where was the symbolic equivalent of the literal door event? How could a metaphoric and poetic interpretation of the historical closed-open door event and locating its magnetic catch provide a useful interpretive pattern to follow? The literal door's easy opening was resolved by prayerful information for help and a helpful demonstration, all from a religious [same sex, shadow] sister. Many accusing questions tried and tested Rose Aaron for she didn't know what key she held, if any. In the literal situation, Rose Aaron did not have nor need a literal key, even though Leda accused her of withholding it. If she did hold the key of fear, Rose Aaron chose to refuse to give fear to Leda, and rightly so. But such a decision was very costly, for she

25. In Leda's flat refusal to give any information, any hint or clue about her poetic-symbolic door, Rose Aaron was warned that any offering of her own images would be a terrible intrusion, and even a violation of Leda's boundaries. Given the violence of Leda's reaction, this position was not easy to sustain. Rose Aaron's steadfastness was, in part, based on an important palliative care principle. However manifested, a dying person must be permitted to take and maintain as much control and direction as possible in their lives, in order to countermand their increasing debilitation and physical dependence on others.

was very troubled and afraid for it seemed that, judging from Leda's fiery rebuke, she had failed Leda, failed God and betrayed her missionary vocation.

In the week that followed, Rose Aaron was prompted to produce an anthropological and theological synthesis of conversion and transformation, using doorway and threshold images connected with the tripartite movement illustrated in initiating rites of passage. This synthesis she named "Three Steps to Free Love." It was also patterned on the reversal theme of Jesus' first words in Mk.1:15. "Repent and believe", that is, "turn and trust". Instead of facing an exit doorway, she interpretively discovered they were actually on the outside, facing an entry into... An entry into what?"²⁶ (JCN, triaxial parameters)

Good question! Entry into what? What was on the other side of the door? Following the four day time and space of Leda's mini remission, the passage of time between being refused entry at death's door and her final physical passing, she died in peace and stillness on the twenty-third day of the month. Leda's face had slowly transformed and delicately infused with a pearly luminescence that had increasingly covered her core irritability with a certain lustrous beauty. But Rose Aaron also went through the door into a new life. In a sense, the rest of this thesis is a twofold reflection on that crossover from death to life. It involves telling the story of the interest-free and no-strings cost of learning to love Leda sufficiently so that she could make her own peaceful way across the physical threshold to death and new life.

26. This photoknit is an example of the hermeneutical circle mentioned earlier, of history, interpretation, back into history.

The practical lessons and questions of companioning Leda, and of observing and participating in the mediating mission of her images and symbols, have slowly grown into a new vision of good news for today's world. The revisioned gospel news is accompanied by practical applications of thematic principles for Christian mission. The Second Cup theme is thus the distant goal of this writing. The braided ring quest and questions arising from this companionship praxis slowly unveiled their longterm investment of significance in and through this original set of sideways experiences. So let us continue on the journey of hidden discoveries that veiled Christ's presence and purposes.

Door-opening interviews have an important role to play in palliative care. As Elisabeth Kubler-Ross comments, it involves the "meeting of two people who can communicate without fear and anxiety."²⁷ In the most ordinary ways, these meetings help the dying person to share some unfinished business which keeps them hanging onto life, and facilitates the resolution of some unspoken problem or conflict. In order to set the stages of development more fully, some historical context will indicate why and how communication through images and symbols was an important means of dialogue with Leda.

Leda's brain tumour seemed rather selective in its effects. She slowly lost the ability to balance herself and she slowly lost the physical, mechanical power of speech. At first, she couldn't string the words in sentences together in an ordered way that corresponded with what she was thinking. As English language and literature had been her lifelong specialty, this was a frustrating indignity and frightening

27. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, *On Death and Dying*, (New York: Collins Books, 1968), p.269.

loss. Secondly, her speech became increasingly slurred so that what she did say was very difficult to understand. It is as though there was an inhibition on her tongue only, for she remained mentally alert and aware, and conversant-responsive until she died. But her manner of conversation adapted itself to a less verbal one, while the level of communication continued, though in a new mode.

Dialogue with Leda increasingly developed into what could be called 'sign language' for as well as being verbal, it also involved the use of the hands, and other types of descriptive actions and gestures of body language. She also implicitly used the reading to her, and discussion of other carefully selected stories and material contents as a means of speaking the necessary volumes of which she was physically incapable. Story contents and themes gave expression and insight into her interests, concerns and needs, and though demanding great levels of mental and emotional concentration, was productive, fruitful, and enriching 'conversation'.

Leda's use of images and symbols, within the events of their contextual setting, became a form of very positive compensation for her loss of conventional speech. Her images and symbols took on a mediating sacramental role in providing a means to communicate some kind of inner reality which insisted on being expressed, though in delicate, muted tones and oblique, indirect lines. As a historian of religion, Jonathan Z. Smith comments thus on the sheer survival of this indirect approach.

[The historian] is...debarred from making a frontal assault on [the] topic. Like the pilgrim, the historian is obliged to approach [the] subject obliquely. [One] must circumambulate the spot several times before making even the most fleeting contact....Having shyly addressed and momentarily touched the object of attention, [one] must let it go and return it to its place, unexhausted and in-

tact....The historian provides us with things that remain too fragile to bear the burden of being solutions."²⁸

Leda's very indirectness seemed to call out for a muted but sacramental meaning to her communications, using the correlations envisioned by "the sacramental imagination."²⁹ The sacramental assignment of meaning, as the symbolic assignment of meaning, is an aspect of the healthy religious attitude, being an interpretive human response to the numinosity of a two-sided exposure of *transapparency*. This word is used purposely here because the meaning of a thing, event, or person may be neither opaque nor transparently clear. One is therefore poetically invited to see through and beyond the material to a certain meaningful distance, but can't always determine the exact reference being pointed to. The material is projected from one side and illuminated from the far side with a numinous quality. The projected material 'speaks' in and through an already existing and familiar language of meanings, but these *become* sacramental through a numinous light, voice, and other consecrated senses that communicates, not simply the unknown, but the Holy. The human response is sacramental and interpretive. This receptivity acknowledges and honours the sacred and holy significance and meaning given to ordinary objects, events,

28. Jonathan Z. Smith, "Map Is Not Territory," in *Map Is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions*, Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity, vol 23, (Leiden: Brill, 1978), p.290.

29. See Mary Catherine Hilbert, "Retelling the Gospel Story: Preaching and Narrative," *Eglise et Théologie* 21 (1990): 147-167, p.165. The author is speaking of those correlationists that conjoin human experience and Jesus' experience in the stories of the Scriptures. These combining narratives "tell us both about God and about the new possibility available to us in an anticipatory way in the grace of Christ and in the fullness of the reign of God."

actions, ideas, people. At the same time, the active application of responsive human interpretation is meant to empower the redescribed elements of life's compositional narrative reality with new possibilities and the potential for genuine change. Without sacramental and symbolic imagination, poetic narrative fails to become prophetic. "Story is incomplete as a vehicle for change until it is interpreted."³⁰ The problem with Leda's poetic door was not the key but finding an interpretive application of the magnetic love catch open to change. Imaginative prophetic and sacramental interpretations does not destroy but fulfills and compliments the existing common elements of observer-participant companionship. Jesus' discussion with the woman at the well (Jn.4:) about water and living water is a case in point.

Thus for Leda, while one type of conventional language became increasingly inhibited, another unconventional but powerful mode of communication replaced it. In overall terms, this mode of compensation seemed also to be aimed at the release, the development, and the increasing value of 'soul language' which had been denied its rightful spiritual voice for many years.

In response to a question about a dark-haired man in Rose Aaron's family, a conversational opening brought out the triple wordplay on hair, heir and hare. Hair was related to ratty hairstyles as a lived symbol of the feeling function of loyalty.³¹ Heir was linked with

30. Ibid, p.156, quoting Richard Lischer, "The Limits of Story," *Interpretation* 38 (1984), p.35.

31. See Tom Chetwynd, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, (London: Paladin Books, 1982), p.425, s.v. wind. The author comments on Kenneth Grahame's story (1908), *The Wind in the Willows*, saying that loyal Ratty, the

precious antiques, coming of age, and getting one's promised inheritance. Hare was the alert tendency to flight at the slightest disturbance, but was combined with soft fur that positively loved to be stroked. Hare, as it turns out is also a neglected Christian symbol of the soul.

The next week, as Rose Aaron applied some body lotion to Leda's feet, she commented on the latter's difficulty in reaching her soles now that she was unsteady in her balance. "My soul needs a lot of attention", Leda rejoined as she burst into tears.

It would be accurate to say that Leda was saddled with an adolescent voice and language that was spiritually stagnant and immature for a woman in her early fifties. She therefore needed to renegotiate this area at the precise time when the limits of her usual intellectual and rationalistic approach were no longer open to her, being too onesided and unbalanced for her needs. The release of her poetic voice in exchange for her usual conceptual one became a vehicle for freedom of speech and movement.

friend of Toad, Badger, and Mole, represents the feeling function in the personality. It is the feeling function that gives value and weight to those things to which one commits. Ann Ulanov, "The Self as Other," also deals with this issue of value.

E. In My Beginning is My End

With regard to A,B,C starting points and a mediation service, here is a photoknit of Rose Aaron's alpha visit.

Tottering and stumbling with her walking frame, Leda had categorically insisted on getting out of bed to find a particular collection of short stories, *The Siren*, by Dino Buzzati, stories about the call to adventure.³² She hunted, she fussed, she yelled at her daughter: the book was located. Rose Aaron read the first story, "Barnabo of the Mountain". The brooding presence in the mountains acts as the overshadowing backdrop to the plot of the story involving foresters, a guarded powder keg and a road to nowhere. After a certain [unknown] incident, Barnabo runs away from the mountains and down into the valley. He feels ego-condemned by tremendous guilt and shame compounded by seeming cowardice. In tending the broken wing of a black crow, and carrying it in his pocket until mended, he shows both his caring and tenderhearted nature and his own brokenness.

By this point Leda was tired, so she rested. Later, as she and Rose Aaron talked about a favoured holiday place, Leda was especially eager to visit Stratford and take in as many Shakespeare plays as possible.

32. The monomyth of the hero's call to adventure is developed by Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, [1949] 1968). The theme has been taken and further refined and applied to contemporary life demands, see Jean and Wallace Clift, *The Hero Journey in Dreams*, (New York: Crossroads, 1988).

The night after this first 'A' visit, Rose Aaron dreamed about swans and peacocks. As there was a watercolour picture, Leda and the Swan, hanging in the stairwell of Leda's house, this wasn't very surprising. The swan is mounting a naked woman, whose head is flung back, though whether in agony or ecstasy is hard to tell. Rose Aaron did a little homework on swans and then tucked the information away. When, on her 'B' visit, she casually commented on the picture, Leda's reaction was electrifying terror to the beatings of the swan's wings. Especially frightening to her was their size, strength and colour in marked contrast to the little black ones of Barnabo's crow. Following this brief but intensely affective reaction, the reading of Barnabo's story then continued.

After five years in exile from his beloved but haunting mountains, he is lured back by a strange invitation. On the day of departure from the valley the crow is set free. His old friends know nothing of his supposed shame and cowardice and their perspective begins to ease his troubled and guilty conscience. He goes to live in the foresters' mountain refuge above the town. A dangerous stranger and supposed enemy is always expected on the night of the 25th of September every year but never comes, until this year! Barnabo faces and crosses several cathartic thresholds whose successful and merciful negotiation bring release. He is shriven through a merciful act and becomes reconciled with himself and at peace with the brooding presence and the stranger which he had once feared. The story closes with Barnabo contemplating a bright new perspective on where he's been and where he's going.

Leda's strong fear reactions to the beating wings drew Rose Aaron's attention, through wordplay shifts of meaning (JCN, isotopy), towards a creative rather than a foreboding presence brooding in the mountains. The presence is indeed the unknown stranger, a paradoxical fact of which we must never lose sight, but is the stranger the enemy? The terror of wings beating and bruising could be equally transposed into the beatings of a whisk, whipping up a light, airy and frothy concoction, whipping up a blessing, not a beating. Coming as they did at the beginning of their dialogues, Rose Aaron was again notified of a narrow focus and a limited perspective on Leda's part, the counterpart of Barnabo's unnecessary burden of shame and guilt. Barnabo's story makes it clear that he felt ashamed and cowardly but it's not at all clear that his ego-condemnation was justified. These repeated patterns and the double exposure (JCN, paradox) meanings of brooding and beating enabled Rose Aaron to observe and align herself to ways which would enable Leda to come to a change of perspective, just as Barnabo did. In light of her terror, and the overall picture of swan imagery (details to follow in Chapter 2), the terrifying and fascinating numinosity of The Holy is very evident.

Near the end of her life, Leda asked to be again reminded of the ending of Barnabo's story. By this time, almost five months later, Rose Aaron had a much better idea of Leda's overall and detailed perspective. Certain painful attempts at a direct good news response were always slapped down, and so had taught her Leda's communication game, which in turn had slowly taught her how to shape and communicate an acceptable response. Without using stale or dough-heavy language, Rose Aaron freshly amplified and magnified Barnabo's courage in turning and returning (*metanoia*, conversion) to face his sense of shame, cowardice

and fear. The stranger had seemed threatening but had actually been very instrumental in prompting Barnabo over the threshold, and therefore was strangely merciful to Barnabo. His own subsequent turn away from point-blank revenge released and cleansed his own self-esteem, and brought him peace with the brooding presence in the mountains. Barnabo's story contained many personal layers of meaning for Leda and allowed her to communicate her need in an oblique, muted, and indirect way. In turn, Rose Aaron slowly, so very slowly, learned the integrity that could match her with an equally indirect response, and yet remain true and loyal to the essence of the gospel.

The last verbal words which Leda ever spoke to Rose Aaron occurred on the week following the poetic door and key incident. By this time, Rose Aaron was in a Barnabo-like situation herself, wrestling with her sense of ego-condemnation, guilt and shame, sense of betrayal - feeling that she'd completely blown the previous week's opportunity to give a direct proclamation about Christ - feeling that her judgment call about non-invasion was derelict evasion of her Christian duty. Her dreams, however, had quite another healing and supportive perspective. "Rose Aaron looks at a decisive final examination paper which she'd written in mission studies. It is true that she'd missed one small two-point definition on the paper due to lack of time to prepare. By contrast though, the voice of an unknown woman professor was praising her, not criticizing and condemning her. This woman professor praised the excellent handling, not only of the very complicated and complex essay subject, but of some important jubilee insertions incorporated into the body of the text. The exam itself was written on slightly luminous and very high quality, and water-marked bond paper." Between a numinous

voice and luminous bond paper, Rose Aaron's ego-shadow/Self axis line was fairly humming with redemptive activity.

In response to Rose Aaron's question to Leda about the 'key' reference, Leda's last spoken words follow.

"Pluck the fear" and then "Jesus." Rose Aaron had wrestled with her fears and shame, her feeling of disloyalty to Christ, and was then blessed with the loving support she'd received to replace the expected condemnation for her apparent failure. She was thus enabled to eat her own words, responding wholeheartedly to Leda with, "only love is strong enough to counter fear." Then in that ripeness of time, Rose Aaron was given the literal time of a green traffic light to connect Leda's own material with the good news themes of love, acceptance, denial, forgiveness, renewal to be found in relationship with the Holy Spirit of Christ. She fed back Leda's own material to her by connecting various thematic links - the Barnabo material, her longing for fresh food and the broken drive and conversion material, and her literal thirst that day - links connected to Jesus' words in Jn.6:25 ff., where he is offering fresh bread and water. Most especially significant is vs.37, *"Whoever comes to me I will never drive away."*

The following week (#21), however, Leda shut the door of relationship in Rose Aaron's face, completely ignoring her presence, avoiding her eyes. No Sale, No Sail. Rose Aaron entitled this bizarre coldness "The Parable of Silence", for she died of exposure to the truth about an unknown burden she was carrying. Deepseated grief regarding her conflicted relationship with her own mother was the real stumbling block to an interest-free and no-strings companionship with Leda.

Strangely, the grieving component proved to be very parallel to Leda's situation. Rose Aaron's last two visits occurred after Leda had been to death's door. Perhaps conflicted mother relationship and grief were the key that Rose Aaron held. Somehow a grief issue, not a sin issue, had blocked their relationship for a time. Hidden grief may lead to unwitting mistakes, but its root causes are usually ones in need of generous doses of caring compassion. In the historical door event, Rose Aaron had to go ahead to secure it on the magnetic catch (of love). She then returned and accompanied Leda through the doorway. Thus the mediating mission of symbolic communication is to be found in side by side companionship.

F. Where Do We Go From Here?

The development and growth of a wholesome religious attitude has two sides, the experience of the numinous and the conscious response of trust, confidence and loyalty. By seeing the investment of a numinous sacramental quality in Barnabo's story and Leda's reaction to the swan, Rose Aaron was initially alerted to larger paradoxical perspectives. Over the following months she learned to respond to Leda's referential initiatives and slowly find and clarify the split and veiled references to which Leda alluded. Through the praxis of action and reflection inherent in the demands of the situation, two facets emerge. One is connected with tools and methods for the split reference quest. The second is directed toward the appropriate ways and non-invasive methods of applying, inserting, and feeding back her thematic meanings in a transfigured but recognizable form. Leda could not manage the direct

gospel contents of split references but readily accepted a palatable theme.

Thus far, the side by side companionship paradigm has provided the basis for a starting point in considering the mediating mission of symbolic language. In the next chapter, the present starting point will be extended in various directions in order to give a broader scope of reference to translating and interpreting skills involved in poetic and symbolic references. The quest for the missing or split reference is connected with and facilitated by *poiesis*, which is the poetic work and play of locating references and making meaning.

At the source of the longest river
The voice of the hidden waterfall
And the children in the apple-tree
Not known, because not looked for
But heard, half-heard, in the stillness
Between two waves of the sea.

T.S. Eliot

CHAPTER 2

POIESIS: THE SIDEWAYS POSITION AND POINT OF DEPARTURE

A. Waving Goodbye to the Obvious

"When you think sideways you will find new ways to see your subject matter....Abandon your normal premises, and go on a search for new ones....Consider approaches and techniques you've never tried."¹ This appealing invitation and challenge, issued by the Canadian photographer, Freeman Patterson, has much to teach about new approaches to and techniques in Christian mission. The sideways shift espoused here is one that seeks to encourage people to move beyond and away from the foreshortened limits of their habitual visual position and perspective. Often, a change of position is the sole requirement for a refreshed and refreshing new view of one's subject matter. The sideways move lifts the inhibited senses by promoting and welcoming fresh new beginnings, new premises, and new questions rather than focusing on what is all too obvious and familiar. In this chapter, the shift and play between visual images and linguistic images (word-images) will be developed for

1. Freeman Patterson, *Photography and The Art of Seeing*, (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1985), p.28.

the way in which meaning and reference can be searched out in order to find Christ's hidden presence. As has been seen in the previous chapter, the example of a shift of position, from a focus on obvious death and sin issues to a deepseated grief and loving advocacy issues, yields new insights into the healing and helping touch of the Holy Spirit. Like lightning, poetic and symbolic language often takes a zigzag path which is intractable, irregular, unpredictable, and therefore seems fragmented and disorderly, but only by present theories. Like fractal images, however, there is another kind of patterned orderliness and beauty of which we know little as yet.² Companionship with Leda was certainly full of irregular and fragmented exercises for stimulating an alternative sideways approach to religious meaning and reference naturally embedded in poetic and symbolic communication.

The Wave is a photo found in one of Freeman Patterson's books, *Portraits of Earth*. The same poster-size print of *The Wave* also hangs on the wall of our living room, having the caption, *Photography for the Joy of It*. His joy, as well as his pictures, are infectious and

2. See the original work on the geometry of fractal forms by Benoit Mandelbrot, *The Fractal Geometry of Nature*, (New York: W.H. Freeman & Co., 1977). Fractal geometry plots the irregular and fragmented patterns of various natural phenomenon in nature, like clouds, mountains, coastlines, lightning, tree bark, leaves, frost on windows, etc. The family of shapes which form irregular, unpredictable (chance) patterns are called fractals, or fractal images. Mandelbrot developed and synthesized mathematical equations and theory to explain fractal shapes. Non-linear, repeating equations reveals patterns of the most breathtaking beauty, repetition, and inexplicable yet observable complexity. Fractal was coined by Mandelbrot from Latin words, meaning to break, to create irregular fragments. Fragmented is used in connection with fraction and refraction. Things that were described as "grainy, hydralike, in between, pimply, pocky, ramified, seaweedy, strange, tangled, tortuous, wiggly, wispy, wrinkled, and the like, can henceforth to approached in rigorous and vigorous quantitative fashion" (p.5). Mandelbrot's work celebrates nature by trying to imitate it.

instructive. The picture shows the crest of a wave just breaking and bubbling white foam in an otherwise subtly mist enshrouded, muted but iridescent, green-grey coloured scene. Most observers assume that the horizon line coincides with the wave line breaking along the bottom quarter of the picture. The true horizon is actually in the top eighth and usually needs to be pointed out, but is plain to see when the eyes are lifted from the obvious focus on the breaking wave line. The upward horizontal shift changes the whole perspective of the picture from the observer's point of view. The picture itself doesn't change. Even in pointing it out, very few observers notice the presence of the ship on the true horizon at a point directly above the breaking wave. The ship, like the horizon, is there but most people just don't see it. Photography, like language, serves the powerful purpose of communicating perspective and sharing experience that many people just don't 'see' or 'hear.'

The *Wave* is not a mystery picture in the narrow sense that its contents and meaning are only open to a select, initiated few. On the contrary, it is completely open and accessible but requires a conscious, rather than an automatically averaged focus on the most obvious line. In the same way, poetic images and symbols, and poetic and symbolic communication are open and accessible but require a sideways shift in reordering one's habitual perspective on the communication of reality and truth. Death is the obvious brake and break line on the horizon of a person with a terminal illness. What is the true horizon and parts-whole relationship contained within the extended bounds of the overall picture?

B. Visual Thinking and Feeling à la (Sideways) mode

Visual thinking³ is a conscious sideways move facilitated by imaginative exercises which search out and find new starting points. Images are like signposts which point toward fresh and more expansive perspectives and evaluations of what is already there in the subject material and the environment. That is, it is *there* but unseen, unappreciated for the proper scale and proportion it contributes in establishing and maintaining the true horizon. This contribution counterbalances and compensates for a habitual small scale and shortsighted focus. An imaginative move requires and acquires the flare of a more conscious *working with* and *knowing with* one's subject matter in order to apply the elements and principles of good design, and the *know-how* to choose the tools and techniques most suitable to the situation. Dialogue with Leda prompted the search for renewing elements and revisioning principles of good mission design and application. Practical and skillful knowing is called *poiesis*. More will be said about this as we proceed so that the simplicity of a definition of *poiesis*, when it appears, will have already manifested itself in the preliminary groundwork of illustrations.

3. Visual thinking here is the photographic equivalent of philosophy's figurative thinking (*Vorstellung*), see P. Ricoeur, "The Status of *Vorstellung* in Hegel's Philosophy of Religions," in *Meaning, Truth and God*, vol. 3, ed. L. S. Rouner, (Notre Dame and London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982). It is also the lateral thinking of Edward DeBono. Patterson acknowledges that he was using the technique and the term "visual thinking" long before he read DeBono. "Visual thinking" is also applied to the imaginative artwork of M.C. Escher, see J.L. Locher ed., *The World of M.C. Escher*, (New York: Abradale Press, [1971] 1988), p.8.

Exercise disciplines the offering of an imaginative sideways alternative which "breaks the cake of custom and enfranchises speculation."⁴ The exercise of alternatives is done to stimulate more conscious and careful attention to the already existing reality which is there in one's environment, though usually unnoticed or taken for granted. This sideways move helps in making or producing a photograph, for instance, which in its small and particular way, responds both accurately and creatively to what the whole observable situation expresses. As Patterson says of his compositions, "I'm selecting a small portion of the subject matter for each image, but I'm always endeavouring to be faithful to what the whole subject matter of the situation expresses."⁵ Here is the interpretive parts-whole configuration of reality. His medium is a very visual one, of course, so that the challenge and alliance of vision and thinking as a conscious activity makes good sense when applied to photography.

The visual thinking approach is one side or part of the knowing process whose other side could be called visual feeling. This is the equivalent to what Ricoeur calls poetic feeling.⁶ Visual (poetic) feeling is the photographer's affective response to the mood of the

4. This delicious phrase is used of the process of initiation and liminality. See Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between," in *Patterns of Masculine and Feminine Initiation*, ed. Louise Mahdi, (LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court, 1987), p.15. This seminal article may also be found in *idem*, "Betwixt and Between" in *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), pp.93-111; also in *The Proceedings of the American Ethnological Society*, (1964): 4-20.

5. Patterson, *Photography and The Art of Seeing*, p.149.

6. See Paul Ricoeur, "The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling," in *On Metaphor*, ed. Sheldon Sacks, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p.154 ff.

subject matter which is expressed and conveyed by its physical features or elements. Mood and affect are the interpretive human response to the "expression embedded in structure."⁷ Patterson, in speaking of gravel pits, their mood of loneliness or abandonment and the existential questions which such places raise, clearly illustrates the idea of using feeling as a tool and form⁸ of knowing. "I don't try to answer these questions or alter the feeling of the place. Instead, I endeavour to observe and photograph the visual elements that give rise to my questions and my feelings."⁹ The visual physical elements of light, line, colour, texture, position, combine in dynamic interactive ways to express the essential mood or theme spoken by the elemental details. Patterson uses his feelings and his thinking as tools to shape a consciously measured interpretive photographic response which is both creative and productive in linking him with his environment, and with those who view his work. This is the measured interpretive mission response to Leda which Rose Aaron was attempting to express in creative form.

All too often mood, emotion, feeling is equated with all that seems mysterious, enigmatic, and insubstantial, and is denigrated and relegated to the realm of the irrational, the intuitive, the

7. Ibid, p.69, quoting Rudolph Arnheim in *Art and Visual Perception*, (n.p.). A circle feels different from a triangle, red feels different from blue.

8. See also the discussion of "emotion as form" in Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, p.118 ff.

9. Patterson, *Photography and the Art of Seeing*, p.147.

unreasonable, the subjective, and thereby consigned to obscurity¹⁰ and mindless, bodiless oblivion. The problem seems to be that, while both thinking and feeling are equally rational functions and forms of the one knowing process, ¹¹ for instance, each side speaks in its own language. The dominance of cognitive logic and reason in focusing on obvious factuality imposes an unnecessary and inaccurate limitation on its lines of inquiry. Affective logic and reason are partners with cognition in the knowing process. What good is a head without a body? Each needs to learn and listen to, and heed the communication of the other in order to be wholesome in knowledge and wisdom. A fruitful conjunction of thinking and feeling is necessary in order to translate and interpret each side mutually to the other.

Patterson's writing on the art of seeing and the joy of photography very clearly articulates how the mood of the subject matter communicates through its physical elements. The problem is that the observer receives the message (the *what* component) but is unconscious of *how* he or she knows. Hence the knowing may *seem* irrational, intuitive and speculative, and suspiciously subjective, whereas the real problem lies in the realm of unconsciousness, lack of a sufficient scope of observation, lack of paradigms, and inarticulation. Once again, those

10. "Obscure knowing" and "obscure knowledge" are terms used to describe and explain poetic intuition and poetic knowledge by Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, p.114 ff.

11. The rational basis of these functions is dealt with by Jung, "Definitions," in *Psychological Types*, CW 6, s.v. Rational, par.785 ff. "Thinking and feeling are rational functions in so far as they are decisively influenced by reflection" (par.787). Reason is understood to be a reflective, adapted attitude that operates to conform thought, feeling, and action to certain designated objective values.

what and how questions return to circumambulate the theme of split reference. An understanding of the principles and elements of good visual design in photography assist in the transposition of its meaning and an application to the metaphorical realm. For instance, a person may be described as colourful, research may produce a line of inquiry which is direct, implicit, or oblique, an attitude may be described as one's standpoint or horizon. The upturned or downturned line of the mouth communicates more than just the surface of a smile, the pinched lines on the forehead are more than a frown. Their structural expression of lines speak of an inner inherent meaning which must be correctly interpreted, for a frown may mean displeasure or simply intense concentration. As *The Wave* line shows, an interpretive response to the obvious line is not necessarily an accurate response to the whole picture.

C. Pictured Wholeness of Expression

Freeman Patterson's attitude and approach to creative photography and fruitful interrelationship with his environment is a very beautiful illustration of the wholesome balance of relationship between subject and object-subject which integrates one's inner and outer reality without negating either.¹² This type of intimate relationship is called poetic knowing, for it is the fruit of a holistic and active engagement

12. Patterson illustrates recent developments in new hermeneutics which is concerned with healing the subject-object split that was based on a misapprehension of reality. The split involved the quest for truth which completely separated and isolated the knower from the known. It is, perhaps, more accurate to say that the new hermeneutics is dressing and addressing the schizophrenic wounds, for only God, nature and time heal.

between the maker and the material which brings life to both. This is what Patterson means when he says that "the camera always points both ways. In expressing the subject, you also express yourself....When you observe your subject matter carefully, you will find yourself caring for it, and through it expressing yourself quite naturally."¹³ Poetic work in this sense involves an intimate and dynamic subject-object interaction where each shapes the other to some degree. Patterson's work - photographs and writing - clearly illustrates the creative and productive poetic activity between the environment and himself as observer-participant.

This illustration raises and answers some questions about the place of personal identity and self-expression in a most illuminating and reorienting manner. As he notes, "preoccupation with self is the greatest barrier to seeing, and the hardest one to break...[it is] the "Me cramp"; too much self-concern blocks direct experience of things outside yourself."¹⁴ In speaking of the time and effort it may take to establish a visual relationship between the subject matter and the photographer, he offers this wise encouragement. "[God relationships...ah, my slip is showing!]. Good relationships require a lot of give and take, and a lot of hard work. But the process of coming to know yourself through interaction with someone or something else is very

13. Patterson, *Photography and The Art of Seeing*, p.152.

14. Ibid, pp.9-10. While honouring his intention, I would substitute the word 'ego' for self in order to uphold the value of Self as one's inner god-image and its potential for redemptive and wholesome relationship with God, which is graceful before being lawful.

satisfying. In the end, you get the picture - of both of you."¹⁵ Though deepseated and longstanding grief were at the tap root of Rose Aaron's lower eye level perspective regarding Leda's poetic door and catch incident, it still qualifies as "me-cramp." Eventually, both Leda and Rose Aaron got the picture. Patterson shows us very clearly what it means to shift attention away from ego-imposed confinement and isolation and onto an alternative focal consciousness. This type of consciousness participates in the larger picture of reality but does not identify itself as the focal centre of the world. Patterson exemplifies a letting go of self (ego limits, preoccupations, obvious horizons) which is not loss of personhood and identity but a joyous transformation. His work is creative, productive, joyful and inclusive in its focus on the other, and illustrates genuine freedom of expression and freedom of belonging within the boundaries and parameters of a larger spirited physical existence. For the most part a good photographer's place is a non-intrusive one behind the camera, not in front of it. His photographic images demonstrate very clearly that Patterson is never absent from his photographs but neither is he their central focal reference point.

Patterson's approach to photography is a living metaphor of the covenantal form of relationship¹⁶ pictured in the Bible. Covenant

15. Ibid, p.10. Square brackets are mine. This unintentional slip is one way of paying attention to the unknown meaning of an image or symbol. Heeding and honouring its unexpected disclosure of another level of meaning provides surprise openings and insights.

16. The covenantal theme of relationship and belonging is used as a metaphor for human personality by Walter Brueggemann, "Covenanting as Human Vocation," *Interpretation* 33 (1979): 115-129. See Appendix 3 for a brief summary of this covenant metaphor.

living (involving the Other's initiative and human response) offers a radical sideways alternative to various paradigms of human personality, especially in regard to the existential questions about meaningful and purposeful being and doing in the course of one's life. The question of an increasingly wholesome relationship, with reality, with truth, with other people and God, is transformed from the identity question "Who am I?" to the vocation question of "Whose am I?"¹⁷ It shifts focal attention away from the 'me-cramp' of ego-identity affirmations of limited sufficiency and independent groundedness and onto an alternative groundedness of positive grounding in otherness. This shift yields a conscious groundedness and life-affirming consciousness of belonging and becoming within a larger picture, sharing and participating in the life of other people and events whose extensive networks give meaning and reference points to and for our existence.¹⁸ Belonging to and becoming in the larger picture, in their inverse language forms, express the powerful drive, the hunger and thirst for living, whose *longing to be* and *coming to be* is the essence of spirited existential living.

17. James Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984), p.93. The author is discussing Brueggemann's metaphorical use of covenant and vocation. This develops his own concerns for unifying the concepts of human development and growth and religious transformation (*metanoia*, conversion) with an integrative spiritual perspective which illustrates maturing partnership with God.

18. The need for human belonging is most poignantly described by Norbert Elias, *The Loneliness of the Dying*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985) pp.28 & 29. "[Some] find it difficult to press dying people's hands or to caress them, to give them a feeling of undiminished protection and belonging....But, as with every parting of people who are intimate, a gesture of undiminished affection is, for the one taking final leave, perhaps the greatest help, apart from the relief of physical pain, that those left behind can give."

Leda's zest for living [her previous reference and image of oranges, lemons, tangerines] continued unabated to the day she died. Following Leda's literal death door turnaround, she and Rose Aaron later celebrated the real mystery of life continuing beyond false alarms, with some lemon gelato. This celebration took place on Rose Aaron's 23rd and final visit, the day before Leda's death on the 23rd of the month. They both eventually got the picture.

D. Relational Knowing with Imagination

Because of its creative but non-linear logic, a straightforward approach to poetic language is a road to nowhere. Poetic and symbolic language produce fractal images which enable us to appreciate the value and truth of methods and goals which are other than the habitual straightforward head-on approaches. *Poiesis*, or poetic knowing and knowledge, is the holistic intimate knowing which draws and holds together in meaningful connection the human faculties of thinking (cognitive reason) and feeling (evaluative reason), with the input from the physical senses (sensation) and their equivalent psychic senses (intuition). Poetic knowing knows with thinking, feeling, sensing and intuiting, a "knowing with" that operates automatically in the first order interactions between persons and their environment. When greater and more careful conscious attention is given to the details of this 'knowing with' process, the knowing manifests and illustrates itself most accessibly in and through the relationship activity between a maker-doer (photographer, knitter, windsurfer, companion) and the object-made (photograph, garment, wallhanging) or event-done (windsurfing, accompanying). Freeman Patterson's interpretive response

to the visual feeling and thinking components of the gravel pit illustrates the idea of an integrated type of knowing, that is the "knowing together with the other", which is the basis of conscience and consciousness.¹⁹ Relationality is the important thematic factor in this type of conscious knowing with the other.

In photography as in other fields, the role of imagination is to stimulate a more expansive, attentive and productive consciousness. Images are a vehicle of economic communication using pictures or picture language in order to stimulate deeper thinking and feeling about the theme or subject matter. "What imagination confers on thought is the ability to think [and feel] further."²⁰ They do this by making teasing and provocative suggestions - knowing suggestions or a knowing look - in order to bring thinking and feeling into the 'knowing with' process of conscience and consciousness which weds cognition and affection. The purpose of an image is to hint at and point toward possible new and unfamiliar but meaningful relationships. These new links are most easily, readily and economically expressed through a visual medium. The maxim "a picture is worth a thousand words" is not to be scorned for its heuristic value.

That object or scene which the image depicts and to which it refers exploit the visual medium to express and link one thing, event, person with another meaning. "Imaging or imagining is the concrete milieu in

19. See Edward Edinger, *The Creation of Consciousness*, (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1984), p.36, *con, cum* together, with + *scire* to know, to see. Science, by contrast, is the knowing or seeing but without the "withness" factor.

20. Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation", p.36. Square bracket is my insertion.

which and through which we see similarities. To imagine, then, is not to have a mental picture of something but to display relations in a depicting mode."²¹ Images visualize the relationship between apparently unconnected and dissimilar objects, actions, events, etc. because of the creative capacity to develop and present new sideways connections. Such imagistic depictions use the 'as if' or 'what if...' mode of creative speculation and imaginative make-belief to try out new ideas and relationships for their fit or no-fit. The freshness, intensity and evocative power of an image lies in its energizing potential to birth new patterns and themes of relationality.

The speculative "what if..." and "as if" realm of the imagination is then able to raise thinking and feeling questions and issues which consciously probe the habitual limits of perception and thereby challenge and break with the blinkers of tunnel vision and break through the cramp of habit-imposed boundaries. As Joseph Campbell notes, "If the doors of perception were cleansed every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite."²² A sideways move, facilitated by the good graces of the imaginative knowing process, opens and then invites us to make a fresh start. The side door is, afterall, only a fresh alternative and imaginative starting point on the threshold of poetic knowing.

21. Ricoeur, "The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling," p.148; see also p.142.

22. Joseph Campbell, *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986), pp.20-21, quoting Wm. Blake, "The Marriage of Heaven and Hell", with an introduction and commentary by Sir Geoffrey Keynes (London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1975) p.197.

E. Masterful Events - Historical and Symbolical

The door events mentioned in the previous chapter will serve as an example to illustrate the role and function of imaginative make-belief or creative mimesis. They are chosen, however, to also emphasize the fact that an interpretive and creative response to Leda's situation depends on reading a sufficiently clear meaning of events which exist within historical time-space parameters. They provide important starting points. The literal and poetic door situations in which Rose Aaron found herself well illustrates Ricoeur's comments. "We exist because we are seized by those events which happen to us in the strong sense of this word...[events that] have completely changed the course of our existence. The task of understanding ourselves through them is the task of transforming the accidental into our destiny. The event is our master."²³ Companionship with Leda completely changed the course of Rose Aaron's existence. The door-event, especially, had a very strong and appealing quality to it. Without taking away from its historicity, a sideways approach helps to see what its poetic and symbolic appeal offers to imaginative praxis.

To do this, consider the literal picture-event of the historical door as if it was an image made up or fictionalized as in a novel, in order to depict a relationship between the familiar event and its unfamiliar or unknown meaning. From this fictional perspective, one can appreciate that a playwright may use external scene changes and altered geographical positions to indicate inner change, attitudes, etc., or a passage toward a destination. Following Leda's stinging rebuke about

23. Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation", p.34.

the withheld key to her poetic door, Rose Aaron pondered an imaginative re-interpretation of the historical door images, transposed to the metaliteral realm. What they could tell her and help her to do, to see and to give back to the poetic door situation? For in fact, she had managed the literal door once she knew where the catch was. In face of Leda's sharp rebuke regarding her poetic door, and the literal hand on the shoulder comfort of a third woman friend, Lenore, who was present that day, this image gave Rose Aaron hope in exchange for her fear of failure, and her felt burden of shame and despair. Her burden was that of feeling and thinking she had inadvertently and unknowingly betrayed her mission vocation because of Leda's stabbing and stinging accusation.

Out of the historical parameters, the key meanings connect forcibly with the religious sister's help and guidance to the magnetic catch, and the withheld key. Transpose religious sister to religious attitude and prayer for help, going ahead to open and secure the door (which was never locked in any case) on its unobvious catch,²⁴ and accompanying Leda through the door. Doorways and thresholds are significant liminal staging posts. The physical door never required a key, so what was the key reference on which Leda was so insistent? There Rose Aaron was, between a rock and a hard place, between a push and a key whose only meaning was alluded to through the referential activity of cost-effective companionship.

24. 'Catch' was mainly a love catch, and had in part, a lengthy network of personal amplifications which came from Rose Aaron's dreams, studies, lifetext, etc. These involved fishing, resurrected relationship of the Biblical lament form, magnetic attraction and union of opposites, universal covenant relationality, rainbows, joyriding tricksters who stole R.A.'s car, the Holy Spirit and grounded hares, hook and eye type securing devices needed for a mountaineer's ascent and descent.

The significance of the relationships emerging in this connection between the literal historical and poetic door-event did not tell Rose Aaron what to do. Rather they suggested, teased and appealed to her imagination to be conscious both of the facts and possible new interpretations of perspective. This facilitates a creative interpretive application of awareness to the unfamiliar and especially the unknown symbolic components contained in that masterful historical reality. This door image suggested she could and should gently push, and indeed already had pushed on the door and on Leda's armchair in ways entirely appropriate to her weakness and vulnerability, ways that were non-dominating and non-invasive.²⁵

The key does not belong in any way, shape or form to Rose Aaron, she neither held nor withheld it as the situation bears out. However, a key reference to the messianic-compassion activity of binding up the wounds of the brokenhearted and releasing fettered and oppressing grief is one link to be allied with others (Is.61: & 58:6 ff.; Lk.4:17-19). Ally it with giving the comfort of physical food and water accompanied by a symbolic spiritual intention, and a second very brief green light testimony about the numinous experience of the free forgiveness of denial (of innocent grief) and the free pardon offered to (guilty) deniers and betrayers like Peter, Paul and James, and accepted by

25. In these post-imperial and post-colonial times, a missionary's fears of re-enacting the cultural and religious ethnocentricity, domination, and imposed schizophrenia of the past are real and justified. Yet that concern may become debilitating and even paralyzing. Only love's touch is gentle and powerful enough to transform fear.

them.²⁶ The most important point to bear in mind is that the image appeals to the imagination to reconsider, rethink, and refeel the event, object, situation. The return to the original situation, the 're' + factor, is not simply a one-way trip but is meant as an opportunity to transform, not only our limited and habitual perspectives, but to recreate them with greater meaning and reference points. These thematic references become invaluable signposts to be applied or fed back into current living, as illustrated by Rose Aaron's example of feeding back some transformed but clearly recognizable and palatable theme material. This is full circle hermeneutics in action.

F. Poetic Work

"Every activity causing a passage from non-being to being is *poiesis*, so that the works produced by any kind of art are *poiesis*, and the workmen who achieve them are all *poietai* or makers."²⁷ The passage from non-being to being involves the skillful and practical knowing activity which links the subject-maker and the object-made, as in photography and knitting, or the subject-doer with a skilled achievement as in windsurfing or dress designing and making. This is the poetic knowledge that discloses and manifests itself in creative and skillful activity. In this very carefully defined sense, a photographer, a knitter, a windsurfer and a dress designer-maker may be called *poets*.

26. Their paths cross in 1Cor.15:5, 7, 8; Gal.1:17-19; Acts 15; their individual stories of denial and betrayal, and life-giving forgiveness are found in other passages.

27. Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, p.88, quoting Plato's *Symposium* (Discourse on Diotima), 205.

Their finished works or actions are called *poetic*, because of the learning and application of practical knowledge. It is vitally important to understand that poetic knowledge is creatively practical and productive in the making and doing sense, and is knowledge which comes from active and conscious work. By this point, the truth of this view should be abundantly clear in the foregoing material.

Thus *poiesis* is constructive knowledge in the most practical and creatively productive sense, and not, I repeat, not to be confused with obvious poetry-making and language issues per se. However, when this poetic knowing activity and work is applied to the creative production and construction of language to express and share information and experience, there is a dynamic move into the product making, not of objects, but of meaning: meaning-making. Meaning-making has two connected lines as in *The Wave* picture. One is the obvious and attention-getting features which make sense, that is, they are meaningful in their own right. Meaning is wedded to reference which is actually the true horizon. As Ricoeur notes, "meaning is what a statement says, reference is that about which it says it."²⁸ Recall the earlier statement about *expression embedded in structure* and the example of the frown line. The structure of the frown line may be regarded as the meaning to express the reference of displeasure or intense concentration. That is to say, there is a presenting or immanent aspect of meaning and a hidden, concealed or inherent reference. In language the reference may be found through a repeated pattern or theme which is the distilled essence of the meaningful details. As in *The Wave*, the

28. Ricoeur, "The Metaphorical Process," *Semeia* 4 (1975): 75-106, p.81.

true horizon of reference is not really hidden in the mist, but does need to be looked for and searched out in order to take in the whole picture. The productive application of poetic knowledge to language is called the poetic function of language, and it is knowledge which is productive of meaningful and referential communication.²⁹ Photoknit word pictures are one example of the poetic knowledge and productive skills applied to language. That is, photoknit pictures take the already existing material reality of extensive dialogue with Leda, and present its historical reality in an accessible form of communication. These selected 'pictures' represent a larger parts-whole configuration of event-interpretation.

There is, however, another component of producing poetic images which parallels but does not exactly correspond to the physical dimensions of photographic images as a visual medium of communication. The special and distinguishing feature of a poetic image is in its innovative capacity to contain non-spatial meaning and reference. Thus far in this chapter, examples of *poiesis* taken primarily from photography have been used to express the theme of knowing through the use of visual language and metaphors related to seeing. The visual medium is a very familiar and accessible one. In this respect, the visual dimension is also being used here as a metaphor. That is to say, having established an understanding of image based on the visual photographic image, that meaning and reference will now be transposed from photography to language and to poetic linguistic images.

29. This is the "productive reference" which "invents", "discovers" and "changes reality" by interpretive and recreative shaping. See Ricoeur, "The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality," *Man and World* 12 (1979): 123-141.

Written language is visual language also, and certainly poetic in the creative and productive sense. But as a primary mode of communication, language is oral and auditory in the first place and therefore a shift to metaphors of voice and speaking, and ears and hearing, is a necessary and significant reiteration of the knowing which comes with hearing (cf. Is.6:10; Mk.7:31 ff.; 8:22 ff.). Knowing is not limited to the obvious and habitual visual references to understanding as seeing.³⁰ Particularly in situations of oral dialogue, as with Leda, the emphasis is on the primacy of hearing over seeing. In poetic knowing with the ears, meaning and reference is heard before it is seen.

Poetic knowing with the ears is the exercise and learned skill of sideways hearing with the imagination in order to understand, i.e. to have insight, to be illuminated, to see the light. A shift in receiver modalities means hearing the light and seeing the word! Hearing is an important dimension of being receptive to the living word which addresses people in and through many kinds of active and living manifestations. This is similar to the skillful observations which Freeman Patterson models in regard to visual manifestations which come about from a sideways approach. This same sideways shift is required in order to find new starting points for the renewed hearing of the voice of the world and the people around us. Hearing the true referential horizon opens up new worlds of meaning and enables one to shape a poetic response which accurately and freshly re-expresses what is already there

30. A blind friend lives in our household. Her ability to know with and through the other physical and psychic senses is quite remarkable and uncanny for us, but very ordinary for her. She is a very salutary lesson in seeing with the other faculties in order to understand.

in the overall picture.³¹ The metaphor of voice is powerfully linked with skillful and productive articulation. Loss of voice, muteness, and finding an alternate 'voice' were very important issues for Leda.

In the hearing sense of knowing, a poetic image is a language form which is initially presented in a visual or pictorial mode and not necessarily or directly based on sensory perception. Though the poetic image may have a direct sensory component which makes it meaningful, its inherent reference is not to be found solely in its familiar face value. Both Carl Jung and Paul Ricoeur, in their respective fields of psychology and philosophy, insist on this distinctive shift in the understanding of image. This enlarging change of focus shifts "the problem of the image from the sphere of perception to that of language."³² The freshness, intensity and evocative power of the imaginative poetic image "never takes the place of reality, and can always be distinguished from sensuous reality by the fact that it is an "inner" image....[without external] reality-value."³³ The *Second Cup Theme* is a prime example of a poetic image. Even in the original dream setting, it did not have any sensuous reality but was manifest by a voice whispering and imprinting the words, *Second Cup Theme*, the whole night long. A waking example of an imaginative poetic image will be given in the next section. Though without sensory reality-value, they

31. This is meaning of the terms "redefinition" or "redescription" of reality used by Ricoeur, "The Metaphorical Process", pp.75 & 95 resp.; see the same referential meaning for an "internal fiction" and "mimesis of reality", *idem*, "The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality," p.140.

32. Ricoeur, "The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality," pp.127 & 129.

33. Jung, "Definitions," in *Psychological Types*, CW 6, s.v. image, p.442.

create, produce and shape our views of reality in fresh and previously unheard-of ways through the networking process of making and doing productive new relationships, by expansively using familiar materials. It is, however, a great mistake to bind poetic images to the obvious concrete senses and stale conventions of habit.

Poetic work, however productive and creative it may be, needs the refreshment of the sideways play of the imagination. Word plays and language games, like photography, can be a source of great joy, playing with new possibilities for the joy of it. In the next section, the play of poetic language in the prophetic vocation of poetic image-making, meaning-making and reference-locating will be considered.

G. The Contrasting Wings of Poetic Play

"The poet is an artisan of language, who, by sole means of language, produces and shapes images."³⁴ Image, in this sense, is a poetic linguistic image with all the visual and non-sensory implications just discussed. This brings us back to the starting point of the mediating mission of Leda's images and symbols in communicating reality in a non-linear mode. *Poiesis*, the poetic function of meaning-making language, is simply a sideways point of departure in the quest for the missing reference. So let us return to the beginning of Leda's and Rose Aaron's historical context of initial 'A' and 'B' visits, and turn our careful attention to a poetic image which arises out of the historical (literal), poetic (metaliteral, metaphorical) and symbolic (unknown) parameters. These parameters were previously discussed in the section,

34. Ricoeur, "The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality," p.133.

Masterful Events Historical and Symbolical. That discussion focused on the search for and use of a relatively known historical reference transposed to the productive and poetic realm of metaliteral and metaphorical interpretation and its subsequent application. Now this process will be reconsidered in a context where there is no pre-existing and literal history to draw upon directly, but only an oblique referential network of meanings. The poetic work of the hide-and-seek referential game is only the playground preparations which hope for a meeting place transfigured with and through the ultimate referential and symbolic activity of the Holy.³⁵ The present focus is on the human poetic side; the symbolic side of ultimate reference will be considered in the next chapter.

The following is a special example of a non-spatial poetic and linguistic image.

The brooding presence of the stranger waiting in the wings.

This playful poetic image is visually suggestive, teasing the mind's and body's eye with a strong sensory picture. Yet it is fundamentally a non-sensory or non-perceptual image to express an inherent referential reality. It is based on literal and historical parameters as is a photographic image, but is also non-concrete and non-physical in spatial terms. It operates in the fourth dimension of time, but cannot be found in three dimensional space. Without the

35. See the meeting places *cum* holy ground/ holy places, of Bethel for Abraham in Gen.12:8; 13:3,4, and his dwelling place "near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron in Gen.13:18; 14:13; the place of Peniel for Jacob in Gen.32:30; the burning bush and ground for Moses in Ex.3:5.

spatial and historical reference points, it could be said to be timeless, that is, its meaning and reference are not bounded by the obvious and familiar dimensions of Euclidian geometry. The value of such a poetic linguistic image is that it stretches the imaging, thinking and feeling network in all dimensions at once by providing those faculties with a very unaccustomed conscious vantage point which transcends and yet includes the familiar. This 'both-and' position links the transcendent and the immanent. The point of these timeless and teasing enticements are stretching exercises which improve the muscle tone of consciousness. In turn, the real value of a timeless storehouse is that, given the time and space, it manifests its priceless treasures of reality within comprehensible space-time parameters, in the present, in the now-gift of life affirmation. The old-new networking poet is, afterall, only an ordinary home-maker when all is said and done (see Mt.13:52).

The most important question to ask a timeless and spaceless poetic image is the referential one. To what and about what do you refer? The meaning of the above poetic phrase brings together and plies the various strands of meaning and reference emerging with the conjunction of Barnabo's and Leda's stories, the black and white wings of the crow and swan imagery, and Rose Aaron's attention alerted to a positive reinterpretation. The essence of Leda's whole lifestory is expressed in this phrase, a phrase whose distilled and concentrated process is the work and play of *poiesis*. There are no initial shortcuts in the process of knitting together various strands of significance in the quest for the split reference. In the remaining portion of this chapter on *poiesis*, black crow imagery will be put into 'holding position' until

chapter 4, The Garment Exchange, and swan imagery will be 'picked up' (two machine knitting terms) at this starting point in mediating mission. Swan imagery amplifies, verifies and validates Rose Aaron's poetic wordplay image. Secondly, it discloses an essential and ultimate symbolic reference which validates and verifies the human poetic work with a complementary transcendent horizon of relationship of increasing transference.

H. Referential Swan

The brooding presence of the stranger waiting in the wings is a compact and economic linguistic expression which speaks with a multivocal and punning voice in addressing three important dimensions of interconnected meaning, literal, metaliteral (metaphoric) and symbolic (JCN, parameters). Such interconnections are a gossamer web of linking strands which loop back on each other in an unpredictable, non-linear manner. By way of a wordplay shift of meaning (JCN, isotopy), the significance of each of the individual words about this image of the presence in the wings, playfully slips to and fro among these three important dimensions which link the concrete with an abstracted and concentrated, but equally poetic form. The multivalence of these interpenetrating parameters alerted Rose Aaron to Leda's spiritual need to be peacefully and lovingly reconciled with an unknown someone and something. This is the source of the ultimate split reference which was waiting for entry into her life, of which she was very frightened and from which she had run away.

The wings, black and white, bear a literal and historical reference which comes from the Barnabo story and dialogue between Leda and Rose

Aaron. There is also a metaliteral or metaphorical meaning and an unknown symbolic referent. On the second metaliteral level, brooding, as a sense of terrifying foreboding and doom, is the way in which Leda interpreted a felt but as yet unseen presence in her own environment. Her reactions clearly indicated that she anticipated the beating of the wings as a form of punishment, a physical beating, and clearly expressed her sense of foreboding. The literal picture of Leda and the Swan on Leda's wall certainly carries that sense of foreboding, as does the poem by W.B. Yeats,³⁶ and the literal rendering of the Greek myth of Leda and the swan.³⁷ The scythe-wielding, skeletal spectre of Death is perhaps the most obvious metaliteral referent for the meaning of the anticipated presence awaiting the cue for its performance. In the circumstances of Leda's impending demise it is an obvious referent, but it is not the only one.

Swan imagery and its connected associations (JCN, triangulation) disclose an interesting alternative which contrast strongly with the

36. W. B. Yeats, "Leda and the Swan" in *20th Century Poetry and Poetics*, ed. G. Geddes, (Toronto: Oxford University Press), p.11. "A sudden blow: the great wings beating still above the staggering girl...". For a beautifully balancing and compensating picture of swans, see Yeats' "The Wild Swans at Coole", pp.2 & 3.

37. In the Greek versions, Zeus comes to Leda in the form of a swan. He may have seduced her but rape is not mentioned. From her union with the swan-god and her husband on the same evening, she gave birth to two sets of twins, one set mortal (Castor and Clytemnestra) and the other immortal (Pollux and Helen). In some versions, Zeus is said to be only indirectly involved. Leda was given one or two eggs from which the children were born and/or hatched. See Meyer Reinhold, *Past and Present*, (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972), pp.160, 270; see also, *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, (London: Book Club Associates, [1959] 1973), pp.105 & 106, 188-190; Pollux and Castor, both known as the *Dioscouri* (sons of god, Gemini twins), were an adventurous and inseparable pair, and reappear to make an important contribution in Chapter 5.

foreboding and impending sense of doom which Leda of the hospice had enacted so vividly. In amplifying swan imagery, J.E. Cirlot gathers together and summarizes the many complex strands of its essential meaning.³⁸ The white swan is especially sacred to Venus³⁹ and is often used in poetry and literature as "an image of naked woman, of chaste nudity and immaculate whiteness."⁴⁰ Its long phallic neck and rounded silky feminine body suggests a union of opposites.⁴¹ This union of opposites is further amplified in a number of ways. It is dedicated to Apollo, the god of music, and so linked to the swan-song. The swan's muteness is broken when, for the first and last time, it sings sweetly on the point of death. (Sweet is the last word anyone would have used to describe Leda!) Swan-song is also connected with the harp, the funeral pyre, the death-ship journey to the other world, a union with the mystic Centre, and the complete fulfillment of a desire. The swan/harp is also significantly linked to the peacock/lute, this latter representing logical thought, and forming the axes which cross and unite

38. J.E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), s.v. swan, p.322.

39. Venus/Aphrodite is linked with "the sweet tasks of love" and peace, not war, as is Athene. In the battle themes of the *Iliad*, she is pictured as soft and weak, and thereby open to attack from mortals. See *New Larousse Encyclopedia*, p.131; also Edith Hamilton, *Mythology*, (New York: Mentor Books, [1940] 1969), p.33.

40. Cirlot, *Dictionary of Symbols*, p.322.

41. Mountain symbolism also indicates a union of opposites. Barnabo's mountain descent and ascent, and Leda's counterpart interact to reinforce the swan imagery. Mountain is also "the Centre of the world, tending toward Oneness, the all-embracing image of totality," and therefore a very sacred space. See Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, s.v. mountain; also M. Eliade, "Sacred Space and Making the World Sacred", ch.1, in *The Sacred and the Profane*, (New York: Harper, [1959] 1961), pp.20-65.

passion (deep feeling) and thinking. Added to these amplifications is this beautiful poetic description. "If it was the horse that pulled the Sun-god's chariot by day, it was the swan that hauled his bark over the waters by night."⁴²

A few further observations are helpful. The swan wears a black mask over its eyes, which provides a small area of striking contrast with its white plumage. When its wings are drawn back into an arc above its back, they seem like the most graceful of sails. Swans mate for life and the males are most protective of their mates and territory during nesting time, as one of our own family adventures can testify. Swans can be dangerous for the strength in their necks and their beaks can break a limb. A sideways view of a swan in flight discloses a breathtakingly beautiful and powerfully dynamic line in action.⁴³ Picking up on the mask and earlier shadow themes, the question arises, "Who was that shape in the shadows? Whose is the face in the mask?"⁴⁴ The question of the identity of the brooding stranger who is ultimately waiting in the wings, is a vital one.

Paradoxically, the brooding preparations of a mother hen or a pregnant woman also proclaim a joyous announcement contradictory to Leda's fear and sense of foreboding. These preparations herald the newness of life, of real birth and hatched plans. Mothering imagery was

42. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, p.322.

43. See the postcards by the English photographer, Chris Andrews, in his promotional photo series entitled *The Romance of Oxford*.

44. These are Christine's questions after her initial encounter with the Phantom of the Opera. See the libretto in George Perry, *The Complete Phantom of the Opera*, (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1987), p.147; better yet, listen to it!

important to Leda for she intended to be reunited with her literal mother in death by having her ashes placed in her mother's grave. At least for Rose Aaron, another obvious referent was the advocacy of the Holy Spirit, creatively brooding over the chaos (see Gen.1:2) in Leda's life and patiently brooding over her plans to hatch mercy, compassion, and a loving reunion to replace Leda's all-consuming terror. The very derivation of the Latin word 'comfort' (*comfortare*) is used intensively to mean with great strengthening, *con + fortis*. Paraclete (*paracletos*), the Greek word used of comfort and advocacy, and especially used of the Holy Spirit, means to summons as a helper, to call for help from beyond, *para + kalein*. More details about the Holy Spirit's mediation will be considered in a later chapter. Advocacy and comfort is the name of the game that comes with healing in its wings (Mal.4:6).

Recall that the paths of the swan, Barnabo, and Leda crossed at the initial starting point of what turned out to be a sideways mercy mission. With that in mind, it is important to understand the need to listen to Leda carefully, to her language and tone of voice, and to observe her within the events surrounding dialogue with her. It was a time of gathering information and overall perspective, not drawing final analytical and interpretive conclusions. As Freeman Patterson says, "When I'm faced with a new situation, I often begin by photographing the overall view, without trying to capture the theme of subject. Then I follow it up with a series of photographs that reveal what I have discovered about the subject matter."⁴⁵ For that reason, a neat summary of the swan imagery is not given here because it was only the initial

45. Patterson, *Photography and the Art of Seeing*, p.145.

impetus for greater and lengthier musings by providing a unifying image and referential network of associations. At that stage, the information was intriguing but sketchy. However, the idea of the positively brooding Holy Spirit was an inspiring one which slowly began to fill Rose Aaron with many religious and spiritual *what* and *how* questions about Leda and about Christian mission. These questions motivated and energized the sideways search for new mission premises and approaches. By the way, going back to the earliest mention of a highly favoured holiday spot and Leda's love of and longing for Shakespeare; he is known as the Swan of Avon!

I. Palliative Care

As palliative care literature and holistic practice knows full well, dying in peace requires the integrating reconciliation of body, mind and spirit into some kind of wholeness. It means gathering and tying up loose ends in one's affairs and relationships, and bringing them to an end. It does not necessarily mean perfection in the ethical sense,⁴⁶ but rather completion, accomplishment, fulfillment of a task. This sense of reaching a goal, as it is understood in working with people in the dying process, is found in the Greek word *telos* (end). The same root word is used by Jesus when he died (Jn.19:30), and is used

46. For a fascinating and elucidating perspective on the shift from sensory to ethical imagery found in early Biblical translation see Rembert Herbert, "The Way of Angels: The Impact of Translation on Transmission," *Parabola* 14 (2, 1989): 77-86. In speaking of one's relationship with God, "goodness describes what one must 'do' outwardly; 'sweetness' must be tasted inwardly." p.82.

of Jesus as the initiating author and completer of one's faith (Heb.12:2).

The quirkiness of the poetic wordplay, *the brooding presence of the stranger waiting in the wings*, brings some joy and lightheartedness into the situation which discloses a positively compensating picture to give balance to Leda's fear and terror. In fact, taking refuge and hiding in the shadow of the wings is an outstandingly significant Biblical theme.⁴⁷ The dying process is not all heaviness and sobriety by any means. Leda's own material raises important questions about an ultimate split reference, with the ego's terrifying negative, and the shadow's refreshing positive, perspective. This is a double sided exposure which is equally *transapparent* within the poetic phrase itself. It raises questions about the mediating nature and meaning of the symbols inherent in Leda's overall situation. This in turn leads to a consideration of *what* life-giving and space-making service is being asked of the missionary and *how* the task of positive and peaceful reconciliation with the brooding presence waiting in the wings may be facilitated and fulfilled in practice.

Leda's historical context provides a starting point for the mediating mission of symbolic language. Poetic work and play provide a meaningful basis for retracing her yarn networks and processes, of searching for the missing or split references, of roughly sketching some tentative meanings, and establishing a non-arbitrary verification of the

47. In the Psalms, see 17:8; 23:4; 36:7; 57:1; 63:7; 91:1. Also in Isaiah 32:2; 34:15; 48:2; 51:16. Note Jesus' lament over Jerusalem, Mt.23:37, Lk.13:34. Recall too the space over the Ark of the Covenant and the cherubim with their wings outstretched over the mercy seat.

thematic meanings rooted and expressed in Leda's subject matter. Waiting in the wings of the next chapter is a revamped sideways entry into the prophetic task of preparing accessible common ground for poetic and symbolic communications that can disclose Christ's hidden presence and purposes in Leda's situation.

A voice cries, "Prepare the way of the Lord."

A voice says, "Cry out."

And I said, "What shall I cry?"

"Comfort, comfort my people," says your God.

Isaiah of the Exile

CHAPTER 3

NETWORKING: PREPARING ANCIENT BYWAYS OF LAND AND SEA

A. An Open Invitation

"Prophetic teaching and preaching do not begin with scolding and diatribes. Rather they begin with inviting people like ourselves - numbed with overstimulation and excessive demands or with defensiveness against our own inner accusations of moral failure - to begin to *feel* again. Prophetic teaching and preaching...provide new energy and the gift of refreshing images by which to steer our lives and make sense of our callings."¹ Imagine an invitation to *feel* again! Now that is good, good news. It means that the wearisome and burdensome loads of inappropriately shouldered responsibility and eternally unrequited millstones of generational guilt can be laid down, as Jeremiah anticipated (Jer.31:29,30). Then we are free to eat our own soured grapes, drink the new wine of forgiveness (Mt.26:28), and have the vital circulation returned and restored to our numbed and deadened parts.

1. Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian*, p.93. Fowler is summarizing some insights about the prophetic refreshment as offered by Walter Brueggemann in *The Prophetic Imagination*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978).

"People like ourselves..." is the implicit key which demonstrates prophetic solidarity with the joys and sorrows of the human condition, and yet charts and steers an ancient course toward mutually satisfying covenantal relationship with God. New energy and refreshing images are signposts which come with the penetrating conscious recognition of God's presence made manifest in specific situations. The prophetic gift, no doubt, is the ability to 'see through' a situation to the heavily disguised or thinly veiled presence which silently companions and overshadows event-interpreted history.

With the feeling function in the process of being knowingly restored to its appropriate place, hearing, recognizing and responding to the incisive precision (Heb.4:12) of the still small voice becomes the true moral and spiritual area to be cultivated. Law-breakers we are, law-breakers we will be, world without end. Is there more to life than law? "Yes", says Jesus, Peter, Paul, James, Mary, Martha, Phoebe, the Ethiopian eunuch, Cornelius, and an unnamed host of other witnesses. In learning to feel again, the reality of existential finitude may become the very place where vulnerability and moral failure may be "submitted to questionableness"² without the terror of demonic destruction. Tuning in to gardener's question time, "Where are you?", "What have you done?", "Who told you that?", and responding truthfully, trustfully, and a little less fearfully becomes the art of the possible. That is to say, give-and-take covenantal relationship with God looms and becomes a distinctly wholesome and welcome possibility. Such a twosided relationship is a move toward a wholesome conscious "dependence which in

2. Peters, "Truth in History: Gadamer's Hermeneutics and Pannenberg's Apologetic Method", p.50

no way is synonymous with heteronomy....dependence without heteronomy."³ Now that is an appealing invitation! A whole-hearted or a broken-hearted response becomes equally acceptable, provided that the regulating fear gauge is correctly readjusted. To feel again means the refreshment of distinguishing true and false guilt, and expressing healthy and healing grief for both types; to feel again also means the refreshment for the gagged voice of protesting innocence that suffers the oppressive and unfeeling domination of powerfully vested interests; to feel again brings a spirited and bubbly toast of thanksgiving for life in the face of death.

Leda was refreshed by the sight of an amazing parabolic invitation issued just for her.

Leda recounted her appointment with the eye doctor on Battle St. As soon as she put on some new glasses she saw a fabulous feast laid out on a banquet table ("what a spread!") and many people dressed in the most sumptuous medieval clothing (Renaissance, re + birth). When Rose Aaron teased her about her rose-coloured glasses, they had a good laugh. (The next week Rose Aaron borrowed just such a fabulous homemade dress from a friend to show and drape over Leda.) This ancient and archetypal scene reminded Rose Aaron about the essential reality of Jesus' kingdom parables, where place is used to express presence. Kingdom-common wealth introductions especially include the exclusive wedding feast and

3. Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation," pp.21 & 37 resp.

banqueting invitations which read, "For Sinners Only."⁴ The ranks of sinners were all very neatly classified - the poor, hungry, maimed and handicapped, taxmen, prostitutes, the disinherited - and all these ones were invited in off the (battle) streets, welcomed, clothed, and fed. Leda's illness certainly put her into such an exclusive category of open invitation.

Shortly after seeing this scene, and following her comments about rebelling against inappropriate authority, Leda talked about walking on her hands and standing on her head! What a compensating feat of balance and coordination for one as unsteady on her feet as Leda. Fortunately for Rose Aaron (JCN, serendipity), she had, just that very week, read about this very unusual motif of reversal.⁵ Creative upside down birthing rebellion is both positive, necessary, and a strangely healing position to take, for dying people are quickly marginalized and effectively silenced by society's denial of death, long before they die. Rose Aaron was very surprised and somewhat awed at the appealing and inviting strength of this conversion-new birth theme which came directly from Leda. Coming as it did following Leda's request for car

4. Peter Jones, "The Nature of a Parable," in *The Teaching of the Parables*, (Nashville, Tenn.: Broadman Press, 1982), p.44.

5. J.Z. Smith, "Birth Upside or Right Side Up?" in *Map Is Not Territory*, pp.147-171. The author is dealing with liminality as creative experience outside of the established order. In that conventional view the upside down, hand walking motif represents violation of class, uncleanness, being alien and non-human, living in fantasy, living in the Antipodes, being dead, is connected with shame and unnaturalness, derision. Whereas, in connection with the upside down motif of Peter crucified and a genuinely perverse cosmic and authoritarian order, that reversal means, paradoxically, new birth, a reversal of Adam's position, conversion, a reversal of fate and perverse patterns, need to break through confines and be liberated, finding a larger place and properly ordered space.

conversion, she did what she could to trust, support and uphold that curious reversal.

There is a certain ironic humour in this Cinderella-like situation. Leda's dress was provided, and will be considered in Chapter 4, on the Garment Exchange Legacy. The main problem was an RSVP gap between Leda's shadowy invitation and finding a suitably conscious vehicle in which to transport and introduce her to the author and host of the awaiting feast of redeeming images specially prepared for hungry beggars and 'sinners'. Rose Aaron felt like a gossip but wandless and pumpkin-powerless fairy godmother!⁶ In place of Leda's broken down car (broken drive), the provision of a wheelchair and then an armchair turned out to be particularly numinous and apposite vehicles, as "the seat of faith...is spontaneous religious experience which brings the individual's faith into immediate relation with God."⁷ Liminal thresholds and doorways, according to Eliade, are "symbols and at the same time vehicles of passage"⁸ which connect sacred and profane space and time.

6. See Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian*, p.17. He retrieves the ancient meaning of gossip (god + sib) as godparent or baptismal sponsor, one with spiritual affinity or kinship. A gossip is not an idle (idol) talker, but one who serves "as sponsor in a critical rite of passage." Fowler usefully distinguishes between mentorship and sponsorship, the latter being a "less comprehensive and short-term relationship...(where) one who is more experienced takes a generous and active hand in introducing another to an area, a skill, or a status" (p.35). *Introducing* is the key word for a gossip godparenting sponsor.

7. Jung, *The Undiscovered Self*, (New York: Mentor Books, 1957), p.100.

8. Eliade, *The Sacred and The Profane*, p.25.

For the ancient Israelites bound to slavery in Egypt, Passover doorways required some applications of sacrificial preparation and protection before the forty year passage from unbelief to trust and rest could be accomplished. In biblical symbology, the passage between old and new is often symbolized by forty: days, months, years, decades, etc. The Holy holds the very middle ground of healing and wholesome reconciliation between those useful but relative, sacred-profane binary categories imposed by humans on space and time. Jesus gives strong evidence and testament to the filial freedom to be holy and take holiness into equally sacred and profane categories.⁹ In the call to his way of life-giving, filial liberty and freedom of movement, he beckons, "Come, follow me across the threshold boundaries and into the wider and more open unknowns of time-space."

Rose Aaron's own vehicle of passage involved the greater conscious sifting and considerable reordering and rebalancing of her own anthropological-theological heritage. This meant being herself a 'passenger' wheeled over the thresholds of trusting covenantal

9. Holiness cannot to be understood simply as 'separation' from physical or moral pollution, but more positively as conformity to class. See Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, (London and New York: Ark Paperbacks [1966] 1984). She sums up her discussion of Levitical abominations and the concept of holiness as blessing by saying, "To be holy is to be whole, to be one; holiness is unity, integrity, perfection of the individual and of the kind" (p.54). For the same idea of God's holy oneness, unity and integrity, rather than a strict monotheism, see Gerald Janzen, "On the Most Important Word in the Shema (Deuteronomy VI 4-5)," *Vetus Testamentum* 33 (3, 1987): 280-300. Janzen shows that God's oneness means utterly trustworthy and totally reliable oneness and wholeness of integrity. In the same vein, see Frank Lake, *Tight Corners in Pastoral Counselling*, (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1981), p.77. Lake notes God's quality of holiness as seen in the Psalms and in Isaiah is predictably present alongside the needy, noting critically that holiness has been twisted "to mean almost the opposite qualities, of distance and unapproachableness."

relationship,¹⁰ finding and receiving a new voice of lament¹¹ to replace her silent and undared grief and smouldering anger, and finding herself in the symbolic inner kingdom-common wealth parables of space-saving activity.¹² In this respect, she had to go through the door first, become more secure herself about the love-catch, then go back and respectfully and compassionately (with co-feeling)¹³ wheel Leda's chair

10. For an informative perspective on covenant relationality, see the following: Walter Vogels, *God's Universal Covenant: A Biblical Study*, (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1979); for covenant as a metaphor for human personality, see Brueggemann, "Covenanting as Human Vocation."
11. For the lament genre, see Brueggemann, "From Hurt to Joy, From Death to Life," *Interpretation* 28 (1974): 3-19 and *idem*, "The Formfulness of Grief," *Interpretation* 31 (1977): 263-275; also C. Westermann, "The Role of The Lament in the Theology of the Old Testament," *Interpretation* 28 (1974): 20-38.
12. In Hebrew, *yesha*, from which Jesus' name is taken, means spaciousness, roominess, broadness and freedom from oppression, narrowness, constriction, hemming in, cramp or imprisonment. Thus the ideas of salvation and deliverance have a geographical and a metaphorical meaning connected with God's saving and space-making activity. The idea of the promised land and the kingdom has the same connotations of giving sufficient space or room, as in the outer and inner kingdom (Lk.17:21). See G. Kittel ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol 10, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1964-76), p.973; for a list of Old Testament references, see, E. Hatch and H. Redpath, *A Concordance to the Septuagint and the other Greek versions of the Old Testament*, vol 2, (Graz: Akademische Druck-u, 1954), p.1328; see also John F.A. Sawyer, "Spaciousness: (An Important Feature of Language About Salvation in the Old Testament)," *Annual of the Swedish Theological Institute* 6 (1968): 20-34; see also R. Moore, "Space and Transformation in Human Experience," in *Anthropology and the Study of Religion*, ed. R. Moore, (Chicago: Center for the Scientific Study of Religion, 1984).
13. The root of compassion (*com* with + *passio*) may be derived in two ways, meaning with passion as suffering, sympathy, pity, which connotes condescension of superior to inferior. Alternatively, compassion may mean with *feeling*, and therefore a co-feeling which is open and equal to sharing a range of feelings. "This kind of compassion therefore signifies the maximal capacity of affective imagination, the art of emotional telepathy." See Milan Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), p.20.

into a space where her own positively numinous encounter with God could consciously take place through her own transfigured symbols.

The threshold to a more expansive and inclusive sense of communal ground and common wealth, is both a mirror and a doorway of conversion to infinite new possibilities. In the unveiling disclosure of the hidden Christ in the world, conversion, as Thomas Mooren points out, has two facets with regard to the dynamic relationality of trinitarian bounty. "Conversion is first of all this: self-conversion, so that my own self may get more and more transparent for the trinitarian divine bounty....[and having experienced it], it means to share the divine bounty in a peaceful [life-promoting] way, to make sure that God's bounty, as manifested in the kingdom of God, is perceived as what it really is: God's pure gift."¹⁴ Self-reflective dying to old lines of sensory and poetic perception, and of religious perspective is a life-gifting opportunity for experiencing the symbolic reality of death which is required before new life dawns.

B. The Symbol Gap

Let us turn attention back to the problem of the gap and the gaping passage between Leda's invitation and transportation. The prophetic invitation to feel again is a revitalizing tonic for the characteristic apathy (*a + pathos*, without feeling) of those who are spiritually overburdened with too much responsibility and the inability to grieve due to

14. Thomas Mooren, "Theology at the Crossroads: the Case of Mission Spirituality," *Nouvelle Revue de science missionnaire* 45 (1, 1989): 1-16, pp.8-10.

personal and collective guilt suppression.¹⁵ Walter Brueggemann, in speaking of Robert Lifton's and Eric Olson's studies about attitudes to death, remarks that "behind that frightened practice [of a numbing denial of death's reality] is a symbol gap in which we do not have symbols that are deep or strong enough to match the terror of the reality. What takes place when symbols are inadequate and things may not be brought to public expression is that the experience will not be experienced."¹⁶ Being numbed and deadened to our own experience causes immense practical and problematic barriers which considerably limit the powerful images and symbols that express and carry divine-human relationships and our God-horizons. For instance, when loss in its many faces cannot be acknowledged, experienced and grieved as part of reality, then its unclaimed and denied power binds us to an unprofitable and cramped death space. The power of genuine loss is the power of lament to face this humbling reality and yet say and prove that loss is not the final word on life. The healthy and healing grief process is meant to lead into a trust-fund reinvestment in life beyond loss.

15. G. Muller-Fahrenholz, "Overcoming Apathy," *The Ecumenical Review* 27 (1975): 48-56, p.53. In a series of penetrating questions, the author ponders the ungrieved guilt dimensions of global crises and burdensome inequalities brought about by the misapplied virtues of efficiency, industriousness and thrift.

16. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, p.48, quoting Robert J. Lifton and Eric Olson, *Living and Dying* (New York: Praeger, 1974), p.137, "symbolic gap". In their text, "numbing occurs when what is experienced cannot be adequately symbolized, formulated and expressed in individual and communal activity. This symbolic gap...exists for us all"; idem, "The Formfulness of Grief", p.273, also quotes Lifton's and Olson's "symbolic gap" in connection with parallels between the biblical lament form and Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's contemporary pioneering work among dying people.

The two-way paralysis that spells the numbing death of relationship with the whole of reality, is that denial is externally projected onto transcendent views and symbols about God. Projection is a useful means of self-reflection; its one drawback is in the unacknowledged individual and collective ownership of the projected material. On the one hand, we don't experience, grieve and lament our losses and therefore we can't allow God that freedom of passion either. On the other hand, our view of God's distant dispassion and immutability is a symbolic distortion of our own distance from and denial of reality. If God doesn't or isn't allowed to suffer, nor can we. "Power and suffering," says Douglas Meeks, "must be ultimately related to each other in terms of our concept of God, since men and women develop their humanity in relation to the divinity of their God....Since human beings understand their humanity in terms of the divinity of their God, the understanding of human power will derive from the understanding of God's power."¹⁷ The paradoxical doubling element in these reciprocal statements has some sobering and hopeful implications when seen through the lens of the resurrected Christ. One implication relates to the desperate need to re-image the heady and isolating Western philosophical concepts of God, heard and seen not as a 'Thou'-subject, but as an object.¹⁸ By contrast, in Hebrew thinking, God and people were two subjects engaged in dialogue over an event, not a dialectical opposition of subject and object. Freeman Patterson's significant example, seen earlier, focuses

17. M. Douglas Meeks, "The 'Crucified God' and the Power of Liberation" in *American Academy of Religion, Philosophy of Religion and Theology Section*, (1974): 31-43, pp.32 & 33.

18. See Westermann, "The Role of Lament in the Theology of the Old Testament", p.22.

respectful and responsive 'Thou'-type attention onto all kinds of 'subject' matter, animate and inanimate. In Western thinking, the notion of God's ultimate power is characterized by self-identity, self-sufficiency, impassibility (invulnerability), immutability.¹⁹ Here is the human source of projected and unowned parodies of God's character and power which define and delimit human ego-sufficiency, ego-identity and ego-groundedness. In truth, these certainly limited ideals are only falsely glorified half-measures of reality.

A second implication of distorted human projections is that the deity cannot suffer and experience grief and loss over the existential limits of the human situation, especially over the reality of suffering, human sin and death. Equally this means we cannot and may not permit ourselves to live in peace with those obvious and familiar fault lines in the patterns of human existence. But these views do not accord with the picture of the biblical God of covenantal relationship and language. As found in the prophetic discourses of the Old Testament, God is experienced as passionate, that is, of having "the capacity to be affected."²⁰ In other words, God is not apathetic, but is openly receptive and responsive to the human 'voice' in its highest and lowest tonalities of verbal and body language.

Overburdening numbness was certainly part of Rose Aaron's generational missionary heritage, expressed in the image of having to carry Christ to pagan places in which he's never before set foot. Nonsense! Such inflated ethnocentricity denies both God's sovereignty

19. Meeks, "The 'Crucified God' and the Power of Liberation," pp.34 & 35.

20. Ibid, p.35

and the cultural and religious spark-plugs of God-given humanity. This view is too great a cross to bear. It took a long time of vocational wrestling to experience and trust the truth of authentic mission. Mission is defined as the discernment of what the creative Spirit (and often anonymous presence of God) is doing in the world, and doing it in partnership. "God has always been where we are going. Sensitivity to the prior work of [the] Spirit and attention to [that] agenda are the difficult beginnings of all ministry in the mode of the Spirit."²¹ A second type of numbing unexperience arose from the denial of a longstanding grief about a conflicted parent relationship. It certainly formed a part of Rose Aaron's unconscious 'me-cramp' agenda of silently killing despair, hopelessness and outright unbelief that is triggered by certain situational patterns. The icy silence of unvoiced grief and lament was the tie that bound her to an infinite childhood death space. She suspected, for many confirmed reasons but unspecified here, that the grieving-mother motif was also true of Leda in some unknown and undetermined way. Just as Freeman Patterson's flow of existential gravel pit questions enabled him to focus on and respond to his environment, so too did the ebb and flow of Rose Aaron's existential grief enable her to hear, see, feel and respond more accurately to Léda, and to a network of mission-related themes of sideways reference.

As it happened, the grieving-mother motif was far more accurate than Rose Aaron ever guessed. In that respect the theme and image of

21. See A.H. Matthias Zahniser, "The Trinity: Paradigm for Mission," *Missiology: An International Review* 17 (1, 1989): 69-82, p.75. The author refers to John V. Taylor's definition of mission as discerning and working with the Spirit's purposes, John V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Mission*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp.37, 54.

grieving-mother was also a symbol, that is, it creatively brought together and held the tension of a gap between something *known* and completely *unknown*. Let this point be very clear. Rose Aaron did not make or create the motif, it was already available in the environment. She took it and reshaped it as a poetic image, but it turns out to have been profoundly symbolic as its many unknown points of reference become more manifest and *transapparent*. That is, she participated in and penetrated into given aspects of its meaning but she neither created nor possessed its transparent fullness. Rather the opposite, the symbol held and nurtured her into a perspective more expansive yet still existentially relative and provisional.²² A symbol is that which completely transcends our greatest but focally limited horizons and bridges that very gap by inviting and investing the known with fresh meaning and significance. In doing this existing material takes on renewed and revitalized meaning and reference.

The grieving-mother image has many curious and unexpected strands of symbolic reference and while the head may not know it in cognitive fashion, the heart²³ knows and responds when given the time and space parameters. The covenantal language form of prophetic grief and lament

22. Provisional knowing is the "key pillar" of the parts-whole dialectic of historically revealed reality and truth which is so important for Wolfhart Pannenberg's theological method. See Peters, "Truth in History: Gadamer's Hermeneutics and Pannenberg's Apologetic Method," The historical nature of reality is "the bridge of shared understanding which connects the biblical understanding of reality with the modern (secular) understanding" (p.53). This bridge is the modern basis for dialogue.

23. In Hebrew, the 'heart' refers to the seat of intelligence and decision making, see J. Goldingay, *God's Prophet, God's Servant: A Study in Jeremiah and Isaiah 40-55*, (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1984), p.47.

is an invitation from and for "people like ourselves". It cuts through numbness and denial as nothing else can, for the doublesided cutting edge of lamented loss and its pivotal hinge of praise and gratitude is an incisive turning point. The key to disciplined feeling seems to be the flowing acceptance of what actually is. "Acceptance is nothing else than a quality of attention."²⁴ As Rose Aaron accepted that grieving-mother image, she was able to ponder and attend to Leda's own silently grieving relationship without knowing any details. In her own realignment with and acceptance of reality - the fully grieved reality regarding the loss of mother relationship, and the greater acceptance of other sustaining and supporting adult relationships - Rose Aaron was freed from her debilitating but hidden 'me-cramp' need for Leda's smile of approval. Leda's brilliant smile was very selectively bestowed, but had been withdrawn from Rose Aaron, and its lack had stirred the resonating depths of an old unhealed wound. However, life smiled on and waved to Rose Aaron from many other-directed and more spacious horizons. In learning the acceptance of that pointed reality, she was slowly freed for more bountiful, interest-free service to and compassion for Leda's cramped space.

Leda herself gave instructions about her cramped space to Lenore and Rose Aaron.

24. Rowan Williams, in the section, "The Education of Passion," in *Christianity and the Ideal of Detachment*, (Church Westcote, Oxford, U.K.: Clinical Theology Association, 1989), p.7, quoting Simone Weil, *The Notebooks I*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1956), p.287. Williams is discussing reality's otherness, and the ego's stance of openness, passion (feeling) and vulnerable powerlessness which loves "within the limits of a mortal and timebound world" (p.7.).

"Go get that other container that's in the air. Get that larger crystal container, like the flower vase, and move the contents from one to the other. Be careful. I want bigger and better sized accommodation." To what was Leda referring? Was it the something 'in-the-air' atmosphere, or an uncertain 'up-in-the-air' position? The obvious referent was the globular rosebud vase that had been Leda's Mother's Day present from her children. The crystal theme was explored a bit though Leda was immensely impatient to give even the slightest hint of a reference. All that Rose Aaron could remember was the redeeming crystal sea and emerald rainbow throne of Rev.4:3 & 6, the cut flowers of Is.40:6-8, 1Pet.1:25, and a dream image of crystal vases and a tiny voice of almost murdered loyalty that refused to die. But Leda was so angry and stinging that she couldn't see how and where to apply this.

The most important thing to understand about working and playing with symbols is that whatever they have to offer for the particular moment is good enough. A relative and provisional good is not perfection and wholeness, but simply good enough. It is sufficient for that time, though it may well entice one to search more diligently and wait and watch more patiently for a further referential disclosure. A symbol does not hold out the ultimatum of "all or nothing", and therefore invites, encourages and supports active side by side participation in its reality at whatever level a person can manage. To embrace and be embraced by the pathos of the grieving-mother symbol was a redemptive release and a blessing which transformed Rose Aaron's bitter cup of salty tears into a type of preserving wisdom. As T.S. Eliot rejoins, "The only wisdom we can hope to acquire/ Is the wisdom of

humility: humility is endless." Without knowing very much about the referential source of Leda's 'me-cramp', Rose Aaron was enabled and energized to work and play more freely within the historical parameters of sideways companionship.

C. Navigating the Ancient Play Ground

In working to prepare the ancient play ground of covenant relationality, Rose Aaron did all she could to search out and cultivate the commonly shared ground of poetic dialogue and discourse between Leda and herself. Lest it seem so very clear now, it should be noted that during this particular time of companionship, the referential thread was difficult to find, let alone pick up, even for an experienced machine knitter. It often required many behind-the-scene hours following each visit to check out possible referential leads, or dropped stitches, that linked Leda's images to the easy and unconditional access to God enacted by Christ in the Gospels. 'Flying by the seat of the pants' is a phrase which exactly describes the breathtaking immediacy, lack of situational control and know-how which marked so much of the dramatic experiences of companionship. The indirect and oblique lines of undercover secret service work suited Rose Aaron's temperament but seemed rather incongruous and out of place for one with a mission vocation. Though on balance, it is true to say that every time Rose Aaron tried a direct approach concerning Jesus, she was slapped down, and ruled out of court - wham! Everywhere was the echo, "Wherein, if we do well, we shall/ Die of the absolute paternal care/ That will not leave us, but prevents us

everywhere."²⁵ How she wrestled with her limping fear of disapproval and failure, half-masked by seeming to be a fraud and betrayer of the faith.

However, the longterm value of those cumulative experiences has intensively confirmed a more deeply rooted conviction. The fertile but poetically shadowed vales which are carefully tended, are indeed the mutually shared seedbed for God's numinous symbolic activity and sacramental communication. Tilling the soil, seedbeds, broadcasting seed, harvest fields etc. are certainly familiar biblical metaphors. They do, however, carry certain *tabula rasa* dangers for missionaries who wantonly plough under and clear away any existing cultural and religious growth in order to plant their own seed or transplant their own imported nursery stock. The image of earth-midwife²⁶ is one complementary side of the care for the birth of the earth's and nature's bounty, whose other side is that of path-keeper or path-maker, i.e. way-preparer. She smooths out the rough places in labour (Is.40:3 & 4) and gives good direction (Jer.6:16) to labourers. Clearly, a midwife is neither the source nor the sustainer of life, but she plays a small character part in the birthing process preparations.²⁷ The indiscriminate danger mentioned above may be partly redressed by a shift of metaphors to those of exploring, orienteering, and navigating earthy and watery terrain. A

25. T.S. Eliot, "East Coker," in *Four Quartets*, IV, 159-161.

26. The distinction between church transplanter and midwife may be found in Rene Jaouen, "Conditions for Authentic Inculturation," *Kerygma* 19 (1985): 3-15, pp.10, 11.

27. Having been attended by midwives at the births of my children, I well appreciate their skilled assistance, short-term support and directional companionship.

poetic midwife-helmsman²⁸ may explore and cultivate, and smooth out the obstacles in the ancient paths between the poetic and the symbolic. In this way any cultural and linguistic material may act as made-ready, two-way sacramental signposts pointing between and among human and divine affairs.

There's no business like show business...

By midafternoon, Leda was so hungry that Rose Aaron fetched a colourful strawberry ice lolly and helped her to eat it. Then, while being lifted into the armchair, Leda muttered in distressing tones about "Skit River", water, her fear of being crazy, being unable to walk through the waves. What was she talking about? The nurse thought she was confused but Rose Aaron knew otherwise. She recalled dream images about resurrected lament relationships, the triple-purpose tugboats, fishing boats and salvage craft, and berths-births, and the wave power of love which takes the weight-wait. She also recalled some innovative 'wave art' at the National Gallery. Projected ocean breakers are given a realistic roller effect by being partially screened on a moving loom and treadle mechanism. Roller is also linked with the Orante (soul) figure of uplifting praise found in early Christian art.²⁹ Rose Aaron

28. Strange as it seems, this double-sided image of midwife-helmsman was applied to Rose Aaron by a friend, while she was steering a canoe in rough water one day. Helmsmanship is also a descriptive term for a non-hierarchical team leadership used by Rev. David Prior, formerly of St. Aldate's Anglican Church, Oxford, England.

29. Orante's characteristic pose has arms raised to the shoulders, with elbows bent and palms upward. Sometimes she is found in burial vaults and on tombstones, and at other times, she is seen with a virile young man who is clearly the good shepherd. Her meaning is ambiguous and depends on its contextual setting to clarify the meaning, but is said to represent soul in relation to the Spirit. See T. Roller, *Catacombes De Rome: Histoire de l'art et des*

then fed and soothed Leda with the brief case 'call to adventure' description which covered the short story collection, *The Siren*, where Barnabo and others leave their apartments and set out to board ship. As Leda had previously travelled by ship she was familiar with ships' bell, horns, and sirens, and leave-taking, so became more calm and coherent as their manageable significance was recalled.

As they traversed the hallway, Leda and Rose Aaron encountered the religious sister who showed them the door catch and gave them the "Jesus, help me" prayer. "...when head and hands no longer work, Jesus help me," was Leda's heartfelt cry. Various ministrations of assurance and comfort ensued, about Jesus' socially scandalous yet ready acceptance of women, and his loving arms. Then Leda asked, "Will you drive the car?" to which Rose Aaron readily replied, "Yes, I'll drive you to Jesus." At that embarkation point she was thinking of another hallway round but instead of ships and ocean voyages, she contemplated a drive to Leda's supermarket of well-ordered, well-displayed and colourful food. Especially she recalled Leda's earlier hunger and the strawberry lolly to 'tide her over' until dinner time.

Leda's story discloses a natural symbolic investment of irrepressible spiritual energy and growth pushing through all the concrete cracks. Her story is an expression of nature's life-giving and space-making benefits and blessings ever at work and play, offering her love in exchange for her fear. Slowly the healing power of growth and a transforming indirect voice and touch wheedled its ancient way into her

croyances religieuses pendant les premiers siècle du Christianisme, vol 1, Paris: Morel, 1881, p.292.

conscious fear and terror, symbolized by wings. Jesus' lament over Jerusalem's refusal to be drawn closer is couched in just such wing imagery (Mt.23:37; Lk.13:34). The paradoxical nature of wings is counter to society's and Leda's prevalent attitude toward death as the Grim Reaper and the unredeemable and ultimately destructive view that this image portrays. By contrast, some of the final lines of Mahler's 2nd Symphony, *Resurrection*, give a very different view.

What was created,
that must pass away!
What passed away, must rise!
Cease to tremble!
Prepare yourself to live!

O suffering! you that pierce all things,
from you I am wrested away!
O death! you that overcome all things,
now you are overcome!

With wings that I wrested for myself
in the fervent struggle of love
I shall fly away
to the light whither no eye pierced.

Die I shall, so as to live!

Rise again you will
my heart, in a trice!
Your beat
will carry you to God.³⁰

In terms of the life-giving and space-making symbol gap, Sandol Stoddard notes that our society has "managed to lose a sense of the proper, necessary, and positive continuity between life and death. For too long a time we have maintained a really unfortunate illusion that

30. Text from Gustav Mahler, *Symphony No.2, 'Resurrection'*, cond. Simon Rattle with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, EMI CDS 747962B, 1987.

one can exist without the other....The enemy all along was not death but our own unwillingness to incorporate its reality into our consciousness."³¹ In the wings of enemy or friend, it would seem that our fearful or trusting attitude shapes our perception and reception of death's reality. This is why a repeated return to Leda's own originating stories is so important, for Barnabo consciously carries a recognizably redeeming and healing motif of facing and crossing certain thresholds of fear, shame and guilt. It provides an accessible historical reference point ripe for spiritual investment within her own body of experience, literal and poetic.

"My friend is my enemy." This was Leda's bitter remark to Rose Aaron one day when the latter had hesitated in calling the nurse for a trivial request. Ironically, it is the reverse of a comment about a familiar parable. "Entering the kingdom is like a victim who is helped by his or her own worst enemy."³² In the end, the enemy is not killed but transformed by a change in attitude. My enemy is my friend.

Leda's overall story is representative of some little closing of the contemporary "symbol gap" operating in the face of death. As a companion witnessing to the death-birth process, and sharing in it in metaphorical and symbolic ways, I am deeply grateful and awed that the

31. Sandol Stoddard, *The Hospice Movement: A Better Way of Caring for the Dying*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), p.7.

32. Stephen Happel and James Walter, *Conversion and Discipleship*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), p.11, commenting on the Good Samaritan.

holy and mysterious source of life is ceaseless in its mediating mission of bringing life to the dead.

Make friends with your adversary while there is time. The symbiotic integration of death into the reality of life demands a type of rebirth. Having already been initiated and baptized into death in symbolic and spiritual fashion, literal physical death no longer continues to exercise its habitual life-threatening and life-incapacitating hold. The outline pattern of referential thresholds (limens) is ever hopeful because the death space of liminality is always a transitional holding position 'betwixt and between' an old degenerating order, world view, identity, and a new one.

Shakespeare expresses the concentrated essence of death space-life space liminality in three succinct lines.

Within be fed, without be rich no more.
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men.
And death once dead, there's no more dying.³³

The profound insight and wisdom of these lines may be also be found in much greater detail in cultural and anthropological liminality as an initiation into death in order to rise to new life.³⁴ The experience

33. William Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare, The Complete Works*, (Secaucus, N.J.: Wayfleet Press, 1987), Sonnet 146.

34. The initiation rites and basis of cultural limens and ritual passages is presented in the classic of Arnold Van Gennep, *Rites of Passage*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, [1909] 1960); see the further development of Van Gennep's work in the extensive writings of Victor Turner, "Betwixt and Between," in *The Forest of Symbols*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967: 93-111); this essay also found in *Patterns of Masculine And Feminine Initiation*, ed. Louise Carus Mahdi et al, (LaSalle: Open Court, 1987: 4-19). This is the source I have used; also found in *The Proceedings of the American Ethnological Society* (1964): 4-20; *idem, Dramas, Fields and*

of liminality is one type of grounding preparation in the poetic prophetic task of producing and shaping already existing personal and cultural material, for "it is the task of the prophet to energize the metaphors resulting from historical experience."³⁵ Liminal experience generates energy and trusting confidence in the death-new birth process. The enlarging reality of repeating limens is strong and supple enough to live with the reality of death without being destroyed by it. This applies equally to the dying and death process of outworn ego attitudes, and to literal, side by side companionship with dying people.

D. By Land and By Sea

By whatever names, human growth and development and religious transformation (conversion, *metanoia*) travel hand in hand. James Fowler warns of the danger of short-circuiting the active birthing process of faithing which emerges in these dynamic interactions of growth and change. He points to the special need of some people for a "healing recapitulation" and a "re-dwelling"³⁶ in the earlier places of one's

Metaphors, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974); *idem*, "Myth and Symbol," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, vol 10, ed. D. Sills, (New York: Macmillan and the Free Press, 1968); *idem*, "Passages, Margins, and Poverty," *Worship* 46 (7 & 8, 1972): 391-412, 482-494; *idem*, *The Ritual Process*, (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1969); for applications of liminality, see also J.R. Nichols, "Worship as Anti-Structure: The Contribution of Victor Turner," *Theology Today* 41 (1985): 401-409; also, for a fresh and interesting view of Turner, see Caroline Walker Bynum, "Women's Stories, Women's Symbols: A Critique of Victor Turner's Theory of Liminality," in *Anthropology and the Study of Religion*, ed. R. Moore, (Chicago: Center for the Scientific Study of Religion, 1984).

35. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, p.121, fnnt.6.

36. Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981), p.265.

life experiences in order to reform the primal images of faith and trust which give rise to an overall sense of well-being. That is to say, well-being gives a sense that life is trustworthy, come what may. Though speaking of a particular woman, his words are very relevant to Leda and Rose Aaron's situation. Transformation, and conversion "will not be completed until, through a recapitulative return to the places where that past lives in her, she can be met by a spirit that can re-ground the foundations of basic trust in her life."³⁷ The curtain call for Leda was an ordinary, and almost silent narrative of loving recapitulation that "plucked the fear" and filled that void with a trusting relationship, that is to say, with faith. All her life Leda had lived in inherited grief and faith-paralyzing terror which had wrecked havoc on many of her most precious relationships, though its primal reference was not given until the first anniversary of her death. Inherited grief and terror drove her to distraction and thus made it most difficult for her to really trust anyone, especially God. This explains her terrifying-fascinating, stop-go-stop-go numinous attraction to Jesus which could not be directly addressed. She wanted to enter into that God-space but couldn't move herself. Paradoxically, the break down of paralyzing disbelief also meant break through, being in front of an entry to life, not an exit.³⁸

37. Ibid.

38. Cf. Mk.2:1 ff for the break through the roof, and the same cultural motif but going out through the roof, in J.Z. Smith, "Birth Upside Down or Right Side Up?" in *Map is Not Territory*, p.170, where "liminality becomes the supreme goal rather than a moment in a rite of passage."

The refreshed and expansive faith relationality perspectives offered in James Fowler's works³⁹ yield some important amplifying material in the quest for Leda's missing and split references. Most relevant for armchair passages is his comment that faith is ontological movement and pilgrimage. Being already familiar with the pilgrimage and passage themes of external enactment to complement inner change,⁴⁰ Rose Aaron often pushed Leda's armchair with symbolic intent, while being completely in the dark regarding the ultimate environmental nature of Leda's referential material. However, as she slowly learned to trust the underlying source of whatever each visit brought, she was able to go with whatever the flow of manifested events.

Fowler's revamped definition of faith in the context of movement, pilgrimage and a regrounding spirit, positively amplifies the negativities of conflicted life relationships. "Faith is a relation of trust in and loyalty to one's neighbors, maintained through trust in and loyalty to a unifying image of the character of value and power in an ultimate environment."⁴¹ For example, the *Second Cup* and swan imagery are unifying in their value and power to promote sufficient trust. Without sufficiently secure foundations of trusting experience,

39. For works not already cited see J. Fowler with Sam Keen, *Life-Maps: Conversations on the Journey of Faith*, (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1978); *idem*, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987); *idem*, "The Enlightenment and Faith Development Theory," *Journal of Empirical Theology* 1 (1, 1988): 29-42.

40. For novel approach to pilgrimage involving the 12th C. sleuthing detective, Brother Cadfael, see Ellis Peters, *The Pilgrim of Hate*, (London: Futura, 1984).

41. Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian*, p. 74.

'neighbours' and God-images are often perceived as ultimately fearful and foe-ful, and in need of recapitulating and redeeming pilgrimage.⁴²

Rose Aaron's need for affirmation and approval, for Leda's long withdrawn and withheld "smile", is misplaced in being directed toward a finite source of fulfillment. Her ongoing conversion process required, not that this need be negated, but that it be transformed and extended toward a more ultimate and *smiling* source. This was in process during the time of silent trials following Leda's raging outburst of angry accusations against Rose Aaron. These masterful events were counterbalanced and interpreted by the gospel love stories of Jesus' saving acts of compassion which yield the benefits and blessings of infinitely great forgiveness and acceptance. Those classic stories of a sinner's freedom of access to God, and God's active and saving response to the cries of lament and oppression, became a means of the renewed and disciplined exercise of covenantal faith and trust. For Rose Aaron, Jesus' two-edged prophetic appeal invited the freedom of laying down the overburdening and falsely condemning sense of failure to give Leda the allegedly withheld key. It also truly invited a turning away from the misplaced idolatry which sought finite substitutes for an infinite and eternal smile of approval and a pat on the back.

The space-saving gospel stories, complemented by anthropological limens, were the gift of transcendent images of value and power which could sustain Rose Aaron in a wholesome way and knit together her frayed and wounded edges. During the final three weeks of Leda's life, Rose

42. For a space age application of pilgrimage, see Margaret Miles, "Pilgrimage as Metaphor in a Nuclear Age," *Theology Today* 45 (2, 1988): 166-179.

Aaron's trials of faith development became a freshly revitalized and immediate experience of numinous contextual, and sacramental relevance. It may be fairly concluded, I believe, that the genuineness of the self-conversion process which Rose Aaron was undergoing, was the very event-in-itself which was effectively communicated through her experience of being very *black* (imperfect) but acceptable. Indeed, this is exactly the role which Leda saw in Rose Aaron on the very first day Leda's car conversion was mooted.

E. Once More into the Symbol Gap

Dramatic narrative plotting emphasizes a web of events and actions over and above individual character parts. That is, *what* happens is far more important than *who* does what. In the historical flow of events surrounding companionship, Leda and Rose Aaron found themselves newly cast into a type of mother-daughter relationship graciously sufficient for their last two scenes. This involved the very ordinary re-enactment of an early childhood faith setting between mother and child, feeding a hungry and dependent babe, responding to non-verbal clues, loving verbal and body stroking to comfort long exiled, but unspoken distress. On the day following the death-door turnabout and its false alarm, Leda had a four day mini remission which included two completely interest-free, and ego-sacrificing visits.

Rose Aaron pillowed and stroked Leda's cold feet to help to restore some circulation in the body's natural shutdown process. Then she sat at her side for many hours and watched over the Leda who'd been to death's door the day before and was turned back. During this time, she

began to read and pray "The Lady of the Hare",⁴³ a remarkable case history about the willing sacrifice of the hare and the indirect but transformative healing of a circumstantially conflicted relationship between Mrs. Wright and her daughter Margaret.⁴⁴ In light of Leda's recent new hairstyle and the earlier wordplays on hair, heir, and hare, this was a very apposite and symbolically honouring choice of reading material, though without any knowledge of its greater significance and application.⁴⁵ All that Rose Aaron knew were some introductory comments by the author, that "any form of animal sacrifice [symbolizes] the transformation of instinct into spiritual power."⁴⁶ The energy generated by this conversion from one form (instinct) to another (spirit) can be likened to the transformer in an electrical circuit. As the current passes through some induction coils in a self-contained circuit, it indirectly stimulates a neighbouring circuit. By analogy, the profound transformation in attitude that occurred in the mother seemed to establish an equally therapeutic change in the daughter herself, albeit indirectly. Rose Aaron recognized the invitation to sacrifice her 'me-cramp' modesty in order to more fully introduce Leda to the sacramental food and hands that speak of healing.

43. John Layard, *The Lady of the Hare: A Study in the Healing Power of Dreams*, (Boston: Shambhala, 1988).

44. The name 'Margaret' means pearl.

45. This is exactly the situation represented by the author himself. When the hare imagery appeared in the dreams of his client he did not understand their specific and very particular symbolic and universally mythic import until some two years later.

46. Ibid, p.23.

Such was the real beginning of a literal and symbolic enactment of a revisioned plot of hope and trust through becoming ultimately acceptable as one is, in healthy vulnerable interdependence. Their last scenes together expanded and extended their existentially cramped boundaries of limited trust and graciously filled in the mutual need to be affirmed and valued.

Into this poetic scene comes the comforting presence of a silent Other who acts and broods over all the bit parts with a more primal and maternal source and image of value and power. This is the Other who is more than we can ever ask or imagine. This was an image of the value and power of that kingdom place and presence of rest and peace, that most precious gift which is the experience of those who find and are given "the spaciousness of freedom from their own imperfections."⁴⁷ This is surely the most surprising cosmic joke ever, that those black and imperfect ones remain blemished and yet, paradoxically, are perfectly acceptable in God's sight.

In having her own woundedness anointed and dressed, Rose Aaron was able to invest more interest-free resources into undivided attention to Leda's physical and spiritual hunger and thirst.

In concentrating on the activity of popping tiny morsels of food and water into Leda's open mouth, Rose Aaron felt it was more like a scene between a mother bird and her fledgling. Liberation of the heart is facing, knowing and joyfully accepting that one's beaky 'baby' will never smile and letting go of that finite horizon.

47. Sawyer, "Spaciousness (An Important Feature of Language about Salvation in the Old Testament," p.29.

Through her persistent chewing on and clinging to a water sponge, Leda communicated her need for complementary mental, emotional and spiritual food, "something to chew on." As she received minute quantities of physical food and water, Rose Aaron meditated⁴⁸ on the existential questions of forgiveness, being acceptable with all one's blackness, the anchoring turn and return to a liberating embrace and a secure holding position that circumambulates the central axis of God's love. She went with the red and green lights, pondering all the while. How can one adequately articulate the experience of trying and testing the transforming principles of symbolic death and rebirth? How can one express the quality of the 'welcome home' sign and surprise party crowd which is always waiting on the other side of the door? How can this treasured reality of being loved by God, by Christ, by the Holy Spirit, ever be adequately shared and communicated in words? As she struggled with simple words to expressly shape this experienced reality, Rose Aaron broke down and wept, feeling unable to adequately verbalize the hope which ever sustains her. Perhaps nothing need ever be said where everything is known and understood through the mediating mission and sideways position of images and symbols. Maybe this breakdown was also a breakthrough, a teary prism to split covenanted light into its colourful components, the brown irises (rainbow) reflecting a concealed

48. Ah! I see my 'slip' is showing again. Meditate is the intended word. In language games, these delicate and revealing slips are often important trickster openings into a world of references far beyond the author's intentions. When these undercover garments are manifest, their appearance should be honoured and respected, and not hastily deleted from sight!

earthy nature. "Whereas the Pentecostal fire descends on men from above, for women it arises out of the earth."⁴⁹

The grieving-mother symbol has a special twist of verification which came to light on the first anniversary of Leda's death. Leda's mother herself was grieving at having been abandoned by her husband, just at the time that she was carrying Leda in the womb.⁵⁰ In a profound way, this new information verified Leda's need for a 'healing recapitulation' which could take place completely 'in the dark'. It establishes and verifies the Barnabo motif of overburdened and unnecessary guilt and shame, and discloses that the poetic image of the brooding presence of the stranger waiting in the wings was far more symbolic and sacramental than could ever have been known at the time it was poetically shaped.

F. Fare Forward

Land and sea passages can be difficult and dangerous. To energize the metaphors of historical experience seems to be an awfully daunting conscious task for a wandless godmothering sponsor. Far better to be in the veiled and faithful darkness during that time of gestation. Now, by the light of a gift-receptive harvest of black art consciousness, can

49. Layard, *The Lady of the Hare*, p.236.

50. For an interesting amplification of womb imagery, see Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, p.40. Fowler comments on Moltmann's understanding of creation through God's Trinitarian life, where the divine being makes space for the other. Maternal images facilitate this view, inviting us "to imagine this space as the womb of creation" with a world coming into being through God's word "from and within this space."

sense be made of chaotically zigzagged historiopoiesis of fractal companionship experiences. The lean times are overtaken by the stored up events of gift-giving significance, ready to be shared out during times of famine and hunger in the land.

Alternatively, to harvest the depths of the sea is not the fruit of ego action but of patient and silent networking preparation and reparation in the fishing ground of the unknown and unconscious areas of life. Leda's hunger and thirst for satisfying relationship with Christ was manifest in many ways, but every conventionally guaranteed fishing line of approach failed. In the face of repeated failure comes the resounding ring of Jesus' words, "Cast your net on the other side (Jn.21:6)." The true horizon of relationship was far greater than could be consciously realized. And this is exactly the gap which images and symbols fill so willingly and readily. One doesn't have to be a 'know-all' in order to live and work fruitfully within one's time-space parameters. Rather, one may live by faith, that is by trusting but non-possessing relationships with images and symbols that expressly unveil a sufficient goodness of ultimate value and knowledge. Dynamic faith is a power-sharing trust fund.

Faith in this larger picture invites and entices one into an intimate and active way of knowing and valuing and committing which is more comprehensive than the boundaries of ego consciousness. This is where the importance of images emerges. "Virtually all of our knowing begins with images and that most of what we know is stored in images."⁵¹ Three important reference points orient and develop greater

51. Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p.25.

consciousness with regard to images and symbols. Firstly, knowing impacts far more comprehensively on consciousness than can be monitored. Though not necessarily remembered, infancy and childhood experiences impact the human personality with non-articulated events and senses. Secondly, the spectrum of knowing is more inclusive than conscious apprehension through receptive subliminal knowing. Meaning can consciously register without needing to narratize and verbally articulate its impact. This provides a storehouse upon which to draw, by coalescing, augmenting and extending its imaginal components. Thirdly, and most importantly for our purposes, even with conscious attention, "we do not yet "know" what we are seeing or being told until it (the events or communication) has found linkages with our previously formed images. Significant learnings both resonate with previous images and extend them, possibly reorganizing and re-valencing them with feeling."⁵² Just as the Voyager space probe transmitted pictures of the scientifically inexplicable, but observable braided rings of Saturn, so too, Rose Aaron observed and participated in Leda's braided ring type narrative pictures. She participated adequately and consciously without being able to extract, concentrate and distill their essential referential meaning into economically articulated concepts expressive of their ultimate meaning and reference. Hence there is the need for patient and time-consuming networking which learns to connect the old established meanings with new and more spacious patterns and themes of reference. The braided ring quest which forms the underlying concern of this thesis is the essential and distilled expression of a long drawn

52. Ibid, pp.25 & 26.

out process of initiating consciousness into a new *anthropos* and *chaos* life space.

Without any irreverence, the obvious wave line of a positively brooding relationship of love was all too clear in Leda's poetic and symbolic communications. At that time, Rose Aaron was more in search of empirically validating her 'how-to' methods of applying the results of her undercover detective work conducted in and through the quest for the reference that had split the scene. Power-sharing is a very different reality than than power possession and domination. These history lessons reveal that it isn't necessary to transgress and try to possess the centre of knowing in order to participate and share in the preparations for a feast of redeeming images that herald bridegroom and bride (Is.61:10b-11; Jn.3:29). As Eliot urges land and sea travellers who may be very trying, "Not fare well, But fare forward, voyagers." Thanks be to God, Leda was able to move forward through the wave power of love.

"The great gift that sojourning in the interstices of the world can give....[is the space, vision and notational ability]....to begin to steer by the wake."⁵³ Sideways companionship with Leda was a very demanding and mutually trying experience of being in the interstices between life and death, death and new life. Now it all seems so clear and wonderful to review the jubilee of love and trinitarian blessing which was being poured out on Leda. A slow awakening and dawning process of re-understanding and revisioning Christian mission and related thematic concerns began during those strange and often

53. Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, p.110.

inhospitable times. The braided ring quest developed out of this small context of initiating consciousness into a fresh understanding of the covenantal nature of life-giving and space-making relationship with God. In the next chapter, the initiation theme will be considered for the way in which God's spirit takes the initiative in the first dependable place to prepare the way for new life.

How can the arts of the imagination overcome the slow dying of men's hearts that we call the progress of the world, and lay their hands upon men's heartstrings again, without becoming the garment of religion as in old times?

W.B. Yeats

CHAPTER 4

LIVING LANGUAGE INITIATION: THE GARMENT EXCHANGE LEGACY

A. Initiation Language

"The presence of the core stories of our traditions...precede our coming to consciousness and provide symbol, image and story by which we awaken to the task of making meaning."¹ Though we may find ourselves as actors and actresses in the wings and/or moving on the stage of life's dramas, we are "never more (and sometimes less) than the co-authors of our own narratives."² Seen in this light, the big question, "What's going on?", was often at the forefront of Rose Aaron's dreaming and waking attention to Leda's active and dramatically enacted communications. The big answer slowly disclosed its polysemic significance as the plot unfolded. Rose Aaron found herself written into a script co-authored by Leda and a mysterious Other. As the power and value of conceptual words failed, Leda began to speak in another language involving the economy of image, symbol and ritual story-telling. All too often, Rose Aaron felt she was at the mercy of a confusing narrative

1. Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian*, p.136.

2. Ibid, quoting Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), p.198.

plot whose meaning-making script she struggled to read in the amplifying reference materials that came to hand along the way. Indeed, Leda's lifetext story details a mercy-mission narrative about the mystery of the inculturation process written and birthed by the Holy Spirit.

In this chapter, careful consideration will be given to one small and particular incident that occurred to Leda. The word 'occur' is significant here to indicate an event of doublesided initiative where each side runs to meet the other.³ The small particulars of life are to be valued and cherished, for "they are vessels of the universal, and thereby valuable apart from any utilitarian considerations."⁴ Thus Leda's lifelong search for unity, enlightenment and blessing may be concentrated and narrated in one small ritual occurrence which speaks volumes about the universality of a mysterious initiative which anticipated, supported, and responded to her quest for wholeness.

Initial, initiative, and initiate are a kinship network of words connected with the meaning of going into something, making a beginning, taking a first step. 'Initiation' is connected with mystery, that is, a secret rite. Initiation is a step going into the unknown. This does not mean that something is completely and forever unknowable, which is the way it tends to be used in describing religious mysteries. It simply means that something is secret, hidden knowledge or information, an unapparent reason or explanation. In ancient times, the secrets of

3. See Edward Robinson, *The Language of Mystery*, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1987), p.22. The Latin for 'occur' means run to meet, in the sense of a spontaneous happening which is not prearranged. Robinson suggests that a capacity for spiritual openness is receptive to a reality that comes to meet people, "a mysterious initiative that responds to, perhaps even anticipates, their search."

4. Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p. 201.

an exclusive group were shared only with those initiated into their midst. The distinction between the secret and the unknowable is very important, for Christians often speak of events like the incarnation, resurrection, baptism or the Eucharist, as unknowable mysteries. Such usage is unfortunate, for it perverts the correct use of the word. It is true that some realities are veiled from profane exploitation but scriptural images of the veil torn at Jesus' crucifixion (Mt.27:51, Mk.15:38, Lk.23:45, Heb.6: 19, 20; 10:19, 20.) show that humans have access to a holy secret and a holy place in God's abiding presence.

"Mystery is a secret that is acted and displayed."⁵ This is a succinct way of expressing the sense of the word 'mystery' found in Scripture. For example, Rom.16:25 speaks about the "mystery long kept secret but now disclosed" about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Col.1:26, 27, speaks of the "mystery hidden but now made manifest...Christ in you, the hope of glory".⁶ God manifest and displayed in Christ, Christ in us... What secret is being enacted and displayed? What is the hope being offered? The secret is connected with the mystery of life and death. In many of the so-called mystery religions of antiquity, and then in Christianity, the secret of life and death was often symbolized by a white garment worn by initiatees. Leda seems to have co-authored a core story involving garments, as we'll see.

5. Jung, "Transformation Symbolism in The Mass," in *Psychology and Western Religion*, (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, [1955] 1984), par.379. Also in CW 11.

6. See also 1Cor.2:7, 4:1; in Phil.4:12, Paul uses "learn the secret" in the sense of being initiated into a mystery. See Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, s.v. learn, secret. In Eph.3:1-15, Paul considers himself a servant of the mystery.

Thus, to communicate that universal mystery of life and death requires a living language which is dynamically adequate and appropriately articulate to sharing the secrets of hope that make life zestful in the face of death. The creative arts of the imagination liberate innovative dimensions of experience that require, and even demand that artful experience be publicly communicated. Artful communication "sets one free to give birth to an idea that one has never dreamed of before. Yet imagination is not primarily inventiveness, but vision, the gift of seeing what is already there in a new way."⁷ Leda's artful communication regarding the mystery of hope birthed in her is complemented by the sideways gift of grace given to Rose Aaron to see what was going on, however dimly. Between them there is the invitation into the saving space of a gift exchange legacy with which to hear, see and amplify the already existing reality of God's trinitarian presence and initiative concealed in the most surprising and unexpected places and occurrences. In order to understand Leda's use of living language communication in the photoknit picture in this chapter, some preliminary frames of reference regarding the poetic-prophetic interpretive task and language issues will be set out first in order to present a context for 'hearing' what Leda was 'saying'.

B. Interpretive Knitting Task

The vocational mission role and detecting task of discerning the Spirit that was undertaken by Rose Aaron in the context of sideways companionship was not that of co-authoring the narrative text. Rather,

7. Robinson, *The Language of Mystery*, p.viii.

it involved acting as a high fidelity amplifier,⁸ tuned in to the imaginative and interpretive middle space between the input and output signals of the original author and Leda as co-author. To live in the core stories of this middle ground invites a doublesided fidelity which balances a tightrope adventures in faithfulness. On the one side is fidelity to Christ and the Holy Spirit and the thematic principles of the Christian faith tradition; on the other side is fidelity to the mediating reality of natural poetic and archetypal configurations in their provisional and mediating interpretations of experience. This trial and error induction process of balancing traditionally opposed contradictions was amply confirmed many months after Leda's death, but nevertheless at the time, the tightrope had to be walked in experience first of all.

In elucidating the amplifying and interpreting position, one outstanding facet must be emphasized and clarified time and again regarding the translation of symbolic communication. "Whatever meaning an interpreter derives from an examination of historical events is inherent in those events themselves when understood in light of their originating context and the history of traditions (i.e. one's prejudices, dispositions, preunderstandings), namely, the meaning of an event is not the arbitrary projection of the interpreter."⁹ Fidelity

8. Amplify derives from the Latin *amplificare* to enlarge, from *amplus* spacious + *facere* to make

9. Peters, "Truth in History: Gadamer's Hermeneutics and Pannenberg's Apologetic Method", p.55. The process of establishing a satisfactory level of probability verification is aided by the hermeneutical-historical foundations laid by Gadamer regarding texts. He also extends this method and meaning to personal lifetexts (p.46.). However, the inherent difficulty in the interpretation of Leda's overall 'texts' are also found in Gadamer's hermeneutical model as a

means accuracy in reporting and carrying the details of mutually interpretive links. If Leda's images and symbols have the power to speak a living language, their message may be verified by the amplifying depths of an already existing reality of which they are manifest expressions. However, the message must be heard clearly to be understood, hence the need for amplifying detective work and poetic play.

The amplifying activity of Leda's dramatically co-authored texts was done in a certain black space of partial unknowing lit with the sufficient symbolic light and feeling needed for conscious poetic activity. That space of unknowing was joined, nevertheless, with a conscious preunderstanding and preconceptualizing experience of knowing carried and stored in space-probing braided ring type images that were sufficiently good enough for the situation. Light-dark and awake-asleep metaphors and images must be used carefully in cognitive situations. Darkness for a blind person does not inhibit or limit what is reliably known, trustworthy, and navigable without being 'seen' visibly and concretely. As noted previously, the boundaries of conscious and unconscious knowing are more extensive and permeable than can be monitored by ego consciousness. The abject poverty of strictly

personal conversation and agreement of text and interpreter. The text does not talk back, neither confirming nor denying an interpretive relationship with its referential meaning. Gadamer's conversation model is respectfully nuanced by Pannenberg's circular emphasis on the need for formulating and establishing a textual method based on historical-hermeneutical lines. Pannenberg's concern, which I share and have tried to address in the methodology of JCN, is that of being able to test and authenticate a provisional methodology which truthfully and faithfully unites the differing horizons of the text and interpreter in a new and more "comprehensive" horizon. A more inclusive understanding, which unites without obliterating their differences, must be open to tests of meaning which can connect their unique historical and referential contexts in ways which explain and authenticate experience.

conceptual language is very keen when utterly stripped and shorn of its relational and descriptive "as if" images that provide reference points of meaning. Both image and concept are ways of conscious knowing, also patterned in sleep activity, that alternates symbolic and analytical thinking and feeling processes. Being in the dark does not necessarily mean being unconscious, though certainly that is sometimes the case. The dark mirror of dimmed reflection (1Cor.13:12) still speaks a living language of conscious perception and conception which is sufficient for the day's task.

As well as the amplifier image to illustrate the interpretive amplifying nature of Rose Aaron's place within the narrative drama as an observer-participator, a knitting example complements this descriptive situation. In machine knitting, there are several simple operational procedures for moving the knitting carriage to and fro over the material without knitting, and most importantly, without dropping all the open stitches onto the floor! One type of operation requires a simple disengagement of the carriage mechanism and is called a slip, slide and free pass. The other type uses a holding position and cam, and may be used for shaping seamless, bulkless insertions and deletions of material. The combination of these two techniques are vital but straightforward. Slipping and holding operations take a little practice but in fact are quite elementary procedures for any knitter worth their salt. By recalling the principles of free movement and the few technical variations required to operate them, specific movement details can then be applied to many diverse patterns of circumstances.

This freedom of movement - apparently non-productive, but vitally important movement of free and unhampered play - between the opposite

sides recalls the need and skill of being able to move freely between the hell and high water gates of paradox, without suffering a crushing paralysis. As P.L. Travers remarks, "To be in readiness for it, to make the dash through the opposites, I need to go widdershins round my mind, stand on my head, as it were. One gets, thus, another point of view, discovers at moments the endless moment and a Himalaya in every paving stone."¹⁰ To learn a paradoxical kind of disengaging freedom of movement is essential in being able to accurately and faithfully amplify narrative yarns and tales. The paradox of imaginatively accurate interpretations involves two components, that of keeping one's ears [ah! another slip!...]...ears and eyes attuned to the existing horizons and at the same time, speculating on the reality that lies beyond the immediacy of a conceivable image. "Ultimate reality", in Edward Robinson's view, "needs, apparently, to be complemented by its opposite: the paradox succinctly put by St. Nicholas of Cusa when he declared that 'it is beyond the coincidence of contradictories that Thou mayest be seen, and nowhere this side thereof'....[This is] the place wherein Thou are girt round... this is the wall of Paradise wherein Thou doest abide."¹¹ The requirements of the interpretive knitting task will become very clear for the referential amplifications of garments in this chapter are wonderfully paradox in character.

10. P.L. Travers, "Well, Shoot Me!" *Parabola* 13 (2, 1988): 34-38, p.38. Such descriptive language is well worthy of the author of *Mary Poppins*.

11. Robinson, *The Language of Mystery*, p.24, and ft.nt.10, p.99, respectively, quoting Nicholas of Cusa, b. 1401, *The Vision of God*, (Frederick Unger, NY 1960, pp.43f.).

C. Linguistic Point of Departure

"Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent."¹² Leda's great love was having her hair stroked, her great fear was that of loosing her intelligence and her ability to speak. As time and again I slip, slide and pass freely over Rose Aaron's case notes and recalling experiences, I marvel at the communicative power to be heard and seen in symbolic and dramatic action voiced in the overall plotting of Leda's script. In response to the silent-speaking mystery motif which Leda dramatized, the horizontal question presents its far-reaching challenge. "To whom shall I address my silence?"¹³ Communicative silence is very precious for those with eyes and ears disciplined and exercised to see and hear its meaning. The paradox of silence is a piercing reality, for on the very day when Leda refused to speak a single word to Rose Aaron, the latter happened to be studying an article entitled "Architecture of Silence."¹⁴ It was composed of black and white photographs of Cistercian abbeys from the 12th century, showing ancient stone doorways and passages. The article began and ended with two quotations from Bernard of Clairvaux.

You wish to see; Listen.
Hearing is a step toward Vision.

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12. Turner, *Revelation and Divination in Ndembu Ritual*, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975), p. 32, quoting L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico Philosophicus*, Aphorism 7.
 13. Robinson, *The Language of Mystery*, p.95, ft.nt 2, quoting a response to Wittgenstein's aphorism by Petru Dumitriu, *To the Unknown God*, (Collins, 1982), p.123.
 14. D. Heald, photographer, "Architecture of Silence," *Parabola* 14 (2, 1989): 65-72.

This canticle is not a noise made by the mouth but a jubilee of the heart, not a sound of the lips but a tumult of internal joys, not a symphony of voices but a harmony of wills. It is not heard outside, for it does not sound externally. The singer alone can hear it, and He to whom it is sung.

More than any other experienced gift, Leda taught Rose Aaron about the performative reality of imaged and silently nonverbal communication. This is a precious legacy which has become invested in this thesis as I have slowly awakened to its importance for a renewed and applied revisioning of Christian mission.

Victor Turner's work on anthropological ritual, social process and symbolic action is a particularly ripe and fruitful field of extreme relevance to the photoknit context. His writings are the occasion of much deep thinking and feeling about the split references occurring in and around Leda's situation. Turner's recourse to other disciplines like depth psychology,¹⁵ and especially linguistic theory and the philosophy of language, and the dramatic and literary arts, is very welcome for it gives access to other vitalizing images and descriptive concepts. Multidisciplinary paradigms act as metaphors to explain cultural and social relationships expressed in and through symbolic action and nonverbal language. Particularly regarding the dramatic and performative aspects of ritual action, Turner found that the dynamic and diverse modes of drama and literature had much to say about the meaning

15. Turner, *Revelation and Divination*, p.30. He notes that although the symbology of depth psychology was useful in the search for some theoretical guidelines, in his later work he moved away from the "crude interpretation of cultural symbols by psychoanalytical concepts," and warns of that danger in ch.1 of his *The Forest of Symbols*.

and networking of human relationships between persons and their environment.

Intent, on the performer's part, is just as important in elucidating meaning as any underlying psychological processes and cognitive structures. This is an important key in reading Leda's co-authored script because it moves away from the solipsistic limits of a solely psychological interpretation and gives greater access to variable metaphors of referential meaning. I say this because psychological consciousness, however valuable and precious its contributions, is not the sole filter and arbiter of reality but part of a greater and more inclusively exercised and disciplined picture. As a result of the "thrice-born" experience of religious conversion occasioned by living with the Ndembu people,¹⁶ Turner has been enabled to move freely between the polarities of an outside and inside perspective on the affairs of religion, spirituality and faith experience. This thrice-born freedom becomes very innovative in uncovering the significance of dramatic performances and religious ritual practices in bringing change. His own converted and transfigured sensitivity to the depths of symbolic social communication is a treasure house of accessible knowledge and wisdom upon which to draw.

There are numerous, diverse and free variables that facilitate symbolic action. "Ritual and its symbolism are not merely epiphenomena or disguises of deeper social and psychological processes, but have

16. Ibid, p.32. Especially in the study and interpretation of religion, the "thrice-born" experience of fruitful anthropological insight involves a threefold move, that of being born into a faith, then a distancing from it, and finally a re-entry with a "sophisticated naivety."

ontological value, in some way related to man's condition as an evolving species, whose evolution takes place principally through its cultural innovations."¹⁷ This understanding of innovative ontological change or transformation through ritual and symbolic intent (as found in the liminal experience in spontaneously structured relationships of *communitas*) is significant. It facilitates the inner and outer alliances made with and between persons within the larger picture of their social and physical environment. Ritual and dramatic enactments are ways of accessing and 'reading' the situational script for its parts-whole comportment. In this dynamic sense, language lives in words and deeds, and speaks in and through all the dramatic activity which surrounds and bounds its performances. A beginning, a middle, and an ending provide analytical and interpretive boundaries for making overall sense of a plot.

The mimetical processes of ritual and symbolic action may well indicate an ontological dimension which uses the visible and the physical to communicate dynamic realities which are invisible and spiritual. However, it is important to note the interactive complexity of the inner and outer change mirrored in ritual and symbolic ways. Visual examples of mirroring, seen in the artwork of M.C. Escher for example,¹⁸ graphically illustrate that a simple reversal and transposition of the mirrored image in relation to its originating one

17. Ibid, p.31.

18. Locher, ed., *The World of M.C. Escher*. Both with literal mirrors and mirroring principles, the lack of exact correspondence becomes obvious in Escher's drawings. They are meant to convey a larger, inclusive parts-whole configuration.

does not necessarily produce an exact correspondence.¹⁹ There is a salutary lesson in mirrors to be appreciated and pondered at length, and dare I say, reflected upon! The art lesson of Escher's mirrors and graphic mirroring illustrations is reflected in multidisciplinary fields (crystallography, physics, mathematics, philosophy, hermeneutics, chaos theory, linguistics, anthropology, etc.) in that reality is simultaneously composed of and lived on multidimensional planes of intersection.

Escher's art is visual thinking and feeling of the most stimulating and sacramental kind. His mirrors are revolving doorways opening onto many interconnected avenues of reality. This art lesson to be learned breaks with dualism (East and West) and the simplistic reductions of binary classifications, and breaks open the contextual limits of their inherently closed systems symbolized by mind over matter. Astronomy, history, and religion disclose that reality includes and welcomes the human perspective, but that it is not the sole arbiter of all that is real and true, let alone good, beautiful, just and virtuous.

The most important point of departure which Turner's work introduces and substantiates is a precious third position which comes out of Africa (remember the film?), all too often grotesquely characterized as the 'dark' continent of the soul. The reconciling recovery of this third position helps to redeem the subject-object, mind over matter split, and brings us back to the opening importance of language in all its diversity. "It is not enough to counterpose West

19. This can be easily demonstrated using one's hands. Place them palms together as a mirroring image. Now move one so that it is behind the other. Do this through a sideways and/or an over the top flip. They don't exactly match.

and East as the archmodalities of human articulate experience. If "heart-shaped Africa" (as Blake always called it) may be considered mankind's civilizational South, we have there an autonomous set of linked world views which validly enrich our ways of understanding ourselves. For African thought (the South of the World) embeds itself from the outset in materiality, but demonstrates that materiality is not inert but vital."²⁰ A Southern view of richly articulate language refocuses attention on the what issues that an already existing reality may speak. Deeply creative and articulate religious and philosophical thought, such as those found in African ritual models, speak a nonverbal language of symbolic forms and actions. They replicate in symbolic pragmatic action language what cognitive systems express in conceptual verbal terms. The living language of the Zen master's thump on the head or the token decapitation of the *Chihamba* candidate in Ndembu ritual, speak in eloquent terms. "These assaults on the head were not assaults on cerebration or reason; rather, they are attempts to say the unsayable. Mystical experience and cosmic joke: Both exceed the just or even possible limits of thought."²¹ Just imagine the spontaneous cosmic joke of a woman so unsteady and wobbly on her feet that she has to walk on her hands and stand on her head to communicate. Leda was never one for keeping silent in her attempts at living language.

20. Turner, *Revelation and Divination in Ndembu Ritual*, p.21.

21. Ibid, p.20

D. Trial Run

After her initial workout and communications test run done on the Barnabo material, and other experimental forays into poetic-symbolic material, Leda began to introduce her real maze of poetic work on the fourth visit, starting with two questions to Rose Aaron.

"Who is the man in your family with the black hair? What are you dying of?" Gulp! The short silent answer to the second question was bitterness and a broken heart. Leda insisted that she could 'see' this man very clearly, and in uncanny detail described a literal man in Rose Aaron's extended Christian family, connected with her by geographically and poetically constructed 'distance therapy'. By the time of Leda's 'vision', the 'Raven'²² had, in an inductive way, become slowly transfigured into a sacramental and healing figure, a prophetic signpost representing and pointing Rose Aaron (via Rev.19:10) to Jesus. Raven was always symbolized as the one with 'hands that speak of healing.'

22. The name refers to a chance sighting on the evening of this visit, in Song of Songs 5:11, "(My lover's) head is purest gold; his hair is wavy and black as a raven." As Leda had specifically mentioned navigation, direction-finding, ships, safety lines, and gestured in certain ways about securing a hook and eye, this is a picture language pun. The name is also derived from a popular folksong, "Black, black, black, is the colour of my true love's hair. And thirdly, Farley Mowat, *Westviking*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1965), pp.351-363, in the section on Norse navigation, tells of an adventurous and innovative navigator named Raven-Floki. He used his namesake nonmigratory land birds to travel between the Faeroe Islands and Iceland. Ravens "don't have to make passages across large expanses of open water, and seldom do so voluntarily" (p.362). When released from the ship, they fly high, then head for land and thus indicate the direction in which to go. It so happens that the first wallhangings I ever knitted had ravens on them, and this many years before meeting my friend named Raven. The raven, hare and coyote are also trickster figures in Amerindian lore, see Joseph Campbell, *This business of the gods...*, (Caledon East, Ont.: Windrose Films Ltd., 1989), pp.88 & 89.

Leda testified, "This man has cut off some people who weren't good to you. Because of what he's done for you, this man has made it possible for you to be of great help to him in his work, and even though you are black (very weak and imperfect), it doesn't matter. He accepts your blackness, it doesn't prevent your effectiveness in helping him." Her description resonated deeply, accurately seeing and voicing specific personal details about which she could never have known. In this way, Rose Aaron was 'hooked' and her attention alerted to 'the work' of partnership being required of her. But it seemed that this work involved an awful lot of blackness, i.e. mistakes, fumbles, and blind walking in the dark. However, with the heart's intention to sacramentally mime the meaning of the Raven's speaking hands, Rose Aaron slowly learned to trust and hope that the work and play of her own hands could also speak. In this way, she recognized Raven as one side of the healing, inviting and enigmatic stranger waiting to deliver a dining invitation to Leda, following an appropriate introduction. Remember the broken and mended wings of Barnabo's black crow? Holy Crow!

Leda had once insisted that Rose Aaron read a brief story about Marco Polo and the Kubla Khan in a book called *Invisible Cities Far*. Marco first learned to communicate by gestures which greatly amused the court. After he learned their verbal language well enough, they got bored and restless. So he went back to the entertaining and effective sign language of mime and gesture, and then he and the Khan got on famously, their mimetical friendship restored. So, more split references. After many weeks Rose Aaron decided that Leda was silently communicating the fact that she enjoyed and thrived on mime and gesture and therefore Rose Aaron was taught more clearly to mime the sacramental

hands that speak of intimate invitations to dine freely and without cost (Is.55). It did, however, take a long time to become fluent and articulate in sign language, and in its interpretation.

E. The Garment Exchange

The hair, heir, and hare wordplay connections were mentioned in an earlier chapter, for the world of style, co-inheritance, and soul which they opened up. Other, mutually shared amplifying details of blackness included the variable and appealing textures of black velvet, leather, ink, earth (black fertility, horticultural blanching and forced growth coverings, for seeds, bulbs, rhubarb, chicory, celery), and being in the dark in a positive sense. They spent a lot of time on the well-dressed elegance and simplicity of a woman's 'little black dress', a cultural symbol of the cocktail dress which 'speaks' of the inherent freedom to go anywhere, anytime, and freely combine the polarities of business and pleasure. For a woman, the symbolic shorthand meaning of a stylish and chic little black dress carries a host of significant social connections.

Blackness also involves certain curious reversals: in the Occidental world it has been associated with funerals and death, but in the Oriental world it means life. Apart from its obvious line, orient also means lustrous and pearly. Pearls are often a choice accompaniment to enhance a black dress. The combination of business and pleasure, of work and play, are a special union of opposites linked and coloured by a deep and lovely dove grey. One way of understanding all these linking details is as strings of rhythmic coincidences, where bead after

lustrous bead of significance is added to the clusters of chain references.

By analogy, the positive sense of 'being in the dark', meaning ignorance or facing the unknown, becomes a very redemptive and purposeful image for a person with a terminal illness. Death is the imminent and unknown stranger and therefore it is important to enable the dying person to probe, ventilate and face their fears. Sharing that darkness can be a very healing and redeeming experience that eases and comforts a person in their distress, and gives them the courage and support to face the ultimate reality of death welcomed as a friend.

Among all her other longings of that day, Leda was also thirsty. Eliade helps to amplify this on the poetic and symbolic levels of religious thirst by saying that human beings have an "unquenchable ontological thirst" for "real existence" and "being."²³

The requested glass of clear water (a tumbler!), remained untouched at the side of Leda's bed. Then, while Rose Aaron was brewing tea in the kitchen, Leda got herself out of bed, took a step or two, and lost her balance. In falling, she 'baptized' herself with the water! She was thoroughly soaked, and her wet T-shirt and nightgown had to be changed.

23. M. Eliade, *The Sacred and The Profane*, p.64.

There was a deliberating irony in the silent simplicity of this event, for earlier Leda had been "lamenting"²⁴ in a certain fashion, railing against her sense of loss, her increasing weakness, her shameful dependence and lack of privacy. Eventually she concluded that she was really searching for "enlightenment" and "blessing".²⁵ After all her lament, Leda initiated an action requiring complete nakedness, with her scars and vulnerability exposed. In these lamentable circumstances, Rose Aaron was as non-intrusive as possible in helping her to change, while discreetly avoiding Leda's telltale battle scars.

The only fresh nightgown left in the drawer that day was a white one of finely woven cotton lawn, opaque to the point of delicate transparency. Woven, not appliqued onto its yoke, were some doubly embossed flowers and into the centre of each flower were sewn some tiny seed pearls.

A change of garments! What meaning can be made of such a commonplace accident as spilling water on oneself? Indeed, is there any deeper thematic significance than the surface structure which the narration discloses? A great silence surrounded this incident. It is a further reminder of Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's doubly appropriate comments

24. Westermann, "The Role of the Lament in the Theology of the Old Testament", p.32. "The true function of the lament is supplication....as such [it] is a movement toward God."

25. Did she know what she was requesting? See Westermann, "Salvation and Healing in the Community," *International Review of Missions* 61 (1972): 9-19, p.10. "The basic meaning of blessing is in fertility - through birth, growth and maturity. Blessing is effective in the development of a person....In the Bible [it] unquestionably includes both [body and soul]."

on "the silence that goes beyond words."²⁶ She is referring to the last stage in the final dying phase of terminal illness, but equally, it could refer to the dying phase in symbolic death, for it was another three months before Leda died physically. In Leda's situation, one can conceive of this change as being her symbolic death and rebirth experience. Kubler-Ross quotes Tagore in noting the purpose of great silence:

The water in a vessel is sparkling; the water in the sea is dark.
The small truth has words that are clear; the great truth has great silence.²⁷

With respect to the great silence of this occurrence of change initiated by Leda, it is essential to note that at the time, it simply occurred without any explanation. There were only two things which Rose Aaron dimly yet sufficiently understood about this situation shortly after it happened, and for many months after Leda died. What was known was connected to and stored in a 'garment' image linking Leda and references to inculturation, and to the 'putting off-putting on' motif of Eph.4:22-24. The profound significance of what Leda had silently communicated slowly dawned on Rose Aaron in a gradual observer-participator awakening. Thus the amplifying details of reference that follow are part of Leda's inheritance, shared first with Rose Aaron, and now invested with present readers of this text.

26. Kubler-Ross, *On Death and Dying*, p.275 & 276.

27. Ibid, p.277, quoting R. Tagore, *Stray Birds*, CLXXVI.

Due to the silence which sprinkled Leda's halting steps, the split reference and braided ring quest must give careful attention to the thematic "issue" being ritually enacted and performed in that silence. On the levels of split reference, Leda was 'speaking' and actively displaying a 'baptismal' event on the discursive and interpretive level. The issue of three dramatic and thematic facets appear, body language or expression resulting in baptism, a change of clothes with associated details, and a transitional state of nakedness. Abundant descriptive details will be considered in the next sections. As well as a new story of inculturation developing, it is my conviction that these rich details yield an as yet 'unheard of' story of inculturating developments that hint at and point to a new orientation and integration of cultural applications able to partner a sideways approach to Christian mission.

F. Body Language

Within hours of Leda's silent act, some gentle but penetrating light was shed on that baptismal event, fostering a unique body-faith response to the endogenous process of inculturation. Out of the extensive case notes that link Leda's baptismal change with Rene Jaouen's text on inculturation,²⁸ two corresponding conditions have been selected to amplify Leda's dramatic script at this point. One is about tentative first steps (i.e. initiation) and the second is about seeding truth. They bring an interpretive perspective to Leda's self-baptism as "a response that is creative, original, unique and properly unheard of

28. Rene Jaouen, "Conditions for Authentic Inculturation," *Kerygma* 19 (1985): 3-15.

for the missionary."²⁹ Yes, indeed! Rose Aaron observed and participated in this original and previously unheard and unseen braided ring picture of covenantal inculturation.

There is an "unexpected....diffused....new response" of non-Christian people recognizing and valuing "a little spark of the Gospel"³⁰ which may be shining in a most unlikely place. Such a response is but "the first steps....with the power to open up new perspectives for as yet unrealized possibilities for authentic inculturation....[The steps] allow us to affirm that a new history is in the making, that something new has been said which may develop one day into a new story."³¹ However wobbly, Leda took some initial steps that day, and later emphasized this beginning process in front of three witnesses by saying, "This is the first of twenty-five steps."³²

Why the silence? What's going on? Why the need for detective work? A clue may be found in a concealed part of the text. It was while Rose Aaron's hand were massaging Leda's leg cramp under the covers, that the latter first enquired about car conversion. Rose Aaron almost fell off her chair at that point (dropped the stitches!), for she

29. Ibid, p.6

30. Ibid, p.6.

31. Ibid.

32. Note that the number is twenty-five, not twenty-three which is connected with her death. This intriguing and dangling clue was only resolved at the reception following her memorial service. Twenty-five years (steps) is a good age for coming into one's mature inheritance! Also, it was on the night of 25 Sept. that Barnabo leapt through the doorway of his greatest fears of the stranger now present to him, and crossed the literal threshold shaken but unscathed; it led him to other cathartic thresholds in resolving a revenge-mercy opportunity.

had long considered her mission vocation in terms of undercover or secret service work. Thus the incongruous cosmic humour concealed in this situation brings mirthful tears to the eyes of faith. It is a reminder of the main premise of this thesis regarding Christ's opaque and hidden presence and purposes in the existing world.

In reflecting on the parable of the seed that grows by itself (Mk.4:26-29), Jaouen suggests that the sower of the (gospel) seed is very secondary to the mysterious process of growth. The most important emphasis is on the silent and imperceptible interaction between the developing seed of the gospel and the nurturing, fertile soil, the welcome initiative which God gives to those who are receptive to living word. So the questions arise. What, if anything, do the seed pearls on the yoke (see Mt.11:28-39) of Leda's nightgown signify? As a completely unanticipated and unlooked-for detail sewn (and sown?) onto the main material, do their comparatively tiny size belie and reveal an inversely important reality? Might this be the growing possibility of recognizing and realizing, consciously and unconsciously, a Godly welcome which displays itself in the dark and invites a faith response communicated in body language? No concise answers are given but only more hints and clues which enable one to reflect on the religious nature and quality of what is being manifested.

In Leda's context, the seed is combined with the pearl (Mt.13:45, 46). This tiny but precious jewel is formed by repeated applications of a mother-of-pearl substance to cover an initial irritation. In truth, Leda became increasingly irritated with Rose Aaron in ways which made visits increasingly uncomfortable and painful for both, well described

as "mutual suffering."³³ Leda's steps are an endogenous and independent sprout pushing up out of the unknown depths and darkness. When the gospel grows in this way it "actually sets about its own evolution, its own conversion, and it comes up with a faith response that is (ideally) at once totally evangelical"³⁴ and totally expressive of that person.

Consider the referential question of what response is being expressed by the action of Leda's self-baptism and the resultant change of garments. The performance of a staged drama or textual narrative will often use an external change or rearrangement of some kind to indicate and represent an inner, symbolic change. While this is useful, remember that the inner-outer relationship is multidimensional, and not simply a one to one correspondence. Leda's outer change of garments could well be taken as the ritual expression of an inner change, or desire for change, within a more spacious context of ultimate reference. "In antiquity", notes J.M. Ford, "clothing was a manifestation, or even an extension, of one's personality."³⁵ Body and garments become the intimate co-expressions of a larger and an undivided reality. Though referring to a cultural body and cultural garments, Jaouen's further remarks amplify what Leda has dramatically enacted. Contents and expression have a oneness which cannot be separated, "it is indissolubly body and expression, a body that expresses itself....In

33. Jaouen, "Possibilités et limites de l'inculturation," *Kerygma* 21 (1987): 185-191, p.186. Between the reality and the ideal of the inculturating gospel message to 'become what you are', there is a distance, a gap, or a lack which brings the reality of mutual suffering (*une souffrance mutuelle*) between missionary and evangelized person/people.

34. Jaouen, "Conditions for Authentic Inculturation," p.14.

35. Ford, *My Enemy is My Guest*, p.98.

the dynamics of inculturation, it is the very body...that is in question, not the garments it has borrowed."³⁶ We must emphasize here that we are not dealing with any kind of psychological speculations about Leda's motivation and intention in getting out of bed in the first place. Within the contextual framework of the event itself, we are looking at this event as though it were a dramatized life text (Gadamer-Pannenberg mode), or the nonverbal ritual narrative (Turner mode).

The biblical view of the body's place and relationality in communication is clarified by Walter Kaspers in affirming that it "always describes the whole man and not just a part....The body is the whole man in his relationship to God and to his fellow man. It is man's place of meeting....[and concrete obedience]. The body is the possibility and the reality of communication."³⁷ The body is a covenanted place for meeting and for communication with God. Equally, body language is as important as verbal language in communicating the glad tidings of good news. Embodiment is a core story at the heart of a living Christian faith response to life. In the same vein of embodiment, James Nelson notes that ancient prayer book language expresses and celebrates the body as relationship to God: "It was God's pleasure to take on our human flesh."³⁸ Leda's dramatic 'speech' seems to be expressing a new and unheard of response to the pleasure of a

36. Jaouen, "Conditions for Authentic Inculturation", p.14.

37. Walter Kaspers, *Jesus the Christ*, (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1976), pp.150 & 151.

38. James Nelson, *Two Gardens: Reflections on Sexuality and Religious Experience*, (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1983), p.38.

gospel meeting with Christ. Her body language speaks of a union of the deepest and most penetrating love shared in a fulsome and holistic silence.

G. Fabiola's Garment Legacy

The motifs of life and death figure prominently in the practice of baptismal initiation and hospice care. Fabiola is the name which knits together these two elements. She was a disciple of Saint Jerome, and was the named recipient of his letters, especially regarding the symbolic meaning of a literal post-baptismal garment."³⁹ Fabiola's name also links the modern concept of hospice care for the terminally ill with her specific efforts to provide care for weary and ill pilgrims returning from Africa in the 3rd century C.E.⁴⁰ As an initiate, and a hospice companion, I share Fabiola's concerns for 'pilgrims'.

Wearing a white linen garment bears witness to a powerful constellation of interconnected symbolic meanings, cultic and Christian, regarding each separate aspect, white, linen, and garment. In ethnic and religious initiation rites held throughout the ancient Mediterranean area, as well as in other parts of the world, the central issue concerns the human protest about the scandal and mystery of death. By being baptized, plunged into water, people were immersed into a symbolic death and then were reborn into a condition of deathlessness. This is the

39. J. Quasten, "The Garment of Immortality," in *Miscellanea Liturgica in onore di Card. G. Lercaro*, vol 1, (Roma: Desclée, 1966), pp.391 & 393. The author is quoting St. Jerome's *Epistula* 64, 19 (CSEL 54, p.610 Hilberg).

40. Stoddard, *The Hospice Movement*, p.10.

hope which was being expressed and enacted, whatever the efficacy of the particular symbolic rites. The fact remains, of a passage through literal death as the final existential human journey for all persons, whatever their beliefs and practices.

The white linen garment of initiation rites was the concrete material used for conveying a clear and yet profound symbolic constellation of clustered meanings readily understood throughout the ancient Mediterranean world. The white linen robe 'spoke' a cultural language about the concept of immortality. The 'stripping off' of an old garment (often woolen) and the 'putting on' of the 'white linen robe' clearly illustrated the material and nonmaterial interplay of the literal and symbolic, and the verbal and non-verbal, dimensions of communicated reality.

With tremendous economy, linen speaks about deathlessness, i.e. immortality,⁴¹ because it is a plant, living but without blood. Unlike animals and humans, where loss of blood means death, plants are regenerative; they live forever. Where the binaries of sacred and profane operate, linen is sacred, and wool is profane. Here is that familiar domain of human categories of the 'clean' and the 'unclean'

41. J. Quastens, 'The Garment of Immortality; Hugh Ridley, *Christian Initiation: A Comparative Study of Baptismal Liturgy in Cyril, John, Theodore and Ambrose*, (Washington, D.C.: University of America Press, 1974), p.159, 186 & 187. In ft.nt. 38, p.159 Ridley quotes from J. Quasten, 'A Pythagorean Idea in Jerome' in *American Journal of Philology* 63 (1942): 207 -215. I have not been able to locate this latter article and therefore repeat Ridley's quote. Quasten "deals with the significance of animal skins vs. linen. Shame, mortality death is represented by such animal skins as wool. Joy, immortality, life, is represented by cloth made from plants, such a linen. Behind this idea of the mortality of the "tunics of skin" which Adam wore (Cf. Gen.3:21) is the ancient conception that clothes are peculiarly liable to attract the influence of the spirits."

which operate so strongly in many domains, being particularly familiar through the Jewish dietary laws.⁴²

White colour 'speaks' about expensive, aristocratic clothing as being a symbol of wealth and power, and was especially used to designate the cultic clothing of priests, particularly Jewish priests. White was also connected with the appearance of a person's face.⁴³ The baptismal initiatee was stripping off death and putting on life.

The 'white linen garment' of cultic initiation rites is one example of a concrete material which becomes sacramentally transformed. God's living word approaches cultural material and infuses it with greater significance than anything achieved by human cultivation alone. Stripping off the old dead self and putting on Christ are fairly clear in themselves, but the deeper sacramental significance is a secret which is acted and displayed for those with eyes to see. Christian initiation garments of white linen had an additional cluster of symbolic meanings attached to them by the early Christian community.⁴⁴ One of the most interesting connotations represented light, enlightenment, or baptismal

42. See Mary Douglas, "The Abominations of Leviticus" in *Purity and Danger*, pp.41-57; see also, Bruce Malina, "Clean and Unclean: Understanding Rules of Purity", ch.6, in *New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, (Atlanta: Knox Press, 1981).

43. Athalya Brenner, "'White' Textiles In Biblical Hebrew And In Mishnaic Hebrew," *Hebrew Annual Review* 4 (1980): 39-44; for multivalent whiteness representing moral order, harmony and stability in a traditional African culture, see Turner, "Ritual Symbolism, Morality and Social Structure Among the Ndembu," in *African Systems of Thought*, ed. M. Fortes, (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp.79-91.

44. Ridley, *Christian Initiation*, p.413 ff.

illumination.⁴⁵ *White linen* 'speaks' about being clothed with light, meaning that one is dressed with the wisdom and inner illumination of the Holy Spirit of Christ. This is a move from spiritual ignorance and blindness of inner darkness to glorious light, enlightenment. The very day of Leda's self-baptism, she had been searching for blessing and enlightenment, and God certainly honoured her longing. The inner symbolic reality of Christian baptismal experience, death and life in Christ Jesus, is conveyed outwardly by putting on a white linen garment which signifies light, transcendence, glory.

The word 'glory' (*doxa* in Greek) is used to express praise, worth and honour to God for the many manifestations of the deity's presence in the world. The white linen garment catches some of this meaning as it applies to human beings who put on Christ. But this raises the question of human cultivation and its sacramental transformation. Such transformation is God's activity and as such, we can look to the Gospels as one place where a mysterious secret is being manifested and displayed for those with baptized eyes and ears to see, hear, and understand its healing meaning. (Is.6:9, 10; Acts 28:26, 27). The story of Jesus' transfiguration (Mt.17:2; Mk.9:3; Lk.9:29) is one such place where the cultic initiation garment is steeped in a divine language of light. The Prologue to John's Gospel is another place where the polarities of light and darkness play together. Light figures prominently in the records of St. Paul's conversion experience (Act 9:ff; 22:ff; 26:ff) and his letters to various Christian communities. The early church was the recipient of living witnesses to Jesus' life and death, and

45. Thomas Halton, "Baptism as Illumination," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 32 (1, 1965): 28 - 41.

resurrection. From that enlightening experience flowed the human testimony as well as the writing and reading of all the New Testament documents after Paul's initial good news texts.

Surely, Jesus' healing of the blind, deaf, lame, sick, etc. is a testimony about combined physical and spiritual healing. He freely renewed and restored physical and spiritual capacities to those who were receptive to his truth. In terms of genuine receptivity God looks upon the heart's intention and responds in kind. Leda's initiatory baptism is surely an awesome testimony to the initiative of that holy presence that freely came to meet her. In this way, the sacramental meaning of Jesus' words and deeds, and their mimetical enactments of the Old Testament, actually reveal what is secretly veiled and yet accessible. "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col.1:26, 27), this is the secret image of humans made in God's likeness, as Jesus enacts the meaning of being the firstborn of many other heirs. Yes, the image of 'glory' often lies tarnished, dormant or in 'dead' rebellion. We humans may be carrying a dead weight, but cultural and Christian baptismal initiation garments speak concretely yet metaphorically about the hope of light, restoration, renewal and rebirth for the paucity and poverty of our existential limits.

In the early days of human history, the first Biblical writers spoke metaphorically about God covering our naked bodies with "garments of skin" (Gen.3:21), i.e. mortality. The New Testament writers affirm that this process has actually been reversed. To be clothed with Christ Jesus is to put on deathlessness, joy, light. It means the renewal and restoration of filial relationship with God and the resumption of our rightful place as inheritors of an original 'garden' and a rightful and

trusting innocence. Such a re-creative garden need not be literalized but can be cultivated and lived in, with imagination. Imaginative gardens are the place for an "artful taming of nature....the greening of the soul."⁴⁶ Leda, weary pilgrim that she was, was able to enter her rightful, filial garden home.

H. Clothed with Power

Another artful 'soul' reference to white linen (Rev.19:8) communicates the gift-giving garments, representing righteous actions, prepared for a bride. Leda's self-baptismal initiative raises the inculturating question of what God knows about the righteous intentions of her heart that occasion such honour to her. Indeed, in the bridal garden context of eros-agape love sung in *The Song of Songs*, the two lovers actively alternate in inaugurating and initiating their meetings. In exploring sexuality-spirituality garden metaphors, James Nelson wisely notes that such two-sided initiatives challenge the fallacious notions "that make the human being into receptor only, a passive, waiting vessel who can only respond to the divine initiative. But this is to impoverish the erotic dimension of knowing another, including knowing God."⁴⁷ God honoured Leda's wholesome womanly initiatives that

46. Tom Moore, "Dream City Green," in *Rituals of the Imagination*, (Dallas: Pegasus Foundation, 1983), p.43 & 54, resp.

47. Nelson, *Between Two Gardens*, p.10; this point about inappropriate passivity is also convincingly dealt with by Robinson, *The Language of Mystery*, p.25, where he brings imagination and faith together in mutually gracefilled initiatives between the human and divine. Indeed, "imagination and faith are the same thing, 'giving substance to our hopes and reality to the unseen'." (p.ix.); however, a challenge to this liberation mutuality is found in Francis Landy, "The Song of Songs and The Garden of Eden," *Journal of Biblical*

sought to express, in living language, a yearning for relationship with the deity. More than that, though in a kind of exile, she was clothed and accompanied with the deity's presence at each step of her way and on the journey 'home'.

One other significant revelation regarding illuminating light and clothing came to hand one year after Leda's death. Waiting until one is clothed with power (Lk.24:49), i.e. clothed with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:), and being baptized and clothed with Christ (Gal.3:27) are important images that are rooted and grounded in the multivocality of Old Testament ideas connected with the Shekinah (literally to dwell, to rest)⁴⁸ and the Spirit (ruah = breath, wind) of Yahweh. The important point is that these powerful numinous and luminous aspects of God are feminine in gender and are connected with the animating disclosure of God's revealed glory, immanence and manifestation in the spatial-temporal world of everyday living. Thus God's inherently feminine side, comprising mercy, gentleness and compassion complements the masculine side composed of justice, strength and power. The image of sustaining light is closely associated with Shekinah/Spirit and therefore Biblical Hebrew used the term "the Spirit clothed..." to refer to persons and "being clothed

Literature 98 (4, 1979): 513-528. Landy suggests that the woman is far more vulnerable to shame in the honour-shame code of biblical Mediterranean life, and in situations where young men are expected to take the initiative (p.515, ft.nt.8).

48. For details, see s.v. Shekinah, in *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, (Jerusalem, 1971-1972); see also I. Singer, ed., *The Jewish Encyclopedia*, (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1901-1906); God rests or dwells in a place, object, person, etc. and gives light or inner light. See Moses' radiant and veiled face in Ex.34:29-35. Shekinah is also associated with prophecy, and symbolizes the Oral Law. The study of the Torah, especially the Shema, and prayer brings the Shekinah near. (cf. Acts 1:4)

with..." to refer to words descriptive of a specific situation.⁴⁹ In Old Testament imagery, the "glory of the Lord" is manifest in the sound of wings, the roaring rush of waters, to indicate the voice of the Almighty (Ez.1:22-28). Thus being gloriously clothed with white linen garments is one visible way of expressing the invisible illuminating presence and insight which the Holy Spirit blows and breathes into whomsoever she chooses to animate. Taken at face value, she willingly animates every living person in a physical sense, and also seeks to do so with the greater spiritual vitality of insight and enlightenment. Thus can it be understood that Leda, being clothed with the power of the Holy Spirit, was gifted with a slowly transfiguring radiance that was to become very manifest in the lustrous beauty of her face, and a sense of rest and peace, by the time she died.

In speaking of the mission of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament, Massyngbaerde Ford⁵⁰ points out some of the novel and provocative ways of the "nonconformist" Spirit. This is a timely warning about the danger of reifying the work and play of the Spirit in practical life contexts. She blows hot and/or cold approval, depending on the specific needs of the situation (Acts 10, coming on Cornelius' household before water baptism, Acts 8, coming afterward to the Samaritan converts). She

49. See Alexander Cruden, *A Complete Concordance to the Old and New Testament and the Apocrypha*, Youngman's Edition, (London and New York: Warne and Co., 1737), s.v. clothed. Cruden's references to being "clothed" are not found in the RSV and NIV translations, and so don't give the same textual link between Old and New Testaments that Luke would have been alluding to in Lk.24:49. For examples, see Jud.6:34; 1Chr.12:18; 2 Chr.6:41; 24:20; Jb.29:14; Ps.93:1; 104:1-4; Ps.132:9, 16; Zech.3:3-5; Mt.6:29, 30; 2Cor.2-4; 1Pet.5:5; Rev.15:6; 18:16; 19:14.

50. Ford, "The Holy Spirit and Mission in the New Testament," *Missiology* 16 (4, 1988): 439-453.

does everything in her power to lighten the ritual difficulties and burdens facing the proselyte and neophyte, burdens connected with keeping the cultural and religious "traditions of men."⁵¹ The outcome of the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) brings the welcome decision that Gentiles only need to heed the basic fundamentals found in the Noachic commandments. Even circumcision is conceded as unnecessary under the direction of the Holy Spirit and the diplomatic chairmanship of James. Mission paths were smoothed out and obstacles removed that might hinder the gentiles in receiving and living the good news of peace with God. These practical and innovative concessions are indeed good news and a timely reminder with important implications for our own current and future-oriented practice of mission guided by the Holy Spirit.

The important principle illustrated here, of smoothing away the cultural obstacles in the path of a God-seeker, has profoundly surprising connections with Leda's situation, as has been shown. Smoothing the paths to God was also an important part of the poetic-prophetic ministry enacted in the Old Testament context of literal and spiritual exile. Recall that Leda is involved in an exchange of garments, the basic black dress for the delicately yoked white nightdress. In a change of garments, various prophetic images complement this view. "Awake, clothe yourself with strength, put on your garments of splendour" (Is.52:1). "He has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of righteousness" (Is.61:10). What does it mean to be clothed with the Holy Spirit? Ford expresses

51. Ibid, p.446. Ford notes that one important principle or technique in Jewish missionary work, called the "concession to sinfulness", was intended to lighten the burden of ritual purity and dietary laws.

this garment gift exchange legacy in a very beautiful and surprising set of images that graciously amplify so much of Leda's story. "The most frequent image for the Shekinah is Mother....She accompanies the people in exile and suffering and wears dark clothes and weeps on these occasions, but changes into robes of joy when they are redeemed....[Judaism and early Christianity] expressed mission as bringing the convert under the wings of the Shekinah."⁵² I hope that you, as readers, share in the joy that these sentences elucidate, for they amplify and verify the plotting details of photoknit pictures in the most unexpected ways. Recall that *the brooding presence of the stranger waiting in the wings* was a poetically constructed image and reference point for mission work and play with Leda, long before this information about the Shekinah came to conscious light.

The most important point that emerges from this doublesided expression of exchanged garments is that of God's guaranteed presence in every circumstance of life, favourable and unfavourable. This is the paradox *par excellence*. Exile, enforced or self-imposed, may be the reality we live with, but we are never abandoned. The black-white polarities are not irreconcilable opposites, but rather challenge us with a very surprising and unexpected opening onto almost unimaginable vistas of otherness. The garment exchange legacy challenges every ethical principle known to religious conventionality. The obvious wave line is well expressed by the blind man healed by Jesus in Jn.9:31. "We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly man who does his will." Not so, says Jesus in words and deeds; not so, say

52. Ibid, p.451. Imagine Rose Aaron's joy in discovering these lines almost a year after Leda's death.

Leda and Rose Aaron. It is in a mutual initiative that God listens to sinners, and communes and dines with law-breakers and outcasts. Otherwise, there is no hope for any existential human living based and judged on lawful merit. On the contrary, the larger picture of relationship with the holy God of Jesus Christ shows the opaque and transparent presence of one who accompanies exiled and redeemed sinners everywhere without exception. A Jubilee story of God's favour to 'sinners' plots their release from captivity, their return from exile, their restored fortunes (Jer.29:14; 30:3, 18; 31:23; 33:26). Black and white garments are neither antithetical to each other nor to the experience of holiness that is the permeating middle ground between the sacred and profane binary 'traditions of men'. The Scylla and Charybdis danger in symbolism, as J.E. Cirlot warns, is a twofold one. Oversimplification devitalizes a symbol's potency, and excessive ambiguity exaggerates either its meaning or its ultimate implications. "In truth, the deepest meaning [of a symbol] is unequivocal."⁵³ Thus the symbol of Leda's garment exchange, as indeed all the other split reference images and symbols in her story, have one essential and unequivocal meaning, that of the unmerited freedom of access to God.

I. Naked Transitions

The oppositions of being clothed and being naked are right at the heart of human experience and values about the reality of birth, the scandal of death, and the hope of rebirth. Nakedness, literal and symbolic, often marks the transitional state in various types of

53. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, p.liv.

cultural initiation rites as well as those baptismal initiation rites of the early Christian churches. In anthropological circles this transitional, 'betwixt and between' condition is known as liminality. As the wealth of amplifying details makes clear, "it is a period of structural impoverishment and symbolic enrichment"⁵⁴ or "structural simplicity and cultural complexity."⁵⁵ Ambiguous limens and thresholds are particularly characterized by the qualities of lowliness and sacredness.⁵⁶ Sacredness, here, is not an absolute but a relative condition where a person or group is sacred (set apart) in relation to others who remain in a secular state.⁵⁷ The umbrella protection of relative sacredness allows the necessary and creative freedom to challenge, test, even break or transgress the normative social and/or religious traditions and boundaries with impunity. The creative and regenerative importance of the liminal condition is purposeful in promoting an ontological transformation which is free from socially structured sanctions and conventions. This type of 'law-breaking' is used to impress upon the neophyte a participatory experience of the originating root values, attitudes and first principles of one's ancestral heritage. In terms of societal and personal renewal, this

54. Turner, "Passages, Margins, and Poverty", p.398.

55. Turner, "Betwixt and Between", p. 11.

56. Nichols, "Worship as Anti-structure", p.403. The author is referring to Turner's work.

57. Van Gennep, *Rites of Passage*, p. 12. Further to this, Van Gennep writes that the presence of the sacred is variable. A person moving from place to place within society moves within a pivoting "magic circle" through the various positions of a lifetime, coming to see the sacred where the profane was previously seen, and vice versa. These changes of perspective are disturbing, and rites of passage help to reduce the harmful effects (p.13).

return to the ancient founding principles of one's heritage is of paramount importance. "For each society requires of its adult members not only adherence to rules and patterns, but at least a certain level of skepticism and initiative. Initiation is to rouse initiative at least as much as to produce conformity to custom."⁵⁸ The naked passage between outworn or immature perspectives and new expanded horizons often requires a purposeful, creative, and regenerative break with existing conventions. Initiations into new approaches and orientations in Christian mission will require this same transitional death-to-life passage.

Cultural initiatees live in a marginal situation of dynamically unstructured and egalitarian relationships called *communitas* (Latin for common task). They are reckoned as 'dead' to their former life and as such, they have no existence. "The subject of passage ritual is, in the liminal period, structurally, if not physically, 'invisible'".⁵⁹ Unfortunately in our own society, the dying become and remain permanently 'invisible' long before they die. In cultural initiation rites, the 'dead' are being prepared for new adult life, and thus must first face a complete loss - of previous status, wealth, rank, kinship - and any other hierarchical distinctions. This loss may be expressed externally by ritual nudity, as well as other symbolic and ritual expression of humility, passivity and obedience. Loss of previous status and rank, etc. was also St. Paul's liminal experience (see Phil.3:7 & 8).

58. Turner, "Passages, Margins, and Poverty," p.483.

59. Turner, "Betwixt and Between," p.6.

In the context of the early Christian communities, the three movements - of stripping off the old life (woolen garment), nakedness (and baptismal immersion), and putting on a white linen garment - were literal and externalized ways of portraying the inner reality of transformation brought about by faith in the death-new life, crucifixion-resurrection drama of Jesus the Christ. The positive and negative qualities attributed to nakedness are profoundly and intimately linked to the death-new life theme.

In showing its negative face, being naked means complete insecurity, nothingness, lack of status, even sinfulness. In Biblical imagery, nakedness expresses human misery, poverty and existential limits.⁶⁰ The stark and naked reality of terminal illness highlights the factual nature of human vulnerability and limitations in particularly hardnosed ways. There is no cure for death. However much we may deny and repress our sense of ultimate insecurity, our existential nakedness cannot be veiled. At heart, the problem, both personal and social, confronting us in the figurative language and imagery of nakedness, is the refusal to accept the reality that as human beings, we are not autonomous and independent selves who can measure out our own exclusive material. We live in an external network of relationships with other people, objects, and events. In a very practical way, we are clothed and constrained by many existential

60. It is important to note that nakedness is not connected with sexuality but with the limits of the human condition. See W. Vogels, "Cham découvre les limites de son père Noé," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 109 (1987): 554-573; B.N Wambacq, "Or tous deux étaient nus, l'homme et sa femme, mais ils n'en avaient pas honte," in *Mélanges bibliques en hommage au R.P. Béda Rigaux*, ed. A. Desamps & R. P. A. de Halleux, (Gembloux: Duclulot, 1970), pp.547-556; J.Z. Smith, "Garments of Shame," in *Map Is Not Territory*.

parameters over which we have no control. Ultimately, death looms and creates garments of mortality which are exactly made-to-measure. However, within the parameters of existence, there is always sufficient saving space to exercise and discipline the depth dimensions of human freedom. The existential experience of these liberating dimensions encourage the loving penetration into the realms existing beyond the veiled and illusory boundaries of what is already known. The unknown horizon of one generation becomes the obvious line of attention for the next one.

Thus a regenerative return to the biblical image of nakedness without shame (Gen.2:25), that very special dimension of paradise, is a positive corrective to the equally existential fear, shame, insecurity, and guilt of being human, limited, and blemished. The symbol of shameless vulnerability offers a new world of possibilities for living creatively within the parameters of a somewhat scarred as well as glorified existence. The naked reality that humans are not God need not be a fearful revelation but one which, on the contrary, brings a mutual sense of divine and human initiative, acceptance and companionship. The experience of nakedness without shame may well be conveyed by the symbolic image of a man and a woman sharing adventures in paradise gardens, but it would be a great mistake to limit and curtail this imagery to literal issues of sexuality and modesty. The metaphoric dimension of such experienced nakedness really brings healing images of freedom to be just as one is, with all the strengths and weaknesses inherent in being human.

The healing image of nakedness without shame is also developed in the iconographic depictions of the nakedness of certain Old Testament

figures such as Jonah, Daniel, and the three men in the fiery furnace. This iconographic typology spells out the theme of resurrection and salvation which is then taken into New Testament baptismal themes and further developed in the early Christian communities. "Nudity is clearly a symbol of new life as promised in the resurrection (cf. John 20:5-6 & Luke 24:12) and, when appearing in connection with baptism, must be interpreted as signifying sacramental rebirth."⁶¹ And so we circle around the meaning of the garment exchange legacy once again, for a white garment (of linen or cotton) is "an anticipatory sign, a nakedness of transcendence."⁶² As an anticipatory sign, its importance, however dimly understood in a clear and concise cognitive sense, was sufficient and clear instruction to Rose Aaron. To partner, support and amplify the previously unheard of work and play of the Holy Spirit in Leda's life and forthcoming death, and death and forthcoming life, was an immense challenge. This meant falling in line and in love with the superabundant images of hope which clothed Leda so graciously, and with such transcending and abounding generosity.

J. The Silence That Goes Beyond Words

It is well to remember that there were to be many stormy passages to transverse between the inaugural inculturation event of Leda's body language response to faith and her 23rd consummating and homecoming day of physical death. Perhaps more memorable than all else is the

61. Smith, "Garments of Shame," in *Map Is Not Territory*, p.6.

62. Ibid, p.12.

amplifying picture of the mother-love of God which curbs the raging excesses of patriarchal power. The "suffering Mother love of the Father"⁶³ is an image of staying power that lives to see a radical transformation of trouble spots. Jung, in speaking of the inborn archetypal image of Mother which expresses the *mater natura* and *mater spiritualis*, amplifies a particularly fruitful and positive aspect of this reconciling love. For travelling companions with very conflicted mother relationships, this wholesome reconciliation is a redemptive activity of God's grace expressed in the womanly-wise images of the Holy Spirit. "Mother-love is one of the most moving and unforgettable memories of our lives, the mysterious root of all growth and change; the love that means homecoming, shelter, and the long silence from which everything begins and in which everything ends. Intimately known and yet strange like Nature, lovingly tender and yet cruel like fate, joyous and untiring giver of life - *mater dolorosa* and mute implacable portal that closes upon the dead."⁶⁴ Silence may be barren or fruitful, hot or cold in its power to communicate the mysterious presence which comes toward us with welcome in the wings. As a symbol, Mother means rebirth (Jn.3) and is an aspect of the feminine principle in God's nature, and not to be confused with literal mothers and women *per se*. However, Mother is not the source of life, but a partnered contributor to and container for the mystery of generation and regeneration.

As I continue to ponder this open reconciliation with the Mother love of God, it seems that the seed potential for restored and

63. M.D. Meeks, "The "Crucified God" and the Power of Liberation", p.38.

64. Jung. "Positive Aspects of the Mother-Complex," in *Aspects of the Feminine*, par.172. Also in CW 91.

rejuvenating images of the deity is part of the longer term preparations being required in the innovative and holistic evolution of our present society. These generational healing preparations are part of a welcome home for the long exiled images of God's womanly side. But take care, for cocktail dresses, mourning clothes, bridal gowns and nightgowns are worn by women as women first of all. It is an intolerably cheap trick to equate woman with mother per se. A healing reconciliation opens onto a multivocal reconciliation with womanhood in all its faces.

There comes a time with dying people when it is too late for words. Then, as Elisabeth Kubler-Ross shares, one moves into the therapy of silence. "Those who have the strength and the love to sit with a dying patient in the silence that goes beyond words will know that this moment is neither frightening nor painful, but a peaceful cessation of the functioning of the body."⁶⁵ In this chapter, some lengthy consideration has been given to the 'Southern' position of articulate nonverbal language which dramatically enacted and displayed a resurrected baptismal and universal hope about life in the face of death. This third position of vitalizing material presence, complements the East-West dualistic modalities of mind over matter, by articulating the refreshing alternative of a sideways partnership. In order to break with the extreme excesses of dominating horizontal monologues, the north-south axis is now beginning to be recognized as an able partner at the round table of dialogue.

In the next chapter, we will look at ways in which images from the fourth point on the compass, Canada, the true north strong and free,

65. Kubler-Ross, *On Death and Dying*, p.276.

contribute an alternative sideways perspective to the mediating mission of images and symbols in good news communication. A photoknit picture of Leda's and Rose Aaron's last scene together remains to be seen from the revolving doorway, reflecting on the avenues of an inherent investment coming out of the long awaited gift exchange legacy.

And what the dead had no speech for, when living,
They can tell you, being dead: the communication
Of the dead is tongued with fire beyond the language
of the living.

T.S.Eliot

CHAPTER 5

DEPTH EVANGELIZATION: THE FOUNTAIN TRUST LEGACY

A. Voice of Fire

Voice of Fire, the painting by Barnett Newman on display at the National Gallery in Ottawa, is a visual and poetic icon which speaks to me in concrete sacramental language about a Canadian "vocation dream"¹ of Christian mission and sideways companionship. The painting, representing bilateral symmetry, is 8 ft. wide and 18 ft. high, and is intended to be seen close up, first of all. It is composed of three equal vertical bands of colour 32 in. wide, the central band being cadmium red, and the flanking ones deep ultramarine blue with some white showing through. Newman, in speaking about the painting's meaning, says:

There is no hierarchical arrangement of dominance of one part over another: the three equal parts exist alongside each other. The only differences are in their relative position and colour....Each part remains separate and yet all coexist as a whole. As we struggle nationally and

1. Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian*, p.143. Fowler contrasts the destiny dream and the vocation dream in various ways. I share his metaphorical usage and application, but also employ this term isotopically, in opening up other triaxial levels of significance and reference.

internationally with our individual and collective identities, *Voice of Fire* acts as a reminder of what it is to be independent and free of domination while at the same time part of a larger world. *Voice of Fire* is a visual call or cry beckoning the viewer to come closer.²

Likewise, the mediating mission of images and symbols can be seen to stand close up to an event, person, or object symbolically, while maintaining a healing and wholesome distance. Each part is distinct and yet wholesomely and holistically coexists in a sideways relationship.

When its dynamics are understood and practiced, the wide spectrum of symbolic language communication, verbal and nonverbal, is a very powerful but gentle art and well able to communicate effectively in close up situations and over distance, however literal and/or metaphorical. Jesus himself was involved in the healing of certain people from a distant vantage point (Mk.7:24-30; Lk.7:1-10; Jn.4:1 ff. shows a type of healing distance with the Samaritan woman). *Voice of Fire*, close up and at a distance, expresses an interpretive non-dominating mission for amplifying the mediating reality of images and symbols using an especially Canadian voice and language.

"When a metaphor contains a radically new vision of world it gives absolutely no information until after the hearer has entered into it and experienced it from inside itself."³ From inside the events of Rose Aaron's 23rd and final visit with Leda, one unsolved and unexplained referential clue remained long after all the other loose ends of split references had been tied up and secured. This one seed, planted by Old

2. Quote taken from publicity leaflet available at the National Gallery of Canada.

3. Crossan, *In Parables*, p.13.

Man Time, grew in silent darkness for nine months before its meaning was suddenly and timely birthed through an amplifying image and article which came to Rose Aaron's hand.⁴ A further nine-month 'pregnancy' fulfilled the song of promise in Is.54:1 for all barren women, to sing and shout for joy about the alternating power of image and concept in creative eros-logos partnership. The resulting investment of this amplification may seem rather scandalous and controversial in some Christian mission quarters. I expect that is why it has taken yet another full term for a clearly conceived concept of depth evangelization to grow into a communicable form. In the sideways growth of the image and concept of symbolic depth evangelization to be presented herein, the heartfelt stake is a pivotal issue for mission conceived with a Canadian accent.

As with any living symbol, it grows out of the nascent demands of contextual specificity, implicit and explicit to particular cultural and societal depths. Symbols grow but cannot be artificially produced, manufactured or cloned. They grow when the time is ripe, and die when their power to imaginatively point to and participate in their originating referent has been exhausted or thoroughly depleted. In this chapter, the depth evangelization of the secret of "Christ in you, the hope of glory", discloses the discontinuity-continuity paradox of dying to the old outworn patterns and being born anew. As a theme it is ripe for further amplifying investment in mission. The Fountain Trust Legacy acts as Leda's parting gift and salutation to future generations. But

4. Louis Beirnaert, "La dimension mythique dans le sacramentalisme chrétien," *Eranos* 17 (1949): 255-286; also entitled "Symbolism mythique de l'eau dans le baptême," *Maison Dieu* 22 (1950): 94-120.

in fact, it is a return to and retrieval of the ancient precedent established by St. Luke, the early Christian communities, and other new and newly returned followers of the ancient ways and paths that lead to spiritual rest (Jer.6:16).

B. Other Fiery Voices

As well as being clothed with the garments⁵ of the Holy Spirit (Lk.24:49), the voice of the Spirit is often likened to images of fire and fiery language, animating breath and wind, and water poured out on the thirsty (Acts 2, with cross reference images to the parched land in Joel). The phrase "tongues as of fire" in Acts 2:3 (RSV) is powerfully and poetically linked with the disciples' subsequently fiery language about Christ Jesus crucified and raised from the dead. When this fiery voice speaks with a distinctly Canadian accent about peace-filled good news, then it is again time to hope about the style of Canadian peacekeeping missions. The hope of peace, the *shalom* of restored wholeness and restored relationships,⁶ is a dream of joint connection networking, so that the multidimensional axes of a non-dominating, non-hierarchical dialogue may be the mission place where people once again hear about the crucified and resurrected wonders of God in their own native languages and cultural tongues (Acts 2:6, 11). St. Luke's crowning literary skill is in sowing the seeds of good news in

5. Luke links the Old Testament and the subsequent cultural imagery found in Acts through garment imagery. This is why being clothed with a Godly attribute or having the Spirit clothe one is so important, as was discussed earlier regarding Shekinah.

6. *Shalom*, seen for example in Is.53:5, is equated with wholeness, see Goldingay, *God's Prophet, God's Servant*, pp. 140 & 148.

recognizable cultural images, symbols and stories that are a treasure-house link of myth and history both old and new.

Luke's "tongues as of fire" has a most astounding cultural connection with the ancient Mediterranean world and with Leda, historical and mythical. The myths of the *Dioscouri*, the twin sons (one mortal, one immortal) of Zeus born from the mythological Leda or hatched from an egg given to her, tell of a most significant fact to which Luke has alluded. At the beginning and the end of the book of Acts, he refers to tongues of fire in a most imaginative way. His method links a known image and physical phenomena with the completely new and previously unheard of context of historical resurrection. Stories of the dying and rising gods were not, in themselves, new to the Mediterranean world. The new component is the historical intervention of God in raising Jesus.

The *Dioscouri*, those famous mythological twin brothers, exercised their cultural capacity as the protective patrons of sea voyagers (as well as being patrons of battles, and of hospitality) in ways which come from their own nautical adventures. While sailing with Jason on the Argonaut's expedition, they were assailed by a storm. Zeus was benevolent, and in response to Orpheus' musical pleas, "two flames descended from the sky and hovered over the heads of the *Dioscouri*."⁷ This is said to be the origin of the phenomenon of St. Elmo's fire (corposant) which announces the end of a storm. It is the luminous corona that sometimes appears around ships' masts or church spires as a result of the discharge of atmospheric electricity. The idea of the halo also

7. *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*, p.189.

originates here, being used to visually depict a holy person, one who is dynamic, energetic, full of the breath of life. Thus, it is important to comprehend the way in which myth and fact are intertwined. Though inexplicable in those days, the mystery of St. Elmo's fire is a literal and physical phenomenon, and its universal reality can be experienced under certain weather conditions.

It is no accident, to be sure then, to find that the book of Acts ends with an even more explicit reference to these twin brothers, Castor and Pollux. The safety of Paul and the other passengers during the shipwreck on Malta (Acts 27:44 & 28:1) is seen as a miraculous escape from the sea, and is accompanied by an exceptionally warm and hospitable welcome (v.2). Then, following the snake bite expectations of divine retribution, the natives reconsidered and thought Paul was a god (v.6). These are veiled allusions to the patron-god of sea travellers. And finally after a three month sojourn, Paul and his companions set sail for Rome, on a ship with the figurehead of "the twin gods Castor and Pollux" (28:11, NIV), or "The Twin Brothers" (RSV). In terms of connecting the myths of cultural stories with a sacramentalized Christian meaning, Luke is a master evangelizer of existing cultural material.⁸

Luke's emphasis on the power of fiery language is set in the context of the question of restoring the kingdom of God (i.e. a synonym

8. Another example of Luke's connecting skill is found here in Acts 28:1, in the word "we", which is a shift from the third person usage in the previous chapter of Acts. In the historiography or historical biographies of the Hellenistic world toward the end of 1 CE, there were two narrative settings appropriate for "we" language, prologues and sea voyages. See V.K Robbins, "By Land and By Sea: A Study of Acts 13 - 28," *Society of Biblical Literature, Seminar Papers*, (1976): 381-396.

for God's restored presence) in Acts 1:6, through fiery language which witnesses to God's heavenly fire power descending upon followers of the Jesus way. Water baptism symbolism was well known in all the ancient Mediterranean area, as noted in the details of the white linen garment in the last chapter. Water symbolism will also play a significant part in this chapter through another image. However, clearly in the Lucan context, there is the introduction of a new element composed of the fire baptism of the Holy Spirit. To be "baptized with Spirit" involves, among other motifs, a 'garment of splendour' and 'kingdom power' worth the wait for witnessing voices and 'tongues of fire'. Luke's thematic precedent, established here, will be returned to later in this chapter. In the next sections, the link with the historical Leda will be clarified through the the legacy inherent in the photoknit word picture which encapsulates a final yet first meeting.

C. Cold Water Cup

In what turned out to be her final visit, Rose Aaron had dressed with symbolic care, wearing dusky pink and turquoise shorts and a thin white blouse with a lacy yoke inset. It was her doublesided way of praying and pondering, firstly, Jesus' invitation in Mt.11:28-30, "Come....rest....My yoke is easy, my burden is light." Secondly, it honoured the comments of Milan Kundera visually portrayed in the film and written in his novel, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, which plays on the binaries of light and weight (burden).⁹ It was a simple ritual

9. Kundera, *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, p.5. In a discussion about lightness and weight in the context of eternal return, Kundera poses the paradox. "But is heaviness truly deplorable and lightness

way of expressing her heart's intent to honour God's unknown resolution (unknown to her at any rate) to the supermarket dilemma, and to acknowledge her own apparent failures to satisfy Leda's yearning for colourful fresh food, fresh 'garden' produce. She pondered the practical methods of *how* to bring a feast of redeeming images to Leda as she seemed unable to drive Leda to a place where she would be free to selectively choose from a range of fresh and colourful food. But Rose Aaron had no tried-and-true answers about how this could be done. The question, though, remained about *how* to translate, with non-dominating integrity, this poetic image into appropriate and active practice - if any practice was even required.

As was her custom with other patients very close to death, Rose Aaron wore a gold-plated maple leaf with a very long, needle-piercing point protected by a little acorn catch. This is a sharp reminder to be used to prick any ego inflation about playing God, and thinking and feeling oneself able to 'do' something when there is nothing to do, when the only requirement left is the staying power of a companioning presence to sit silently with a person in the last stage of the dying process.

splendid? The heaviest of burdens crushes us, we sink beneath it, it pins us to the ground. But in the love poetry of every age, the woman longs to be weighed down by the man's body. The heaviest of burdens is therefore simultaneously an image of life's most intense fulfillment. The heavier the burden, the closer our lives come to the earth, the more real and truthful they become. Conversely, the absolute absence of a burden causes man to be lighter than air, to soar into the heights, take leave of the earth and his earthly being, and become only half real, his movements as free as they are insignificant."

"As we're both stranded, let's call for a taxi!" This was the jokey solution to their mutual dilemma, lack of drive. Leda's car was broken, as we know, and in a dream, it turns out that Rose Aaron's car had been stolen by some joyriding tricksters. Mutuality to the last! This offering of humour was a refreshing tonic, for by hook and by crook, this was the way they both, together, could still get to the well-ordered and colourful supermarket. As well as the tonic, Rose Aaron brought some lemon gelato to celebrate and continue to affirm Leda's zest for still living. Quiet companionship was the order of that 23rd day, a time of quiet reflection and wonder at being equally in the timeless presence of life and death.

While Leda rested, Rose Aaron worked on a dream in which the stormy grey skies (and tear-clouded eyes) became the surplus underground-up-in-the-air stage backdrop for fruit-picking and packaging. Attention was drawn to the sudden appearance of a multiple rainbow in the sky and an iridescent trout-colourful¹⁰ discharge of energy magnetically playing on a nearby digital watch. Rainbows are reminiscent, of course, of the Noachic sign of God's universal covenant. Recall, too, that the multiple sign of God's blessing on and concessions to the Gentiles, came

10. This particular rainbow trout colour is connected with a poem by G.M. Hopkins called "Pied Beauty." It was displayed in an intriguing and amusing piece of artwork which had hung over Leda's bed at home, with the poem's words written in a cow shape, with orange, black and brown colours just like a brinded cow. Leda had also insisted Rose Aaron find a particular book and read this poem (and other ones of Hopkins') to her on their 2nd visit. The poem starts, "Glory be to God for dappled things -/ For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow./ For rose-moles all in stiple upon trout that swim./...All things counter, original, spare, strange...

via the Jerusalem Council of Acts 15, and involved a return to the simplicity of the Noachic commands at the behest of the Holy Spirit.

Upon awaking, Leda sucked and sucked on the water sponge in a very primordial and trusting way which recalled the mother-baby analogy of trusting dependence and vulnerability first experienced two days previously. The sacrificial redemption and liberation of a 'mother's' heart is knowing that one's baby will never favour her with a smile and being able to accept that reality with peace. The only conversation was the 'sweet nothings' that a mother uses with a baby, where tone of voice is far more important than the actual words.

A more efficient method of delivering water to Leda offered itself in the form of a large, syringe-like object used in palliative care. It has a reservoir and a plunger for squirting small jets of streamlined liquid into the mouth. During this time, Leda reached up her hand and rested it on Rose Aaron's forearm. After the reservoir had been emptied and refilled for the third time, Leda spontaneously took and held Rose Aaron's free hand in her own. Indeed, she held on tightly and wouldn't let go. How very precious was that unexpected and surprising touch! How healing! It contained a salute of silent recognition and reconciliation, and fond farewell. It was really too much to hope for. In the lightness of Leda's touching gesture, Rose Aaron's grieving 'no-smile' heartbreak was mended with the reciprocated gift of hands that speak of healing. Then, as four helpers transferred her to the armchair, a nurse commented on how lightweight Leda was, and how her eyes exactly matched Rose Aaron's. Though to be sure, it is not at all clear how grey-blue and brown can be said to match.

Maybe the clue is to be found in sowing the gospel seed with the eyes. On the day of Leda's poetic door and key incident, Lenore, their third companion, had remarked on Leda's beautiful eyes, by likening them with Rose Aaron's. These remarks were made in the sense of the latter's eyes spreading, broadcasting and dispersing seed. It was not meant as a direct exchange but as a silent good news transmission.

In leaving, as she'd done so many silent and verbal times before, Rose Aaron kissed Leda's brow, and offered the prayer of Nu.6:24-26.

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine upon
you and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face towards you
and give you peace.

The following evening, Leda died in peace.

When her family left the hospital in the early hours of the morning, they found, not without a comic twist of irony, that her car had also 'died'. In hearing this tale recounted a few days later, Rose Aaron discovered that the brand name of Leda's car was a Rabbit, that is, a hare!

D. Soul Language Symbol

Thus it is a source of immense wonder and awe that the triple hair-heir-hare soul imagery should be so powerfully operative in the lives of these two women without their consciously knowing or understanding the depths of its universal archetypal and mythological significance. What is noteworthy is that however scanty and inadequate

their shared knowledge, it was good enough. This is a message of hope for all who will take the helping hand of support offered by images and symbols. A summary of the relevant symbolism taken from *The Lady of the Hare* touches on the universal span of the symbolic meaning the hare-rabbit: as a willing sacrifice; as a symbol of the light of dawn, Easter and the 'orienting' east; as associated with sparkling brilliance, whiteness and snow, and with picture writing; as a symbol of intuition; as maker and purveyor of the healing elixir of life, that is immortality.¹¹ In stressing the initiative and priority of a conjoined historical and symbolical testimony regarding the meaning of the hare-soul symbolism, the following passage about Mrs. Wright's transformation is quoted at length. It indicates and honours the relationship and language of the hair, heir, hare mystery, without devitalizing and oversimplifying the interpretive richness of the symbolism connected with the car-hare conversion and transformation process of broken soul drive.

In Mrs. Wright's own dream-history the sacrifice of the hare...did indeed bring about a transformation of instinct, and thereby of her whole personality, in the direction of intuitive knowledge and of a spiritual pregnancy benefitting not only herself but her daughter Margaret to an extreme degree....The mother-love that had been cloyed was now purged of inhibiting misconceptions and could now flow directly into her daughter....Mrs. Wright was now released from the authoritarian influence of a falsely intellectual external world....The fact that...sacrificing the hare had no effect on her till enough of its meaning was explained, and that it then produced this great effect, demonstrates clearly...not only the power of the archetype but also the part it plays in the redemptive process that lies latent within us all, though it remains comparatively inoperative

11. Layard, *The Lady of the Hare*, pp.222-229.

till joined to consciousness, but becomes so potent a force for good when activated by being recognized and honoured.¹²

Leda's and Rose Aaron's last scene invites many levels of interpretation. Remember that the immediate as well as the overall context is important, especially in terms of the referential quest and the issues of dramatic plotting which plait together many diverse strands of meaning. Also, remember that according to parabolic kingdom plots, *what* is done is of far greater significance than *who* acts. The immediate context is connected to the very brief green light transmission of the gospel, two days previously. Leda's culture story of broken drive, her metaphorical and spiritual hunger for something on which to chew, and her literal thirst, all form an instinctive bridge connecting her to Jesus' words in Jn.6:37, "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away." It may be understood in part then, that the verbal words are followed by fulfilling and complementary deeds enacted and sacramentally mimed, to Leda's and Rose Aaron's mutually healing comfort.

E. Nine Month Wonder

In face of X, Y, Z's and A, B, C's, alphas and omegas, and boiling pot mediation, Old Man Time planted a peculiar seed in Rose Aaron's case note text. Instead of the word 'syringe' to describe the figurative cup of cold water given to Leda on their twenty-third visit, Rose Aaron heard and then wrote the word 'fountain' before she knew what she'd

12. Ibid, p.228 & 229.

done. Fountain?! Not another slip! As these slips of the pen are never accidental, it was faithfully recorded. In speaking of the urgent and imposing impress of an image growing and conveying poetical and divine inspiration and revelation, Austin Farrer makes some astute comments that help to underline the importance of such 'slips'. An imaged object, heard in this case before seen, "becomes charged with divine significance; what significance, and how much, [the seer or hearer] does not at first know."¹³ Such 'slips' may be considered as cosmic jokes, where a person thinks and feels with the body language contained by a pen or hand, not with the head. Long experience has taught Rose Aaron that such slips are purposeful, and at times very delicate feminine undergarments usually kept out of public sight. The eventual amplifying interpretation of the cold water fountain-cup is a gift dependent on God's manifestation in history. Its significance is like the parable of the seed that grew by itself (Mk.4:26-29) until that seedy gift was ready for harvest and new birth.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him [or her] who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life" (Rev.21:6, NIV). Or try this version. "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water without price from the fountain of the water of life" (Rev.21:6, RSV). You see, it pays to have more than one translation and interpretation!

A delicious and refreshing serendipity brought Louis Beirnaert's article to Rose Aaron's hand some nine months after Leda's death.

13. Austin Farrer, "Inspiration: Poetical and Divine," in *Promise and Fulfillment*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), p.98.

Having been inspired to pick up and look into his writing on the mythic dimension of Christian sacramentality, she was hit full force by the key words to indicate that tomb - womb - maternal breast - baptismal fount - fountain of living water - Christ's wounded side. In this, Rose Aaron was redirected to the original source behind the mediating mission of Leda's A, B, C's and X, Y, Z's, and redirected to read the other half of the Revelation verse which she hadn't read initially. "Ah! Now I see what's going on!" Depth evangelization is the name of the mediating language game which engaged Leda and Rose Aaron in a child's play concentration of healing. Entry into the kingdom presence of God's love requires a certain restored childlikeness.

F. The Water Fountain

The universal efficacy of water symbolism, with its complementary sides of history and myth, is one outstanding example of the early Christian precedent of archetypal depth evangelization. Luke's example, given earlier, has already been touched on briefly, though in *chronos* order, fire followed water. With refreshing crystal clarity, Beirnaert carefully traces and documents the parallels and detailed correspondences in water symbolism, cultic and Christian. This involves the very revealing disclosure of a distinctly repeating common rhythm connecting the early Christian sacrament of baptismal initiation, the mythic quality of water sacraments in natural religious practice, and the psychological efficacy of the same water symbolism typology still active in modern people today. In particular, the prevalent historic-mythic water symbiosis of universal womb-tomb-fountain imagery carefully and convincingly indicates that there is only one significant difference

between the "pagan"¹⁴ and Christic understanding of water-related, death-new life motifs.

The historical resurrection motif introduces a new note. Christ was neither born nor reborn from the waters (= earth, tomb, inferior psyche, unconscious) but rather, took in hand all their powers to hold people captive to the fear of change and transformation. That is, he was neither absorbed and dissolved by the waters, nor did he conquer and vanquish them per se, and all they symbolize. What Christ did do was vanquish the powers of evil and sin, symbolized by the snake,¹⁵ which held people captive to the fear of death, fear of the unknown, fear of the unconscious waters and their lurking and apparently monstrous phantoms. Evil and sin remain, but their imprisoning and enslaving power is taken into Christ's hands.

It is, therefore, of utmost importance, in my view, to respect and honour the snake's power as an ancient symbol of fertility, healing, transforming growth and life renewal. However, its very poisonous temptation to enslaving false autonomy is purposely meant to strike fear and terror into the snares of the unwitting, the scornful and arrogant. These are the ones who, in culpable innocence and blinding ignorance,

14. Pagan, as the term is used here, is completely non-pejorative. It is being used to distinguish and differentiate a mythic and Christic understanding of rebirth and renewal on the archetypal levels of symbols. Beirnaert is detailing the uniqueness of Christ's interaction with the waters that symbolize a universal death-rebirth schema found in most religious traditions. Unfortunately, the word 'pagan' has become rather abusive and divisive in its applications by Christians to all those very different others who are strangers and aliens, and thus labelled enemy.

15. Beirnaert, "La dimension mythique," p.280. "Car n'est donc pas pour y être absorbé par la Puissance que symbolise le serpent, mais pour entrer en participation de la victoire divine."

imagine themselves as the centre - the source and reference for determining the ever-expanding and transcending truth of all living reality. When the snake's poison sacs are milked, then the fangs and pangs of the transformation process are not so deadly in an ultimate sense. The intimately entwined position of the snake and the tree of life and life-giving knowledge are closely and centrally allied to the process of transformational fertility. The central positional truth of their potentially redemptive and equally destructive reality mediate the human drama, not the reverse.

Being baptized with Christ's baptism enables a person to face the inevitable reality of sin without being captivated in its deceiving and illusory snares. That is, sin and death have only as much power as is credited to their account; withdraw the credit line and their captivating power is bankrupt. Be very clear. Sin and death are not defunct, but only their very considerable power to hold people captive, imprisoned and enchained in oppressive guilt, fear, shame, etc. In the liberating mimesis of Christian baptism, a person trustingly and confidently returns to the waters, to the places of their greatest terrors, and does die as Christ did. However, it is a dying to the fear of being held prisoner, by the power of sin and thereby held by the power of death as ultimate separation from God. One significant implication is that people need no longer fear being absorbed by the powerful public letter of human 'laws' which define social sin and evil. They die, not to law but to its deathly power, and are therefore able to rise to its spirited intent (see Mt.5:17-20).

Among other social sins like eating with tax-gathering sinners and talking to women, Jesus' one great social sin, amounting to religious

blasphemy, was that of knowing himself to be a son and heir of God. This kind of filial garden attitude equated his personal presence with that of the kingdom already come.¹⁶ His name is no accident, for Jesus - Joshua/Yahweh saves, and Emmanuel - God with us, always. Yet he was guilty of challenging and breaking all the moral and social codes and sanctions of his day, just as former prophets had done with regard to established social and religious laws.

So too in the troubles of baptismal 'hot water', we are not dead to law but dead to the power of law to kill the spirit of intent in us, no matter how impoverished our socially defined responses to grace may be. Leda's story is testimony to this point. She wasn't at all interested in a conventionally defined and confined conversion motivated by red hot promises. This is the lesson which Leda's images and symbols have to teach. God raised Jesus in order to reinforce this point. The power of the law to punish and to kill us is nullified when we die to our fear of its punishing and torturing power. Thus the penetrating law-grace rhetoric of a Pharisaically law-steeped man like St. Paul (Rom.8: ff) becomes more transparent in this constructive sideways light.

G. Mediating Historic and Mythic Sides

Christian water sacramentality refers first of all to God's intervention in history. The historical side is necessarily complemented by the mythic and archetypal dimension. The accessible natural language and concrete imagery, as in the Lucan tongues of St.

16. See Mt.12:28, Lk.11:20; Mt.11:5 ff, Lk.7:22 ff.; Mt. 12:41 ff., Lk.11:31 ff.; Mt.13:16 ff., Lk.10:23 ff.

Elmos's fire and the navigational and hospitable light of the Gemini constellation, speak to the depths of the individual and collective human psyche. Myths and archetypes mediate the historical spiritual reality of Christ's redemptive power loving victory into the natural religious depths of the psyche by using physically identifiable and visible materials and experiences, and a familiar language.¹⁷ The early Christians' recovery and renewal of the great natural images of the sun, moon, wood, wind, water, fire, mother, woman, birth, death, etc. signified the active evangelization of their already existing and inherent symbolic powers, and their nonverbal language. The return to these large categories in Christian teaching would signify the active evangelization of the "pagans" of today, secular and Christian.¹⁸ While validating the search for spiritual wholeness and salvation, the mythic dimension on its own, does not save or redeem the fear of change which historical circumstances may thrust upon individuals and societies.

17. Beirnaert, "La dimension mythique," p.284. "C'est par le médiation que le salut inauguré à la fine pointe de l'âme pénètre jusque dans les profondeurs de la psyché." Also "Comment donc ce salut atteindra-t-il notre inconscient s'il ne lui parle pas son langage, s'il ne reprend pas ses catégories?" (p.285).

18. Ibid, p.285 & 286, resp. In speaking of the evangelization of the affective powers signified by these great natural symbols, Beirnaert notes the following comments. "Dans la mesure où un sacramentalisme, et en général une représentation religieuse, néglige d'user des figures archétypiques, et réduit son rituel à un déroulement schématique elle [l'Eglise] perd son efficacité sur l'homme païen qui dort en chacun; elle manque l'évangélisation des profondeurs....Le retour à ces grandes catégories dans l'enseignement chrétien signifierait une évangélisation active de l'homme païen d'aujourd'hui."

Equally true is the fact that a superficial surface exhortation to and application of Christian faith principles¹⁹ is a gross disservice. Beware of such disservice to the real nature of the natural, archetypal mediation of the gospel, inculturating its unique reality into the collective and individual depths of the psyche. We all have 'ancestors' of one kind and another that need to be evangelized and rehabilitated before a fresh broadcast of good news can be heard, let alone sprout. This is not to deny the Spirit and the risen Lord already present to these realities before their conscious evangelization. However, Christian principles and principled poetical and archetypal contents should not be confused one with the other. Apparent look alike may differ considerably in practice, as Victor Turner²⁰ and T.S. Eliot²¹ and James Nelson²² show in their respective fields. On the other side of this paradox are the links of diverse associations, where vitalizing poetic "images are the symbolic metalanguage...; like dream-imagery, packed with meanings, infinitely suggestive... [having assigned associa-

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19. Ibid, pp.271-284. In this section on faith and archetypes, Beirnaert deals at length with the psychological configurations physically enacted in baptismal rites, which bring about an ontological transformation in the believer. He details the way in which the early church Fathers knew the need of the believer to face their fears and return to those fear-laden places with confidence in Christ's victory, and initiating partnership.
20. Turner, *Revelation and Divination in Ndembu Ritual*, p.20. "The silhouettes of the pragmatic man's activities and those of certain mystics and cosmic jokers may be almost indistinguishable to common sense perception."
21. T.S. Eliot, "Little Gidding" III, 150 ff., in *Four Quartets*. "There are three conditions which often look alike/ Yet differ completely, flourish in the same hedgerow."
22. Nelson, *Between Two Gardens*, p.107. He distinguishes between self-love, narcissism, and selfishness.

tions that act as] a communications centre, finding equivalents between the most disparate objects."²³ The invitations and summons for a deep-seated change and expansive growth in personal and social dimensions may be garbed in specifically Christic and/or cultural and cultic forms. Only informed and initiated experience can discern and differentiate the genuine similarities and differences between the detailed contents and their implicit and discursive structural framework. Though disorienting and costly, social and personal change, i.e. transformation, is better faced with trust than with paralyzing and incapacitating fear, guilt, and shame.

This is why James Fowler's work on the stages of faith development is so important in finding and establishing the mutually common and universal ground upon which all human experience can stand. Questions of faith help us get in touch with the dynamic processes and thematic patterns freed from the shallow reductionism of imprisoning faith in take-it-or-leave-it belief systems. Faith, loyalty, and trust are then free to give life a transcending meaning. Sensitive and responsible persons, such as Leda represents, are often forced to wrongly but conventionally conclude that they must live in an kind of exile "'without faith'. But if faith is understood as trust in another and loyalty to a transcendent centre of value and power, then the issue of faith - and the possibility of religious faith - becomes lively and open again."²⁴ The faith question asks, "On what or whom do you set your

23. Landy, "The Song of Songs and the Garden of Eden," pp.514 & 515, quoting T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" in *Selected Essays*, 18.

heart?"²⁵ Extensive consideration has been given to Leda's hunger and thirst for conversion, clothed in poetic and archetypal images and language. In her images and symbols, we hear and see what her heart was set upon, namely an unconventional, Holy Spirit-motivated conversion and transformation. Marvel at the unceasing trinitarian nature of life-giving and space-making grace.

The Christ archetype in dialogue with the historical reality and drama of Jesus' life, death and resurrection, is an adventuresome *biway*. This does not at all signify a renunciation of a real myth's natural and effective power to give accessible significance to the human psyche. In and through the poetic archetypal mediation of myth, image, symbol and story, and enacted body language ritual, the Christian contribution to the universally scandalous story of death and new life is accurately translated and transposed from one 'language' to another without distortion.²⁶ Therefore, it is urgent to note that this means, not the destruction of these mythic and poetic archetypes (such as the Barnabo story, or the Leda-swan relationship), but the innovative renewal, recovery, and taming of their free-flowing energy through the paradigm of appropriate Christic harnessing and yoking. The filial harness and yoke is the supportive, side by side relationship mirroring the fulfilling human life which freely revolves around the trusting central axis of God's love.

24. Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p. 14.

25. Ibid.

26. Beirnaert, "La dimension mythique," p.284.

H. Wounded Sides

In a most profound way, the mythic waters of death-rebirth are themselves transfigured and transformed by the historical significance of Christ's wounded side. In our empirically and historically minded world, this is indeed good news. The waters are themselves reborn, flowing from his side and having a new historical-mythical source in him, thus illustrating the conjunctive twin crossroads of time and timelessness, mortality and immortality, death and life. The implications of the wounded side motif hark back to the very ancient side by side partnership in the Genesis garden, where the positional centre-circumference love relationship went so drastically wrong. Corrected and faithful translations of garden language and imagery speak narratively and discursively of a side by side, bilateral symmetry between man and woman, co-equals and co-heirs.²⁷ Greater and more careful conscious attention to and reconsideration of this garden material is of utmost and tremendous import for current social unrest and upheaval. The battle and power-play of the sexes is no joke. Horizontal precedents, such as those being reflected upon herein, already exist for dressing these battle wounds, were they to be applied in a changing praxis.

Jesus Christ is powerfully innovative good news, for in being the New Adam, he is partnered with a New Eve taken from his wounded side. This is the creation and recreation of a new elemental and multivocal

27. For some detailed references that indicate the history of misinterpretation applied to Gen.2-3, see Phyllis Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), p.73.

womanhood pictured as wife, mother, daughter and sister of Christ.²⁸ The multivalence of these re-created images of archetypal woman are a profound opening onto the world of co-inheritance with Christ. He is the firstfruits harvest to be complemented, supplemented and fulfilled in the legacy given to his other co-inheriting brothers and sisters. Christ issues a good news invitation to return to the ancient imagery and language that forms the substance of a cocktail inheritance drunk to celebrate the union of a New Adam and New Eve.

The sideways motif can be seen in another cultural and religious form in the story of Buddha born from his mother's side.²⁹ This is a symbolically stated truth conveyed in Asian-oriental imagery which is equivalent to the spiritual meaning of virgin birth. In the Hindu-Buddhist tradition of Kundalini development and growth, spiritual transformation takes place, not through a union on the genital level, but on the second level (*chakra*, lotus, wheel of energy), which is that of the heart and side. Here the union of male and female organs is symbolized by gold, the highest value, and represents birth into the spiritual realm. Thus the gold-sided transformation motif is a very beautiful and powerful representation with great benefits and blessings for revisioning the wounded excesses of male-dominant Christian theology. A new horizontal meaning of Christ's atonement opens up in our present context of woman rising from the cultural and theological death

28. Ibid, p. 283. "Chaque âme fidèle aussi, est épouse du Verbe de Dieu, mère, fille et soeur du Christ. Chaque âme fidèle doit être dite vierge et féconde.... Cette féminité [archétypique] est fille de Dieu car elle ne surgit dans son mystère virginal que devant Lui. Elle est épouse de Dieu, car c'est à elle que Dieu s'unit. Elle est mère de Dieu car elle l'enfante dans le monde et dans les âmes."

29. See Campbell, *This business of the gods...*, pp. 38, 39.

space to which she had been consigned. Christ's woundedness on the side and heart level thus carries the potential for immense healing, reconciliation and forgiveness. His ancient stripes provide a timely, historical and symbolical, *theos* and *anthropos* union of pure gold love-references awaiting practical everyday and sideways applications.

The New Eve's elemental and abundant multivocality also issues a profound warning about the multidimensional complexity of woman imagery and symbolism radically rebirthed, renewed, redeemed and restored to her holy place and rightful space of co-inheritance with Christ. To simply equate the new Eve with any one body, church or otherwise, is to trivialize and brutalize the ultimacy of the reality being represented in a sacramental womanly form. The feminine gender of the Hebrew words for Shekinah and spirit (*ruah*, wind, breath), from which comes the understanding of the Holy Spirit (neuter in Greek) is a case in point. The urgent need is for a "resexualized theology"³⁰ which can overcome and unify the destructive dualism of a traditionally onesided, and male-dominated theology and spirituality. This is one place where the North-South axes can constructively contribute to renewed liberation motifs by breaking with the dualistic monopoly of mind opposed to matter. Indeed, Christ is a powerful and sacrificial image of deeply grieving and wounded manhood, broken on behalf of men and women everywhere.³¹ In sacrificial point of fact, the paradox of such a

30. Nelson, *Between Two Gardens*, p.13 & 14.

31. There is a beautiful story of a powerfully redemptive image of the love triangle in transition. It involves a character representing wounded and dying patriarchal manhood passing on his blessing to his young virile protege to search for the missing and relinquished woman. See one of those delightful novels about the 12th C.

wounded side may also bring healing but it requires the consciously searching return and welcome of all that has been exiled. Fortunes restored, captives released and returned, means a return to the sheltering precedent of an ancient way of living, moving and being in fearless harmony with God. Shekinah/Holy Spirit images are exquisitely polysemic and it behooves us as Christians to take a freshly exercised and disciplined sideways look at what is already there in our own reference book of living language.

The danger of failing to grasp and be grasped, and profoundly impressed with the sealing wax significance of the need for deep archetypal evangelization and inculturation, spells disaster for everyone. The turn of the restless sleeping "pagan" to idolatry is fundamentally the search for numinous figures and symbols powerful enough to give peace in the depths of the psyche.³² Only Christ, as hero in both mythical and historical terms, has tamed and subdued the power and fear of transformation to be found in those unknown places of darkness where fear is dissolved and transfigured. Most significantly for historically minded people, it means that no matter what, the human psyche can no longer return solely to the mythic Eleusinian fields for renewal. Such a fact should awaken Christian compassion for those

sleuthing detective-monk, Br. Cadfael, in Ellis Peters, *An Excellent Mystery*, (London: Futura, 1985).

32. Beirnaert, "La dimension mythique," p.285. "Les archétypes qui dorment au fond de la psyché se créent des idoles et font ressurgir le paganisme. C'est alors aussi que l'on est tenté de se détourner du christianisme pour chercher dans d'autres figures et dans d'autres symbolisations numineuses la paix des profondeurs. Mais l'humanité ne reviendra plus aux mystères d'Eleusis....[Il y a] ce besoin de retrouver un christianisme qui savait s'adresser efficacement à l'inconscient de l'homme religieux naturel.

attempting a onesided return. It should also awaken our wholehearted attempts at conjunctive meaning-making unions of historical and symbolic event-interpretations. The significance of historical reality has intervened and disclosed the true horizon of covenantal relationship with God. This is good news and a reason to work for and play with the cultural language that mediates and communicates the depths of Christ's glad tidings in a recognizable tongue.

I. Sexuality-Spirituality Metaphors

"Sexuality is God's magnificent and ingenious gift to implant within us the desire for intimacy and relationship, whether this is genitally expressed or not. Our sexuality is both the physiological and the psychological grounding of our capacity to love. The abiding clue of embodied selves is that our destiny is for fulfilling relationships."³³ The most natural expression of Godly otherness is reflected in the alterity of contrasexual images that partner our relations with reality, physical and spiritual. Inner 'soul images' are represented by the *anima* and *animus* images of women and men respectively. They are both guardians of and guides to the greater and more expansive dimensions of reality. They partner the known and unknown sides of experience and potential horizons beyond one's present circumspection. God's very Otherness is often most effectively communicated in contrasexual terms because of the tremendously fascinating and terrifying numinosity, energy-potential that is well expressed in sexual imagery. Intimacy and relationship with God are a human

33. Nelson, *Between Two Worlds*, p.106.

hunger of the spirit conveyed in a recognizable form of human longing and belonging. As Scott Peck noted in a public lecture series, "sexuality and spirituality are kissing cousins."³⁴ Alas, in the inherited images and concepts of culturally expressed Christianity, the onesided impoverishment and degradation of its male-female images and the backhanded demonization of the body and healthy sexuality, leaves much to be desired. The current secular and societal manifestations of bodily awareness seem to be an important and prophetic judgment call on the excesses of Christian thought and feeling clothed in inherited and dualistic dirty rags. The scriptural image of Joshua the priest's change of garments is certainly one which offers hope for our times (Zech.3:ff.).

In imagistic and symbolic language, the polysemy of woman images conveyed through the complicated and interconnecting circular equations of womb - tomb - fountain - maternal breast - water symbolism redeemed and re-created in Christ, bespeaks an intimate union of ultimacy which finds itself in front of the transcendent love and supreme holiness of God.³⁵ Union with water as a feminine image represents a holy marriage (*hier gamos*). The archetypal images of descent into darkness, night and tomb (death) solitude, as expressed in baptismal descent, represent the reality of one's existential vulnerability in front of The Other. The experience of the shadow in front of uncontrollable psychic power, such as a self-same or contrasexual power conveys, corresponds to and mediates the religious reality of the soul in God's doublesided

34. The lectures were held in Ottawa on Sept.21 & 22, 1990.

35. Beirnaert, "La dimension mythique," p.281.

presence. This is the numinosity of The Holy which is both terrifying and fascinating. Perhaps this may help to explain Leda's fear of and attraction to Rose Aaron, if the latter in some small way represented numinous energy to her. Recall that Leda could see the black-haired man in Rose Aaron's family, and see the love connection between them long before Rose Aaron ever said anything about Jesus. The descent of the Spirit in a dove-like form³⁶ truly expresses the energizing love of God which falls upon a person in such existential circumstances. This was Rose Aaron's repeated experience during all the darkness, pain, and failures of the middle passages with Leda. Love descended on her over and over again, and made the darkness tolerable. Such archetypal imagery is not simply the relation of woman relative to man which is rendered in sexual imagery, though loving bodily sexual union is the nearest and most powerful metaphor to express the humanizing union of powerful opposites.

The creative and productive conjunctions of opposites portrayed by man and woman reflects the coupling of the spiritual principles of Logos and Eros in fruitful relationship. Logos is "the principle of order, the ground of meaning, the source of divine purpose,...the lure for feeling, the eternal urge of desire, the divine Eros."³⁷ Though man and woman are visible opposites, the importance of this imagery communicates

36. Lk.3:22. In the context of a master cultural evangelizer like Luke, note that the dove, as well as being a symbol of the Holy Spirit, is also a symbol sacred to Venus-Aphrodite, goddess of love. This should help us to think twice about the doublesided meaning of love in this baptismal context.

37. Nelson, *Between Two Gardens*, p. 30, quoting John B. Cobb, Jr., *Christ in a Pluralist Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975), p.71.

invisible qualities rather than gender. Thus the ordering and meaning-making purposefulness of Logos principles and qualities are dynamically balanced by the power of Eros expressed in meaning-making relationships with people, events and objects. Logos gives direction and Eros makes connection. Jung calls Eros "the great binder and loosener"³⁸ of meaningful and significant relationships, especially with people. Eros in this sense is relational rather than sexual per se. The hunger for wholeness of relationship relates and connects principles to people in humane ways which empower the process of becoming, and guide meaning into intelligent order not chaos.

In speaking of the dynamic qualities of logos ordering and purposing marked by eros passion and desire, and a driving hunger for God's embodied wholeness, James Nelson challenges the limits of a classical theology that "assumed that God was immutable and changeless, that God could only give but not receive, that God could only cause effects but could not be affected."³⁹ Such views are hardly in accord with the passion of God in the Old Testament, expressed, for instance, through prophetic poetry. In the section on Resurrection of the Body: Incarnation and Our Sexuality,⁴⁰ Nelson suggest four new horizons of possibility open to dynamic and intimate reconsideration: 1. Our body experience might express God's hunger; 2. Our body experience might express God's language; 3. Our body experience might express God's interrelatedness with all else; 4. Our body experience might express the

38. C.G. Jung, "Women in Europe," in *Aspects of the Feminine*, par.255.

39. Nelson, *Between Two Gardens*, p.31.

40. Ibid, pp.29 ff.

divine pleasure. Much to our human detriment, Nelson comments that Christian theology and piety "has lost touch with the pleasure-giving and pleasure-receiving God."⁴¹ An incarnational reminder that "The WORD became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn.1:14) is also expressed in prayer book language: "It was God's pleasure to take on our human flesh." Relationships spelled with sexuality and spirituality metaphors produce energy for meaningful communication and an appetite for wholeness which is part and parcel of our human heritage.

Leda's hunger and thirst may be understood as a union of spiritual and sexual metaphors embodied and expressed in literal and symbolic ways. Once again, though it is important to move away from a simplistic and literalistic interpretation and enactment which is embodied and personified in the energizing metaphors of sexual references. This requires a move toward a revitalized symbolic understanding of sexuality dynamics. If we remember the dynamic interplay between divine god-images and human self-images, as mentioned by Doug Meeks earlier, then we may well find a healthy respect for the power of their mutual reciprocity, and destructive or creative numinosity. The pleasure of meaningful relationships and genuine social intercourse is a vital one, when we begin to permit, feel and understand the genuine pleasure that God has in us as human beings. "Love God in the World of the Flesh; And at your marriage all its occasions shall dance for joy."⁴²

41. Ibid, p.37.

42. Ibid, p.38, quoting the Christmas oratorio by W.H. Auden, "For the Time Being" in *Collected Poems*, ed. Edward Mendelson (New York: Random House, 1976), p.308.

From the thresholds of a woman's viewpoint, the renewal of the Christ image as a figure of healthy masculine virility is distinctly possible and helpful, both for men and women. However, for women reflecting on the needs and issues of men and women, the lack of healthy, sexually active and embodied woman images intimately and lovingly connected with deity, means a displaced turn to pagan and pornographic idol-making, the ultimate heteronomy. This dangerous and poisonous turn is a doublesided one. From a woman's side, the beloved men in her life have no where to go for wholesome images of embodied, sexual womanliness linked with deity. This is also true of women themselves in need of wholesome godly-womanly paradigms and metaphors of healthy and embodied sexuality and spirituality. The yearning for union, communion and intimate knowing must not be denied, but hunger and thirst, like other drives, need to be rightfully exercised and disciplined to express agape love.

From this vantage point too, it is valuable to reflect on the woman-to-woman intimacy of Leda and Rose Aaron. For the sake of discretion, their conversations about men, sex, and certain bawdy references have not been disclosed here. Yet Leda violently and forcefully corrected Rose Aaron during their middle passages by saying one day, "My need is physical, in the body, not metaphysical" and "I miss sex." These remarks were set in the context of a life after death opening to reconsider life before death, now, in the body-self. Part of Rose Aaron's sacramental mimesis of the Raven's healing hands to comfort Leda, on their 22nd visit, was connected with the intimate 'distance therapy' healing of damaged sexuality. Intimate distance can be powerfully redemptive for those, who, through abusive circumstances, are

very wounded in their bodily gender identity. There is, in my view sufficient scriptural room and warrant for re-imaging womanly god-images but that requires and invites an overall symbolic re-education process. More remains to be said and done about a return to the ancient biways of covenant sexuality, but certainly Beirnaert's exposition of the early Christian understanding of New Adam and New Eve sets out a new relational horizon within the context of the Lucan precedent waiting to be further explored and navigated.

J. A New Evangelistic Opportunity

Depth evangelization of the sexuality-spirituality metaphors, images, and issues are essential in the face of the non-pejorative image of pagan or secular woman arising from the archetypal depths of the poetic unconscious. Cultural evidence aplenty shows that this emerging consciousness of woman manifests a distinct tendency to fall into a matriarchal power trap and vacuum. Just look at poster billboards and workshop ads for eloquent examples of the search for a satisfying relationships, bodiliness, womanhood, intimacy. Alas, this could be the disastrous re-enactment of its patriarchal counterpoint, for 'hell hath no fury like a woman scorned'. The very positive and redemptive side of rising woman consciousness comes in the context of the liberation and exodus movement out of a death space and into a promised life space. This 'out of-into' language is a covenantal form to express God's salvific activity.⁴³ The emerging growth and development of re-imaged, re-inherited, and reinstated womanhood is a precious, exciting and

43. See Vogels, *God's Universal Covenant*, p.2

adventurous opportunity for partnering evangelization. But, no doubt, there is a great deal of suspicion, fear, guilt, mistrust, and even terror associated with this critical and timely mission task. Indeed, women and men equally require their respective and redemptive counterparts. Garment exchanges enact the redemptive return to sacramentally restored Shekinah/Spirit and her revitalizing associations with the feminine side of God. She empowers unconventional and nonconformist light-glory-dwell-rest images, and simply redresses the missing balance on the scales of justice and mercy. To be drawn to, to be found under, and covered with the wings of the Shekinah/Spirit is the empowering mission privilege of all who long for spiritual rest and peace in the depths of human nature. In this light, it is a source of awed amazement that the poetically constructed phrase *the brooding presence of the stranger waiting in the wings* could have been be a linguistic vehicle to express and carry a symbolic reality dimly perceived and felt in the beginning but fundamentally unknown at the conscious outset of this story. The discovery and recovery of depth evangelization precedents is certainly a gift to new orientations and opportunities for the mediating mission and sideways position of dialogue with other people of "faith", religious and secular.

Without the active and participatory depth evangelization of the mythic dimension of the archetypes, especially when carried in contrasexual imagery, Christian ritual and reference completely loses its healing and wholesome efficacy for the sleeping "pagan" in each of us. Resurgent paganism reflects the loss of effective saving power carried by Christian symbols and rites, and represents the desperate human search for numinous and luminous peacekeeping alternatives.

Humans cannot tolerate too much darkness and unrest in their depths. Christians need to learn *how* to efficaciously address the unconscious depths of naturally religious persons.⁴⁴ This present text is one response to the invitation of making the joint *what* and *how* connections of regarding this subject matter. These connections are birthed and berthed in the creative and imaginative space intimately and lovingly partnered by myth and history. Jesus Christ joint connection networks are made for the sake of a new orientation in the sharing of good news and glad tidings of peace mission with an accessible God.

As I have endeavoured to show time and again in Leda's material, the holy God of historical and symbolical reality discloses a holy presence and holy patterns, themes, and referential relationships in the most surprising places and ways. But it is not to be confused with the binaries of the sacred and profane. Fractal images put paid to binary blinkers, for God may well take the spectacularly unpredictable path⁴⁵ of forked lightning. The time may come for a direct green light harvest offering of reactivated historical Christian symbols, but this may involve harvesting the significance of what we did not sow/sew. In any case, photoknit pictures record that the first and longest preparatory tasks of depth evangelization involve reactivating and re-expressing a

44. Beirnaert, "La dimension mythique," p.285. He notes that Jung was well acquainted with the remarkable correspondence between the 1st century Christian symbols and the same psychic structure which depth psychology detected in modern people. Leda's story also confirms this finding.

45. For evidence of God's unpredictable nature, see William Doty, "An Interpretation: Parable of the Weeds and the Wheat," *Interpretation* 25 (1971): 185-193; also, Vogels, "The Unpredictable Vineyard-Owner (Is.5, 1-7)," *Science et Esprit* 31 (3, 1979): 367-371; also C. Westermann, "The Role of Lament in the Theology of the Old Testament," esp. pp.37 & 38.

person's already existing reality. Such ways can point out the other less obvious lines and relationships in their environmental pictures and life-texts. Such facilitation helps them to get their own meaning-making pictures. This activity is the real partnering groundwork that involves one in being conscious of God's already existing presence in, and purposes for that specific situation. For Leda in exile, the first and last word was "Comfort, comfort my Leda."

K. Baptismal Chorus

Baptismal imagery carries a staggering host of braided ring allusions to be found in ordinary cultural material and phenomena, as the fire and water illustrations in this chapter and the garment images in the previous chapter have shown. The plaits of allusive fire imagery which are connected with the water baptism are rich in significant detail, especially when connected with being baptized in Spirit. In the last chapter, Second Cup Inculturation, closer attention will be paid to the contextual allusions which braid water and fire together. Here, however, the one point to be underscored and highlighted concerns the absolute need to integrate cultural and Christian material, via Luke's and the early Christian communities' precedents for depth evangelization. These early examples of precedent show conclusively that cultural and Christian reference materials were not in opposition to one another. Rather, they were complementary companions, each with a separate and distinctive identity. The product of this partnership, and its subsequent referential modality can be expressed by the numerical cosmic joke that $1 + 1 = 3$, or $2 + 2 = 5$. That is, the whole is greater than the sum of its individual parts.

Waiting until being clothed with power (Lk.24:49), waiting for the promised gift of Holy Spirit baptism (Acts 1:4, 5), the sound of a mighty breath of wind arriving (2:3), tongues of fire (2:4), native tongues (2:6, 8, 11), outpourings of spiritual refreshment for parched Jews and Gentiles alike (2:17, 18, 33), glad hearts and joyful tongues (2:26) - all these phrases give voice to a braided multivocal chorus of harmonic reference and cross reference. The poetic picture language of exuberant praise as found in Ps.104, for instance, is another figurative way of describing the events of Acts 2.

Most especially are the sound associations in Luke's context for justifying and explaining the good news mission of witnesses sent to the Gentiles (Acts 28:28). "God's salvation [literally, Jesus' name] has been sent to the Gentiles and they will listen." These concluding words of Paul's follow his messianic rebuke to callused and calloused ears, eyes, and hearts (Acts 28:26 & 27, Is.6:9 & 10). The implicit and explicit proviso which Luke has taken great pains to communicate, is that the Gentiles should see (Lk.2:31, 32) and hear in their own languages and mother-tongues, and understand the good news of Jesus crucified and resurrected. Then they will turn and return, and be healed, made whole and healthy through the same resurrecting power which raised Jesus from the dead.

The mission vocation which Rose Aaron exercised in companioning partnership with Leda was really a trial-and-error induction into the experience of depth evangelization. Better yet, it is the evidence of an initiating trial by error, and trial by water and fire. The mediating power of images and symbols at work and play in the situation, however, does conclusively show the dynamic power of symbolic

communication to creatively direct and inform event-interpretations with enough light for one's particular darkness. The amplifying and verifying reference materials and discoveries of this chapter clarify an important point. The legacy⁴⁶ inherent in the side by side paradigm of companionship, though unknown at the time, was that of a superabundant gift exchange of expansive proportions.

In light of the trust invested in this inherent fountain legacy of concealed lessons in depth evangelization, the next chapter will consider some applications of investment in an alternative mission ministry intended to complement the reorienting task of praxis being so ably voiced by others. The prophetic task and ministry of a sideways mission entrusted to specifically Canadian hands and voices of fire invites a new perspective on the old issue which is the main premise of this paper. The braided ring quest is truly the quest to account for the mysteriously veiled reality of God's opaque and transparent trinitarian manifestations in the existing world. The complementary alternatives to be offered are best heard and seen to follow in the poetically inspired context of Psalm 104:1-4 with a cross reference to Heb.1:7:

46. See Nevil Shute, *The Legacy* or same story entitled *A Town Like Alice*, (No bibliographic details are available). The story involves a man crucified for helping some beleaguered women prisoners of war. After the war, one woman inherits a small legacy, and invests it in various woman-related projects. She learns that the man is alive, and eventually they are reunited. Her most involved investment projects are concerned with attracting to and keeping women in the sparsely populated outback of Australia.

Bless the LORD, O my soul!
O LORD my God, thou are very
great!
Thou art clothed with honor and
majesty,
who coverest thyself with light as
with a garment,
who hast stretched out the heavens
like a tent,
who hast laid the beams of thy
chambers on the waters,
who makest the clouds thy chariot,
who ridest on the wings of the
wind,
who makest the winds thy messengers,
fire and flame thy ministers.

Whatever we inherit from the fortunate
We have taken from the defeated
What they had to leave us - a symbol:
A symbol perfected in death.
And all shall be well and
All manner of thing shall be well
By the purification of the motive
In the ground of our beseeching.

T.S. Eliot

CHAPTER 6

PROPHETIC MINISTRY: THE MODEST AND ELEMENTAL TASK

A. Introduction to Glad Tidings

"The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."¹ The placement of this covenantal and vocational life sentence animates the sponsoring introductions breathed into the poetic-prophetic task to be testified and recorded in this chapter. The task involves clarifying an undercover secret service covenant mission on behalf of and at the behest of the Holy Spirit. This mission is jointly connected to the braided ring quest and questions and the main premise of this thesis. The questions raised by Christ's opaqueness and hopefully, by his revealing transparency, are best raised within a context of vocation. Answers...! Well, that's another question altogether! However, having struggled and wrestled² at

1. Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, p.31, quoting Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking: A Theological ABC* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973, p.95).

2. Wrestling is not a very ladylike occupation, I admit, though as a child I was a bit of a tomboy! Be that as it may, see Etan Levine,

length with the issue of why Christ's presence is often concealed and disguised, this chapter will consider a provisional response to address this issue.

Dreamwork³ and play, and the resulting polysemic and isotopical sensitivity to triaxial communication, is my place of deep gladness. Over a period of years, it has proved to be the extensive training and fishing ground of linguistically based *poiesis*. To be gifted with an irreducible experience of *poiesis* which is embodied equally in dreams and waking reality, and as was most especially and intensely manifested in companionship with Leda, is "to be present to the ontology that is hidden in words."⁴ Dreams are an art form of ordinary yet universally living language, one place where the being and doing of the Living Word of God dwells richly in and among the lives of all people, bar none. Making sense of the links between dreaming and waking life, and correctly translating and interpreting their significance and application to daily living is the vitalizing challenge that is 'new every morning'.

"The Wrestling-Belt Legacy in the New Testament," *New Testament Studies* 28 (1982): 560-564. This article contains many helpful insights and cross references to literal belt-wrestling and its metaphorical significance.

3. For a thoroughly scholarly and refreshingly well documented approach to the value and purpose of dreams from a Christian perspective, see Morton Kelsey, *God, Dreams, and Revelation*, (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Publishing House, 1974), known originally as *Dreams: The Dark Speech of the Spirit*, 1968. This work goes a long way in addressing the suspicions of occultism shared by many Christians. It also deals extensively with dreams, visions, and prophetic speaking as found in the Bible. For a more concisely edited approach, see Morton Kelsey, *Dreams: A Way to Listen to God*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1978).
4. Crossan, "Parables and the Temporality of the Kingdom," in *In Parables*, p.11.

Isotopic wordplays and word-picture-plays are the love and joy of my life, comparable to Freeman Patterson's photography for the joy of it. Such word and picture plays also composed an important element in the life of Jerry Pitts, though perhaps he's better known as the prophet Jeremiah!⁵ The greatest, perhaps most childish, and certainly most favoured of all my inner poetic joys are the redemptive and healing gift-games of transapparency. The first type are hide-and-seek games of mystery and intrigue, spies and adventure, and undercover detective work. The second are the catch-me-if-you-can tag games that try to catch the God-glimpses that lift the veils, masks and disguises of otherness that strangely plot the transformative encounters with God's numinous presence and purposes. Transapparency is a deliberately provocative term, for without respectful, conscious poetic work-play, the less obvious but truer horizons of life remain hidden, waiting and needing to be teased out. Though a symbol may have an unequivocal meaning, exploring the opposites is an adventure and inner pilgrimage into the unknown every time energy and opportunity beckon. Trickster

5. See the sound-alike wordplays of Hebrew in the 'almond tree' and 'watching' in Jer.1:11 & 12, see also the almond reference in Num.17 for a similar thematic situation; 'jar' and 'ruin' in Jer.19:1, 10, cross referenced to the picture of broken pottery in Jer.25:34; 'burden' and 'oracle' in Jer.23:33-40, and with intriguing cross reference clues in Mt.11:28-30 linked back again to Jer.6:16. Word-picture-plays are seen with the linen belt in Jer.13:1-11; at the potter's house in Jer.18; two baskets of figs in Jer.24:ff. and an intriguing withered fig tree mention in Jer.8:13, with cross references in Mt.21:18, Mk.11:12, 12:25, Lk.6:44, 21:29-31, and again in Is.38:21; the yoke incidents in Jer.27 & 28, and a cross-reference to Jer.2:20, and again to Mt.11:29, 30; and the boiling pot poured out in Jer.1:13 & 14. This latter one is an unexpected referential reason to ponder more deeply Leda's A,B,C,X,Y,Z boiling pot seen in Chapter 1. This extensive network of references occasions a great deal of deep and imaginative thought and feeling regarding the Bible as living word.

reversals and expansions of the obvious can really turn situations and perspectives upside down, or right side up, as the case may be, mixing laughter and tears in a cocktail of cosmic refreshment for the most weary and jaded palates.

Transapparency games are also knitting games; they knit-me-together in healing and wholesome ways that respect both inner child and adult, and all my other composing pairs of opposites. Literal knitting is an ancient evolutionary art, deriving from words for 'net' or 'weave', and its fabric is called the 'web'. In my inner books, knitting = healing because its entwining links and interconnections form an intricate wholeness. The process of healing involves restoration, repair, or return to health, thus to be healthy is to be whole, complete, full, containing all the necessary components of wellbeing. Metaliteral knitting is not so much an activity as an inner place-of-being, without fear and with loving relationship. Language games are a place of unifying many diverse strands in an overall pattern brought together and embodied in the love of Christ (Eph.4:16; Col.2:2, 19, RSV).⁶ Dreamknits provide integrative waking and sleeping life parameters (1Thes.5:10). Glad tidings dream 'places' and the opening 'hunger' reference points to Egyptian-type 'supermarkets' and recall Joseph, the Old Testament dreamer-interpreter cum entrepreneur.

6. Vine, *Expository Dictionary*, s.v. knit. The Greek word, *sumbibazo*, means to knit together, unite, cause to coalesce, and is also translated as 'conclude' in Acts 16:10, 'instruct' in Acts 19:33, 1Cor.2:16, and 'prove' in Acts 9:22. This latter reference is especially interesting and informative for Paul is 'knitting together' Jesus as the Christ, the anointed and expected messiah.

B. Space Probes and Braided Ring Covenant

"Covenant," claims Walter Brueggemann, "is the dominant metaphor for biblical faith by which human personality can be understood....It is a way of perceiving....discerning and articulating reality."⁷ The initiative-response of two I-Thou subjects in the covenantal metaphor⁸ is based on the premise that "human persons are grounded in an Another who initiates personhood and who stays bound to persons in loyal ways for their well-being....Covenant is the deep and pervasive affirmation that our lives in all aspects depend upon our relatedness to this other One who retains initiative in our lives (sovereignty) and who wills more good for us than we do for ourselves (graciousness)."⁹ The paradigm of

7. Brueggemann, "Covenanting as Human Vocation", p.115. Through metaphorical usage the author proposes it as a "radical and subversive metaphor" to provide a creative alternative to "personal autonomy psychologies...and non-covenantal religions" (p.129). He draws on some aspects of literal covenant-making between the divine (Yahweh) and the human community (Israel) as originally elucidated in biblical sources. However, he creatively expands its literal and technical sense to link and explicate the joint development of an anthropological and theological paradigm of the integrated personhood of body, mind, and spirit.

8. See Appendix 3 for a brief summary of the salient features of the initiative-response model of the metaphor of covenant. Taken in this creative light, the covenant model is very similar, in my evaluation and judgment, to the Self-ego, unconscious-conscious, axis of dialogue and partnership found in Jung's analytical psychology. The double value of Jung's and the covenantal paradigm of human personality is that they give an intelligible account of the numinous experience of a power that takes ahold of a person. Such a power is felt as coming from beyond oneself and brings an alteration in one's conscious attitude. The resulting religious attitude gives due respect, careful consideration, and loyalty and trust to the numinous event and life-altering experience. Paul on the Damascus road illustrates one such numinous and luminous, life-changing encounter. For further discussion, see Jung, *Religion and Psychology*, (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1938); also in CW 11.

9. Brueggemann, "Covenanting as Human Vocation," p.116.

covenant, metaphorically transposed to human personality, and transmitted across great spatial and temporal distances, serves to answer some otherwise inexplicable observations, equivalent to the literal braided rings of Saturn. In listening to the thematic patterns in people's dreams and in their normal, waking use of descriptive language, the abundant and freely given benefits and blessings of life-giving and space-making themes are powerfully at work and play in the lives of people everywhere. Careful attention to this thematic level is one place where opaque-turned-transparent disclosure of Christ's hidden presence and operational purposes is manifest. The themes often express themselves in unconventional and nonreligious language. The great value hidden in these freely transmitted but sometimes inexplicable pictures presents Christians with a fresh and challenging opportunity to move beyond the obvious (battle) lines of a split, us-them mentality that has so characterized and defaced the inheritance of Christian mission history. These space probe pictures invite us to think, feel and more deeply imagine the alterity of God-horizons. Though the term *braided ring quest* was used initially in the Introduction to give an overall focusing framework for this thesis, its simplicity and clarity are the result of a long, long process of concentration and distillation. The experience of witnessing God's active and loving initiatives freely and anonymously embodied in the life-giving and space-making blessings and benefits invested in the world, and in human nature, is a wonder to behold, even if not fully understood!

Recall that the body is the place of meeting and communicating with God, and Leda's comments about her physical, not metaphysical, needs. She is but one of many spiritually hungry and thirsty people who

manifest this fundamental covenant pattern of loyal, gracious and initiating relationship, albeit operating on an unconscious level. The potentially enlarging reality of divine-human relationship cannot be artificially contained and keeps breaking through the limits set by ego consciousness. In other words, the breakthrough power of the apparent enemy is the friend in disguise.

In its most supple and inclusive sense, God's dynamic calling may be termed a vocation which confers not only identity (name), but even more importantly, a purpose in living (vocation). It confers a more compendious network for setting a person's purpose or mission (freely given service), and a place/stance in the world. It is important to appreciate that vocation is not simply one's profession or job, but primarily focuses on the purpose of one's life. The covenantal graciousness of God's vocational invitation is just that, an R.S.V.P. invitation and not an exacting blueprint. However, we must heed the reality that may reveal an invitation-turned-summons to account.

Recall that the primary meaning of *faith* and *faithful* has to do with *actions* of trust, loyalty, allegiance and confidence, not primarily with belief as intellectual assent.¹⁰ This distinction is an important one in the biblical tradition. It has a direct bearing on the understanding of salvation/liberation as acts of space-making deliverance and release, before it emphasizes ontological change and transformation. Thus, in two-way relationships of initiative and response, human and divine, there is a healing and redemptive space for "unbelievers" to function more wholly without being oppressively cramped

10. For a discussion of the difference between faith and belief, see Fowler, "Faith, Religion and Belief", ch.2, in *Stages of Faith*.

by traditionally defined conventions of who and what are in and out of favour and fashion in the kingdom. The metaphor of covenant relationality with an Other helps to affirm the middle ground of integrity between the conventional and traditional delineations of sacred and profane boundaries. The positive antithesis of the conventional religious view of the blind-man-healed in Jn.9:31, can be expressed thus: "We know that God does listen to sinners. He listens to the ungodly man who does not do his will." Just imagine!

The middle ground of integrity betwixt and between the opposites says that $1 + 1 = 3$ or $2 + 2 = 5$. Beyond the binary horizons of conventional and laudable religious perspectives, there are common and uncommon rhythms of undreamed relationship with God, rhythms that come with healing in their wings. Careful conscious attention to repeating patterns - of sound, colour, theme, key words, time and/or space juxtapositions, visual and auditory tones, movements, events, etc. - all these are analogues to explain the rhythmic patterns of images and symbols that echo and resonate to the tune of covenant relationality. Creative and conscious attention to this already existing patterns and themes of reality in people's lives and circumstances bring a very different horizon to Christian mission.

C. Messengers and Ministers

The winging annunciation of a strange and brooding new horizon line expands an ancient message of universal covenant redressed in contemporary terms. Glad tidings point decisively in the direction of God's unstinting grace and favour, most especially for social outcasts, outlaws, scapegoats, exiles, and other disabled, handicapped and

disinherited 'sinners'. This is the painful lesson which confronted Rose Aaron time and again in Leda's situation. From the time of the garment exchange onward, the superabundant images of God's bountiful love and favour shining upon Leda, inspite of her raging and conflicted fearfulness, reinforced the practical lessons on unmerited grace. Painful and piercing exactly describe this beheld reality of God's superabundance which put the squeeze on Rose Aaron. She found herself trapped and snared between a rock and a hard place by all the traditionally obvious lines about how religious conversion is supposed to work. God's living word in Leda's case cauterized the wounded us-them defensive splits of banal religiosity. God's word challenged the idolatry of implicitly practiced modes of earned righteousness (being made right with God) and sanctification (being made holy like God). Winning or earning God's favour by law-legal means is absolutely out of the question.

Thus 'winged and flaming messengers and ministers' (Ps.104:4) are to be heard, seen and understood in liminal space terms, as "messengers betwixt-and-between Absolute and Relative reality."¹¹ The liberated intellect and bodily energy of all such messengers introduce or reintroduce important and revitalizing outside messages and pictures

11. Turner, "Passages, Margins, and Poverty," p.411. In cultural initiation liminality and its associated death-new life contexts and symbolism, the appearance of animal masks, bird plumage and other such "natural" materials worn by human figures is meant to signify and reveal two human traits. These are liberated intellect and bodily energy represented by animal disguises and gestures, that is, human wisdom and instinctual animal vitality. Any combination of animal/bird and human figures, such as angels, or the centaur Cheiron, may be understood in this light. The union of Leda and the swan well represents the middle ground of human life fertilized and empowered by both the energies of nature and of spirit. Ponder also Ezekiel's "living creatures", Ez.1.

into the existing social structure. The braided ring covenant is a betwixt-and-between message in picture form that invites a return to the "archaic but not obsolete"¹² understanding of the covenant of human and divine relationship which is free from paralyzing and crippling fear. Free love casts out fear. Victor Turner wisely notes that the value of all those things "hallowed by antiquity", as is covenantal relationship, has nothing to do with their age. Rather, antique language, rituals, actions, and concepts "are metaphors for something most precious to all 'modernities'.... They represent the chalice in which truth is conveyed."¹³ The development of the triple hair-heir-hare wordplay with Leda involved a lengthy discussion about inherited antiques and their true value! Braided ring covenantal relationship with God is the recovery of an inexplicably precious truth about God's grace and unmerited favour. Thus the *Second Cup Theme* of this thesis is meant to be a way of containing an ancient Christic-cultural truth in modern poetic-prophetic language, by giving shape and significance to its revitalizing power.

Dream-awake reality is one satisfying place where joy and hunger meet. Thus it is from within and from without this covenantal context of dealing with an already existing reality that an amplifying type of prophetic ministry relating to images and symbols can be understood. From within and from without this vocational context of *transapparency* games, the main premise of this paper now moves from the wings onto the main stage. In the symbiotic exchange of mutually transformative

12. Ibid, p.391.

13. Ibid, pp.391-392.

dialogue, the mediating mission and sideways position of images and symbols in context, enables the universal trinitarian blessings, benefits, and bounty of Christ's opaque and concealed presence and purposes in the world, to reveal and manifest God's truth and reality in increasing transparency.

The gradual unveiling of the layers of meaning concealed and revealed in this premise need to be seen in the context of a prophetic vocation as will be clarified shortly. My use of the word *prophetic* comes from the context of Rev.12:17 and 19:10, about the ministry and fellow-service of all those who *hold* to the testimony about Jesus, especially in face of all the stormy passages of existential living. As well, the many intriguing cross references between Jesus in the Gospels and my beloved friend and mentor, Jerry Pitts, as well as other Old Testament types, have occasioned many lessons and pondering reflections on the use of poetic and imagistic language to express spiritual and symbolic truth. In getting beyond and behind the all-too-familiar 'weeping', 'wailing', 'lamenting' front lines of Jerry's face,¹⁴ the backside of his message has one essential and important, and even scandalous component. The message has timely relevance which is foundational for Leda's situation, for the practice of covenant

14. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, p. 62. Jeremiah is considered as "the boldest and most inventive of all the prophets of hope." This refreshing alternative is footnoted to two other authors. See Thomas Raitt, *A Theology of Hope*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977); also John Bright, *Jeremiah*, Anchor Bible 21 (Garden City, N.Y.:Doubleday, 1965); for Jeremiah's use of language, see also James Muilenburg, "The Terminology of Adversity," in *Translating and Understanding the Old Testament*, ed. H.F. Frank & W.L. Reed, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970).

relationality, and for a voiced Canadian dream of peaceful sideways mission.

Sideways companionship with Leda was the intense initiation into a type of alternate prophetic ministry. Language is the only tool, or weapon, depending on one's perspective, at the prophet's disposal, so an alternative prophetic consciousness is lyrical and poetic. Its imaginative power is meant to evoke hope-filled new meanings and new connections from the existing material of a reality which is all too familiar. Freeman Patterson's sideways approach to photography visually illustrates this linguistic point. Poetic imagination uses the familiar to take us, not only to the unfamiliar but to the unknown, the uncatchable, the unimaginable alterities dwelling in the symbolic and spiritual realm of access to God. In this sense the prophet is not simply a poet, but uses the poetic function of language to create and construct a new, imaginable, and redefined alternative reality which is inhabitable.

In this inhabitable light of old-new connections, Jesus as prophetic poet and parable-maker, rather than teacher,¹⁵ manifests tremendous referential depths for detecting and discerning the meaning of the kingdom-common wealth come in and among people. The designation, *kingdom of God*, is primarily a linguistic image and symbol, or a verbal icon, to express God's presence in a characteristically Jewish form of referential and deferential language. It is couched in geographical terms because the literal, historical contexts of reference for Jesus' listeners were deeply embedded in the promises and issues of land and

15. See Crossan, "Parable and Example in the Teachings of Jesus", *Semeia* 1 (1974): 63-104, for remarks about Jesus as poet not teacher.

all the longings which David's kingdom first represented.¹⁶ But as Jesus reiterated, his kingdom is not of this visible world. (Lk.17:20, 21; Jn.18:36)

Invisible kingdom and invisible king make for a good deal of intrigue, mystery and undercover investigation and detection work. This is the quest for the missing and split God-references found in ordinary, daily living. Kingdom parables communicate "a fantastic that remains a fantastic of the everyday, without the supernatural, as it appears in fairy tales or myths. The extraordinary in the ordinary, that is what baffles one and leads one to ask, Why is this story told?"¹⁷ Leda's overall story illustrates the "fantastic of the everyday" and the "extraordinary in the ordinary," thereby energizing and motivating the 'why' search. Thus the imaginative prophetic ministry of discerning and detecting God's presence involves following the leading clues and evidence that trail between the boundaries of the visible and invisible, the physical and the spiritual. As we know, the split boundaries of an already existing reality are very portable and suspiciously supple and expansive in their and our parameters.

In the next section, the detection process of concentrating meaning will be reviewed, and then the three modest and elemental components of prophetic ministry. Following that, three complementary sideways alternatives evolving from the three elementary prophetic tasks elucidated by Walter Brueggemann will be given. These complementary

16. See Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise and Challenge in Biblical Faith*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977).

17. Ricoeur, "The "Kingdom" in the Parables of Jesus," *Anglican Theological Review* 63 (1981): 165-169, p.167.

alternatives emphasize the 'both-and' option, not an 'either-or' choice between opposites. The union of opposites is not mutual annihilation of each side but rather their reconciliation.¹⁸

D. Secret Service Detective Mission

The process of discerning and detecting the hidden trinitarian presence of God involves analyzing both the component parts and the gaps in a given situation. As in dreamwork and play, distilling, extracting and concentrating the significant references, implicit and explicit, yields an economical, shorthand expression or image which reflects the essence and theme of the subject matter. The essence of this whole thesis is contained in the image and icon of the *Second Cup*. The essence of photoknit pictures is expressed in the questionable issue of access to God, and fleetingly expressed in the poetic and linguistic image of *the brooding presence of the stranger waiting in the wings*. The language of photographic images, of art, of love, all these are referential ways of experiencing and communicating meaning in verbal, gestural and symbolical forms which speak with and without words. So the detecting process often requires 99% perspiration and 1% inspiration, but the 99:1 ratio says everything of value about the essence breathed into existential living. That one kiss of life is the pure and elemental gift that animates all living. The sweetness of life-

18. In speaking of this union of opposites, Jung, "A Psychological Approach to the Trinity," *Psychology and Western Religion*, par.278, (also in CW 11), notes that a reconciling symbol "points to the exact opposite of annihilation, since it ascribes to the product of their union either everlasting duration, that is to say incorruptibility and adamant stability, or supreme and inexhaustible efficacy."

breathing spirit blown into all the hints and clues is like the 'aha!' of insight and understanding, the 'click!' of a door opening upon new vistas of meaning and reference, the opening that may transform the bitterest and most poisonous cup into a blessing. In homeopathic medicine, poison cures.¹⁹ Such moments of insight are experienced as a gift - a revelation given to one. As with all forms of spiritual enlightenment, the light and door of understanding can never, but never, be taken by force and violence.

Whether regarded as "privileged revelation"²⁰ or "humble revelation",²¹ an enlightened understanding that hears, sees, tastes, touches, smells and partakes in the fresh connections between the familiar and the unknown, is the gift of life, a most gracious 'given', not a 'snatch and grab'. In the distilling and concentrating process of trying to trace the missing God-referential quest in the lives of modern people, a good detective develops a nose for unobvious leads and hints, and unfamiliar clues. But always a good detective, like a good translator-interpreter, and like a photographer, "must struggle to keep his own preconceptions from obscuring the truth."²² A sufficiently relevant meaning occurs when various apparently unconnected hints and clues begin to fall into place. How exciting when the puzzling pieces

19. This is not such a surprising statement if one understands that all forms of chemotherapy for cancer patients are basically varying doses of poisons. Some such treatments are not without their side effects, however.

20. See Eugene Lapointe, "Christian Revelation Versus Other Religions and Human Culture," in *Portare Cristo all' Uomo*, vol 1, (Roma: Urbaniana University Press, 1985: 635-648.)

21. See Maritain, *Creative Intuition in Art and Poetry*, p.115.

22. Patterson, *Photography for the Joy of It*, p.10.

start to fit together! Those working in the fifth column and underground railway of the spirit's life service know that facilitating passenger transfers involve the making of joint connections, however distant, with the conscious and/or unconscious intentions and centres of passenger cooperation and communication. Understanding may be generously poured into a receptive container, taking on its contours and shape, but it cannot be forced into a mold (Eph.1:18, 19).

'Abstracting' the relevant thematic evidence is, in this context, a positive way of describing the distilling and concentrating detection process. However, in current parlance the words 'abstract' and 'abstraction' have suffered from bad public relations and bear an extremely tarnished and negative image. Abstract, in this unworkable and unrecognizable state, carries a sense of onesidedness and theoretical isolation which lives a separate and independent life in the head, a head which isn't grounded in the body, and is unrelated to the reasons of the heart. Whereas any substantial linguistic processes are distinctly relational, as meaning and significance lives only by the vitality of its networking and cross-referencing connections between cognition, affection and will. However, a practical example from the field of textile design may serve to redeem the meaning and use of the abstract concept which isn't opposed to the concrete.

Kaffe Fassett, the British textile designer, in a lavishly coloured and breathtakingly beautiful book,²³ discusses the sources of his inspiration as applied to textile design. Three examples of the same flower are given. One is a real arrangement of flowers, the second is a

23. Kaffe Fassett, *Kaffe Fassett at the V & A: Needlepoint and Knitting*, (London: Century, 1988.)

painted china teacup with the same flower pattern, and the third is a canvas needlepoint design of the flowers. Of the latter two, he says that "working from painted flowers on china or stitched ones in embroidery is easier (than trying to paint the multilayered complexity of real flowers), because (the latter two) have already been *abstracted* and simplified."²⁴ Here dynamic abstracting moves in a very helpful direction, into the selective ordering of detail which is careful and purposeful in preserving the essential expression of the original material.

Real life experience is full of multilayered and interactively connected complexity which needs to be dynamically ordered and preserved through a parts-whole frame of reference. Although Leda's 'flowery' material is very rich and complex, its essential core is simplicity itself, fresh and free access to God, mediated by images and symbols. Thus each of the photoknit pictures manifests a small carefully selected portion which has a common rhythm with the larger contextual dynamics of her whole picture. Regarding the universality of this whole-parts dialectic, "an end to history would be required to ascertain the true meaning of any event or text within history."²⁵ Death is certainly the end of one's personal history. In Leda's case history, the truth and reality of God's presence is mediated by the full circle of events and

24. Ibid, p.114. Italics are mine.

25. Peters, "Truth in History: Gadamer's Hermeneutics and Pannenberg's Apologetic Method", p.54. The context is a discussion whereby Pannenberg links historical consciousness with his expanding context of meaning which is connected with the universality implicit in historical awareness. It is this point which bridges secular and Christian understanding of truth via the common ground of reality's movable horizons.

preunderstood hermeneutics fed back into her final and closing historical context.

Thus the parts-whole processes of universal gathering, re-ordering, and condensing her fragmented stories, are also a move away from isolating abstracts. A reductive attitude and abstracting process, in its negative sense, so reduces, diminishes and dominates its subject matter as to remove and destroy the recognizable essence of its material meaning. By contrast, common household examples, of yeast or malt extract, fruit liqueurs, various cooking oils, tomato paste, soap, perfume, also illustrate an essence to be found in a concentrated and distilled but substantial, rather than abstract form.²⁶ The kind of simplifying and abstracting techniques used by textile designers like Kaffe Fassett, and also photographers like Freeman Patterson,²⁷ are a form of detecting and recognizing the basic ingredients in a design or pattern, and transposing their essence from one medium to another. But at the same time, the shift is made in such a way as to preserve the essential sense of expression and the recognizable tone and shape of the original. Thus an understanding of the metaphor of covenant to express the essence of human spirituality and the dynamics of growth, development and conversion, give a recognizable yet dynamic simplicity to existential themes.

26. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p.123, s.v. form. *Morphe*, form "is properly the nature or essence, not in the abstract, but as actually subsisting in the individual, and retained as long as the individual exists."

27. Patterson, *The Art of Seeing*, pp.61-64, in the section on "Abstracting and Selecting."

There is no magic key to the mission of secret service detection. The process must always pass through particular permeable boundaries and stages that extract and concentrate meaning into a condensed thematic and referential form. However, familiarity with certain basic ingredients and outlines patterns and motifs may speed up the mission time spent in the apparent maze of details. This is why familiarity with universal mythological and archetypal patterns are valuable cross-referencing indices.

E. The Modest and Elemental Task

"The task of prophetic ministry," according to Walter Brueggemann's hypothesis, "is to nurture, nourish, and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us."²⁸ The lyrical spirit of the prophetic tradition and task offers and shapes an alternative reality in accord with the findings of an undercover mission. Three facets of the prophet's "quite elemental and modest task",²⁹ are to be especially exercised in cases of severe denial and numbness. The first facet of the prophet's elemental and modest task involves the offering of historically reactivated symbols which are adequate to the original

28. W. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, p.13; for the task of poetic ministry and alternative consciousness applied to T.S. Eliot, see G.H. Bantock, *T.S. Eliot and Education*, (New York: Random House, 1969) p.13 ff. The focal point of poetic consciousness captures the feeling of a society long before its experiences can be conceptualized and expresses medium and message in juxtaposed images. For instance, *The Waste Land*, written in 1922, prophetically expresses the modern "illusion of being disillusioned" (p.17).

29. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, p.49.

experience of numbing horror. This is not the invention but the reactivation of ancient symbols "that have always been vehicles for redemptive honesty."³⁰ The second facet is that of giving an evocative public expression, through the language of metaphor, to the fear and terror of a long denied reality that desperately longs to be shared and owned but is not permitted by individual and collective society's vested interests. Such "real talk"³¹ is the sacramental offering and sharing of God's passionate perspective on the situation. The third facet is to speak with passion and candour in a concrete but metaphorical form about the hovering and gnawing deathliness of ego-sufficiency ("royal consciousness") separated from God, and as represented by the royal garden narrative of Genesis 2-3.

The photoknit pictures of dialogue between Leda and Rose Aaron indicate that these three tasks were operating on the implicit level of principled practice, though without being spelled out in the clear conceptual language just used. Perhaps if Rose Aaron had clearly known and understood just how modest and elemental these tasks were, she would never have volunteered for the sideways companionship task! This is one very good reason for living in the dark, for otherwise there is no doubt she would have refused this undercover mission outright, through sheer terror. Reluctant Jonahs are very poor messengers. Additionally, if the vocational task of ministering to Leda had been presented in the

30. Ibid, p.49.

31. Mary Belenky et al., *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind*, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1986), pp.144-146. The authors distinguish between real talk as a constructive reciprocity of listening and speaking, and didactic talk which is dominating and non-participatory.

clear conceptual terms given above, they would have had no meaning. A contextual frame of experience and subsequently clear precedents were not within Rose Aaron's existing conscious horizons at that time. Her existing storage bin images were personally tried and true reference points and analogies, but being very subjective ones, they weren't fit for public scrutiny. Long and sustained wrestling with the triaxial interconnects concealed in photoknit pictures eventually yielded their buried treasure. They revealed the blessing and benefits of a homecoming welcome to the conceptual tools of depth evangelization and covenantal relationality, and to a reoriented sideways approach to mission. Hindsight is only as valuable as the original experience.

F. Religious Scandal

An alternative sideways response to the first facet of prophetic ministry, that of offering reactivated historical symbols, begins without an offering of anything, save a receptive sensitivity and unassuming approach. Nothing is offered but a listening ear, careful observation and exercising discernment which sift the clues for the signs and sounds of Christ's veiled presence and purposes in the already existing material situation. This counters the gross disrespect of car bumper Christianity: "Jesus is the answer. What's your question?"³² Active listening is based on the elementary principle of building up and preserving, not destroying, what's already there. This productive

32. This example is quoted by Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p.7, quoting Judith Guest, *Ordinary People*, (New York: Viking Press, 1976.), p.5.

principle of the cultural biblical mandate that informs all faith in action, is stated very clearly by Egbert Schuurman.

Within the twofold harmonious calling - to build and to preserve, to dress and to keep, to progress and to conserve - man, the image-bearer of God, is called to a twofold service of love. In building and at the same time preserving creation, he both confirms his love towards the creator and redeemer and at the same time lovingly represents all creation. This means, among other things, that man is responsible for the unfolding of the meaning of creation in dressing and keeping it, and at the same time that he must resist every attempt to disturb, disintegrate, and destroy this meaning....Guided by the right motive, man in cultural activity can be a blessing for nature (1Kings 4:33-34) and at the same time enter into an open way toward the future.³³

The covenant paradigm of initiative-response supports the positive and constructive orientation of this cultural and vocational mandate. However, many people, including Christians, are exceedingly disturbed and starved by the stale platitudes and practices of institutionalized churchianity. And those in secular exile from stale and unpalatable religious conventions and language are, nevertheless, spiritually hungry and in danger of disintegration. As Leda's history records only too well, unsubstantiated and unjustified "red hot promises" are a terrorizing and demonic curse on human nature. Thus, the covenantal paradigm and the retrieved precedents of depth evangelization provide a fundamental and sound reason for feeding a person with their own mediating material, albeit amplified and transfigured in its meaning. In the famine, plague, and sword context of an existing siege and

33. Egbert Schuurman, "A Christian Philosophical Perspective on Technology," in *Theology and Technology*, ed. Carl Mitchum and Jim Grote, (New York: University Press of America, 1984), p.117.

battle, Jeremiah had a scandalous and unbelievable message from the Lord to the people. Surrender voluntarily to the enemy, go into exile, you will be safeguarded (Jer.21:8 & 9; 24:5; 38:17 ff.). God urged a type of protective captivity which was the deity's shocking alternative to the religious-political establishment who had turned away from the ancient paths of genuine covenant relationship. God's covenant promise of restored fortunes, release, healing, security, peace, compassion and return from protective captivity, is the one ironclad guarantee in that siege context (Jer.24:7; 30:3; 32:37-33:26). God not only sent them into exile, the Shekinah-Spirit, suitably dressed for the occasion, also accompanied the exiled remnants of God's people. Most specifically, the true people of God were those who willingly surrendered to their enemy and were thus preserved. True, many changes faced them but the essence of their covenantal relationship with God was purified and deepened as a result of living among strangers.

Jeremiah's valuable comments about good figs and exiles (Jer.24:5 ff.) yield an orienting line of reference applicable to other kinds of exiles. His message is especially helpful in the context of the dying, literal and metaphorical, who are exiled to the margins of life. Whatever else she was, Leda was a 'good fig' with a heart to know the Lord (Jer.24:7). God's historically reactivated promise is sufficient reassurance for the vocational front lines which conceal behind-the-scene (seen!) activities. This kind of 'front' has nothing to do with battle lines!

The reality attendant on any human response to God's calling, even a calling into voluntary and prudent exile, and into 'enemy' hands, inevitably involves an existence riddled with conflict. For "we are

always in tension with our vocation, wanting it another way or not at all."³⁴ Even when we are willingly yoked in a well-fitting and comfortable filial harness, the way is often potholed and strewn with obstacles, things not of our making and beyond our power to control or circumvent. God's abiding covenantal promise "is not equilibrium but faithfulness...[which is] flowing, surging, and moving.... Faithfulness...is not certitude, but precariousness."³⁵ The metaphor of covenantal relationship is realistic in its assessment of the oft-precarious patterns of existential life.

A vocational calling knits together the place of one's deep gladness and the world's hunger. Daniel and Esther are but two examples of people living in a 'secular' exile who nevertheless had important and timely contributions to make. They 'fed' their respective situations with timely and trustworthy counsel. There is a surrender to the secular, to the other, to the enemy-stranger which is not a betrayal of faith. It is simply the historical reactivation and revisioning application of Jeremiah's scandalous message.

G. The Name of the Game

In the second prophetic task of giving public expression to denied reality through metaphors, one needs to carefully discern God's passionate perspective on the situation. "The evocation of an alternative reality consists at least in part in the battle for language and the legitimization of a new rhetoric....It means nothing to recite

34. Brueggemann, "Covenanting As A Human Vocation", p.126.

35. Ibid.

[the prophet's] radical poetry unless we are clear about the *battle* for definition of reality which always lies close to the realities of power."³⁶ Alas, even Brueggemann for all the creative freshness of his imaginative insights about the prophetic tradition, treads the habitually crusading line of warfare. Notwithstanding the waste land girth of biblical battle imagery, many people are battle weary and seek genuine rest and refreshment. Remember that when Leda left her Battle St. appointment with new "rose-coloured" glasses, she saw a sumptuous medieval banquet. The ancient clarion call of Isaiah and Micah suggest a contemporary alternative and transfiguring approach to war by beating swords into ploughs and spears into pruning tools (Is.2:4; Mic.4:3). Food for hungry people is the name of the game. Remember Band-Aid music, "feed the world, let them know that we still care." As well as food and drink, give people the tools, plough, fishing lines, etc., to feed themselves and permit them the dignity of their own meaningful and productive work.

Game describes my essential approach to images and symbols. Thus *transapparency* language games, rather than a battle for rhetoric, is a strong prompter for these lines, as was mentioned earlier. The overall ambience of game imagery introduces a certain lighthearted levity into the business of living. It contains the notion of play, fun (derived from fond), frivolous activity, surprise, curiosity, undivided attention, wonderment. Yet fun and games also mark the serious sense of absorption or concentration in the moment and in the object or subject of one's focal interest. As such it is actively receptive to whatever

36. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, pp. 16 & 74, respectively. Italics are mine.

is. This characteristic marks the playfulness of children, and their "ability to bow before the mysteries of life."³⁷ Children have that particular capacity to lose themselves in a certain immediacy without danger or the permanent loss of an exiled and homeless self. Childlike attentiveness promotes intensive learning opportunities which link personal contact with a sense of being in the world. Jesus' approval and encouragement of the child motif is strengthened by appreciating that "playing is the key to being childlike without being childish."³⁸ Though operating on differing scales for children and adults, it is true that learning requires personal experiences which precede intellectual understanding. Even babies can distinguish green and red without having a word or concept for colour.

In normal circumstances, the learning of genuine playfulness may be equated with a carefree and trusting attitude which confidently expects adults to shoulder the responsibilities and burdens commensurate with adulthood. However, a childlike capacity to trust may be permanently wounded by being "weighed down by fears about the future or tormented by events of the past...[and where abusive] circumstances have forced them to carry adult burdens prematurely."³⁹ Companionship with dying people certainly teaches one about the guilt and unexpressed grief of prematurely overburdened. Genuine childlike playfulness is a centring activity which is counter to the overburdening distractions of a

37. Sr. Margaret Magdalen, *Jesus - Man of Prayer*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1987), p.22.

38. Leonard J. Biallas, *Myths, gods, heroes, saviours*, (Mystic, CA.: Twenty-Third Publications, 1986), p.201.

39. Magdalen, *Jesus - Man of Prayer*, p.23.

fragmenting and permanently restless work ethic. Frenetic activity splits and disperses the core of the person's capacity for meaningful connections with objects, other subjects, and self. In the lives of many people, stale and limp religious language and practice no longer has the focal energy to gather and recollect their parts into meaningful images, concepts, feelings, and actions of wholeness. The collapse of meaningful language does not, of course, mean the end of religious experience, but only the inability to articulate its significance. Leda's extended swan-song was a turnaround to her spiritual muteness.

Language games and poetic work-play with images and symbols, especially through attention to dreams, is one way of recollecting and regathering oneself. Dreaming about religious images and symbols brings their external expression into one's inwardly experienced life in ways which need unconscious-conscious integration. The dialogical interaction between dreaming and waking reality models the covenantal metaphor of initiative-response relationality. Numinous dreams or other powerful and enlightening waking experiences can especially become the opening of a person's awareness to the reality of their inner but neglected or impoverished spiritual domain. Spiritual hunger and thirst are enforcing the westward trek toward interiority, and would greatly benefit from the company of specifically enlightening and responsive Christian voices, principles and practices.

Joint Connection Networking is a game developed to enable people to learn how to work-play with images and symbols. It is based on the principle of helping people to help themselves wherever possible. Its unfolding development grew from a waking dream occurring on the eve and at the dawn of Canada's birthday in 1986. The name of Joint Connection

was offered as a playful epigram of Heb.4:12. "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Jesus Christ is the ultimate and incisive joint connector. This epigram was accompanied by a poetic image of small cell groups able and willing to provide genuine friend-stranger/enemy exchanges of open doors hospitality between Christians, other religions and secular people. These small cells would function as invisible links and form a chain of hospitality and 'safe' houses all across Canada. Then in October 1989, following a series of dreams about a high up jet-setting executive, I dream-met a jet black-haired, dynamic 'Med' man,⁴⁰ a real Latin-lover type in his early fifties,⁴¹ who was dressed in a very expensive and hand-tailored suit. He was the chief executive in some large multinational corporation, and very technologically minded. He was involved in international affairs, banking, telecommunications (i.e. contact over long distances in time and space) and computer hookups. He suggested 'Networking' as a deliciously polysemic umbrella term to describe his business affairs. Consider a few of the diverse opportunities for triaxial networks: transfer and thread/punch lace, crystal lattices, computers, spider's webs, expandable string shopping bags, telecommunications, fishing nets, theatre stages, electrical circuits. The Med man was also interested in

40. This name is taken from an article by Bruce Malina, "Christ and Time: Swiss or Mediterranean," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 51 (1, 1989): 1-31.

41. See Guido Maertens, "Ethical Aspects of Modern Technology," in *Personalist Morals*, ed. Jos. Selling, (Leuven: University Press, 1988), p.234, "A proverb says that, at fifty, one is responsible for one's own face."

art investment.⁴² Now as I write more than a year later, there is an accompanying return of more fulsome discovery and revelation to signify who he was, and is, and will be! A recent sighting in Eph.2:10 (JB) amplifies the Med man's interest in art. "We are God's work of art,"⁴³ created in Christ Jesus to live the good life as from the beginning he had meant us to live it." The art of living the good life is important to a great many people, inside and outside the walls of the church.

One of the values of learning a game such as JCN is that it enables people to both penetrate the disguises and be receptive to the revelations that cloak Christ's hidden presence and purposes, the opaque-turned-transparent. Such activity facilitates the restoration and recovery of childlike and covenantal trust, and maturing mutuality of relationship with the power and incarnate mystery residing in one's own inner kingdom. Thus a poetic-prophetic move from battle gloom and doom to life-giving games of joint connection with God's networking presence and purposes for all human life is good news worth sharing.

H. The Voice of the Other Side

The third facet of the prophetic task concerns the deathliness motif of autonomous ego-sufficiency and royal consciousness. The implications of the healing liberation of the "image of God male and

42. Art is a speech of hope; art is a homecoming to the true love story of divine-human reconciliation; artesian wells; liberal arts; human lives as works of art (Niebuhr); to love is such an art that I need your help to start; the art of re-creating ourselves as a leisure time ethic; arts of the imagination; Artemis lives, Pallas Athene lives, Brunhilde is not dead.

43. "Work of art" = workmanship, *poiema* in Greek, from *poieo*, to do, make, create, from which *poiesis* comes.

female" as found, for instance, in the work of Phyllis Tribble⁴⁴ means that it is needful to heed a female perspective and voice which complements its male counterparts. In commenting on the differences in female consciousness regarding sin⁴⁵ (as a Christian term) or moral transgression⁴⁶ (as a secular term), numbers of women are pointing to their experiences as an inversion of that voiced so powerfully by dominant male spokesmen. Inversion is a key word for describing prophetic-poetic activity, as Brueggemann well recognizes. "Inversions are not easy, not without cost, and never neat and clear. But we ought not underestimate the power of the poet. Inversions may begin in a change of language, a redefined perceptual field, or an altered

44. Tribble, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, Italics are mine. For a helpful review of Tribble's work, see Gene Tucker, "Tribble's Rhetoric: A Review Article," *Andover Newton Quarterly* 19 (4, 1979): 225-230.

45. The seminal article, written more than 20 yrs. ago, seems to be that of Valerie Saiving Goldstein, "The Human Situation: A Feminine Viewpoint," in *The Nature of Man in Theological and Psychological Perspective*, ed. S. Doninger, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), pp.151-170. Also in *Woman-Spirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion*, ed. Carol Christ & Judith Plaskow, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979), pp.25-42; Goldstein's article is referred to by Jean & Wallace Clift, *The Hero Journey in Dreams*, p.33; Kathleen Fischer, *Women At The Well: Feminist Perspectives on Spiritual Direction*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1988), p.8; Ann Ulanov, *Receiving Woman*, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981), p.134.

46. In the area of moral and cognitive developmental research, the differences in response between males and females, and the apparent moral superiority and maturity of males is a paradigmatic presupposition built into the survey methodology. Presuppositions and one-sided interpretations are the concern of Belenky et al., *Women's Ways of Knowing*; this concern is also shared by Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982); for a commentary on Gilligan, see J. Fowler, *Becoming Adult, Becoming Christian*, pp.37-46.

consciousness."⁴⁷ A redefinition, redescription or conscious alteration through language suggests that sin or moral failure may also consist of 'ego-insufficiency' and 'unroyal consciousness'. To honour the image of God male and female, and the return to less fearful interaction with the deity does acknowledge the structure and need for ego transformation. In terms of the cultural mandate noted by Schuurman earlier, ego consciousness as much as anything else, should not be unduly and wantonly disturbed or destroyed. *Yes!* to the change and transformation of consciousness (the renewing of the mind of Rom.12:2), often preceded by a natural process which feels like dying. However metaphoric and symbolic in expression, the experience is profoundly real, and may come as a blessed relief to old and outworn attitudes. Death then becomes a friend to be welcomed and entertained for the gift of new life brought to bear on the situation. Such participatory allusions, however, must be qualified by the universal resurrection or new life motifs that accompany such experiences. *Yes!* to ego death, *No!* to ego murder. For it is ego conscious that has its rightly exercised and disciplined part to play in living and dying affirmations of faith and trust in God's goodness. Growth and transformation remain a principle motif for both 'sides', and thereby has a certain mutuality to its exchange. But the starting points and the contents of men's and women's journeys toward greater wholeness seem to be quite different. Precedents still exist for an inn-sufficient room to stable the scandals of otherness that house God's little unconventional and nonconforming indiscretions.

47. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, p.75.

An imaginative re-think and re-feel of Phil.2:6 ff. (see also Mt.20:28, Is.42:1) might focus on a less obvious line than the ideology of service *per se*. Too much weight on the servant motif may simply be the automatic pendulum's swing from the dominating master to the dominating servant side. As Caroline Walker Bynum has pointed out in discussing and critiquing the symmetrical reversal motif of social role and status in a liminal context, "it is the powerful who express imitation of Christ as (voluntary) poverty, (voluntary) nudity, and (voluntary) weakness. But the involuntary poor express their *imitatio Christi* not as wealth and exploitation but as struggle."⁴⁸ The contemporary struggle, I suggest, is one which honours both the servant-master relationship and at the same time is prepared to be more open, expansive and receptive to other nuances of a kenotic vocation. Beware of the Martha syndrome; its down side is very wearisome to servant and served alike, but its up side is a very different story of the first tidings of resurrection news (Jn.11:17 ff.). In any case, the context of a true vocational calling, reminds us that we are no longer to be called servants, but friends of God (Jn.15:13-15). Trinitarian space-making for otherness is one of God's mimetical prerogatives.

48. Bynum, "Women's Stories, Women's Symbols: A Critique of Victor Turner's Theory of Liminality", p.109. In the context, the author is pointing to the challenge of liberation theology which offers corrective images of struggle rather than those of reversal or elevation. Her point, in a reflection on some of the weaknesses in Victor Turner's theory of liminality, is refreshing. Many women, having passed through liminal transition and transformation, find themselves continuing on much the same lines, rather than being in complete reversals. Thus for instance, a woman doesn't become a man in a man's world, but retains her femininity, though enhanced by the liminal integration of her contrasexual qualities.

The Greek word *morphe*, form, as it applies to this famous passage in scripture, can be well understood in light of the earlier discussion of abstract and essence. The antithesis of *form of God* and *form of servant* is connected by its essential nature subsisting in the form of an individual named Jesus. That is to say, the essentially unobtrusive form and nature of a servant's activity is non-invasive, non-threatening and non-dominating. The best and most able servants are just to hand, at one's elbows or fingertips when needed, but otherwise unobtrusive, invisible and out of sight. "God waits on his creatures in his 'costly love'."⁴⁹ I respectfully suggest an attention shift onto a less obvious and unobtrusive service line focus. In such an unglorified light may shine a servant's anonymity and true identity questions. Be open and opened, to the prospect of being served. Jesus washed the feet of his disciples.

In the form of a servant, Christ is able to freely move in and among the ordinary people without paralyzing them with fear or awe. The guilty and the oppressed innocent alike are often very fearful and full of dread. Jesus dealt gently and generously with all those conventionally defined 'sinners' and classified outcasts. They weren't afraid nor threatened nor condemned by him. Imagine a God who freely feeds all the Judas' of this world, and seeks nothing in return. From a sideways vantage point, the larger perspective is not law-breaking *per se* but the *fear* which hides itself, and will not trust in God's bounty. Time and again, God's lament over his beloved people, voiced and enacted by various prophets, is not that they sinned, but that they would not

49. Meeks, "The "Crucified God" and the Power of Liberation," p.38.

turn and return to the ancient covenanted way of relationship and be comforted (Is.45:22). More than that, the ancient prophets, including Jesus, had indicting things to say in God's name about the ungodly religious leaders who obstructed the ordinary people (Is.9:14-16; Jer.10:21).

The obvious theological line on original sin and law-breaking needs the rest and refreshment of a new perspective. Jubilee is the name of Jesus' game. Without denying or minimizing the deadening reality of human sin, expressed in theological terms as 'the fall' and 'original sin', Jesus' scandalous prophetic and messianic message unreservedly proclaims an extended horizon of God's favour and benefit on human wellbeing (Is.61:1, 2; Lk.4:18, 19). It piercingly penetrates all the religious and ethical sensibilities and preconditions of that day and this. In every case, a naturally and dynamically motivated change of heart and mind occurs following, and not preceding a living encounter with Jesus. This message and lesson is important for Christians, and especially missionaries, to learn by heart. Being called and disciplined to be (networking) fishers of men and women requires that one learn to cast fear out of the human picture and story, and draw in the blessings, benefits, and bounty of God's love and compassion for human wellbeing.

However, like it or not, the historical, cultural, and religious impress of theological 'red hot promises' regarding 'original sin' are indelibly stamped on the Western psyche. Two reorienting considerations need to be born in mind. The false absolutism of Genesis garden texts derives from a decontextualized and ahistoricized rendering of their meaning. The political development of David's monarchy, and his relations with Bathsheba form part of the contextual background to the

Yahwist's interpretive textual records. A better educational awareness of scribal bias and the historical-political scene is beneficial. Then a more comprehensive contextual reinterpretation can be made without rewriting their timeless significance and appropriate reapplication.

Secondly, and most importantly in my view, the curse language and images associated with 'original sin' and the idea of *inherited* existential guilt must be redressed. Fundamentally, the cursing of human nature, as found in theological parlance, continues to enact the tribalism of collective guilt and pursuant vengeance which has its origins in antiquity. "This family curse [originated] in a time when individual responsibility for crimes and wrongs did not yet exist."⁵⁰ The very ancient Greek myth of Tantalus discloses this tribal attitude clearly. As perpetual punishment for his *hybris*,⁵¹ he was condemned to a twofold retribution. While alive, a rock was permanently suspended over his head, always about ready to fall, i.e. the perpetual threat of doom. In Hades, he was condemned to eternally unsatisfied hunger and thirst. But, the real point of gross injustice, as we now understand it, is that his perpetual punishment was also inflicted on all the innocent members of his extended family. From thence come many stories of Greek tragedy. The tribal notion of unending vengeance operating in

50. Meyer Reinhold, *Past and Present*, (Toronto: Hakkart, 1972), p.266.

51. Ibid. *Hybris* = scorn of the gods, involving lack of respect, dishonour, inattention, arrogance. This is not quite the same as a conventional understanding of *hybris* as pride, and does give a different flavour to human-divine relationship. Pride as a sense of pleasure, satisfaction, esteem, achievement, worth and value can signify a 'sober estimate' of one's human abilities and qualities. This doesn't have to discount the human-divine relationship, but actually may invest it with greater exchange value.

this myth manifests a classic collective attitude about group guilt, punishment and a pursuant generational curse that is still in evidence.

The new covenant promised by Jeremiah and Jesus is an utterly radical and complete break with the notion of pursuant tribal, collective, and generationally inherited guilt. Be clear that the issue is not sin and guilt but the unconscious tribalism and continuing curse language. The cross of Christ challenges the tribal attitude that continues to curse human nature. As with Leda, the grossly unjust and iniquitous burden of this curse dooms and condemns people to a perpetual death space, where it's "always winter and never Christmas".⁵² That institutionalized curse is an oppressive and enslaving regime under which many modern people groan in 'Egyptian' despair and heartbreak. Though repudiated in theory, the explanation for death via originally inherited guilt remains a cultural and theological impress and plague of epidemic proportions. This tribalistic inheritance is the source of the 'inborn theological attraction to death'. Its transformation requires a life-orienting passage of initiation such as faced Hans Castorp, the commonfolk hero in Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*. Modern people rightly reject and deny a murderous theological death at the hands of original sin. The reality of sin and moral trespass is not to be denied, but the tribal perpetuation of 'original sin' needs to be laid to rest. Alas, this gross tribalism is one which many Christians voice and project in their battles with human nature and especially epitomized by the 'enemy' labels pasted on humanism and secularism. Make friends

52. This phrase is used to describe the wicked spell cast on the land of Narnia. See C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe*, (Middlesex, England: Puffin Books, [1950] 1959), p.23.

with the enemy-stranger; enact the ancient code of hospitality extended to the enemy-guest. Human and secular otherness are to be welcomed as a Godly prophetic judgment on institutionalized 'me-cramp' Christianity.

Jesus himself offered a daringly secular alternative to the established and perverse priestly-Temple, mediating consciousness of his own day. Sinners have access to God because the deity lives among their very secularity without fear of contamination. Recall that one of Jesus' names is Emmanuel, God-with-us. One of the best gifts that Christianity could well offer is a turnaround on the ego-deathliness of their own inherited attitudes. God in Christ supremely values human nature, not because it is worthless, but imminently worthy and precious in the first non-tribal place.

The *kenosis* motif shows God's costly service to human powerlessness in a refreshing context of empowering love. "God's *kenosis* is grasped unequivocally as man's empowerment. Powerlessness in human beings and nature is the condition for knowing God."⁵³ In this sense, God's service is one of empowering the weakness and suffering of human beings. It is not simply the power to put up with passive and pathetic suffering. Rather it means the power to go the distance until the powerlessness is transformed into appropriately domesticated power and energy which can act with transfiguring conviction. In this, God's mercy is not aimed at our ultimate weakness, but expresses the paradox of weak vulnerability empowered with active, liberating and affective trust and trinitarian partnership. I would suggest that an important component of the problem of denying death, an attitude so prevalent in

53. Meeks, "The "Crucified God" and the Power of Liberation," p.33.

Western society, involves the widespread repudiation of the inherited curse on human nature. The law of a collective guilt inheritance, among other things, is nailed on the cross. Christians would do well to welcome and entertain the jubilee alterity involved in inculturating that message anew. This applies particularly to their linguistic, storytelling horizons that account for death. God's final and living Word gives life and makes space for animating new, human life-perspectives.

I. The Reason Why

"The most audacious and crucial (contemporary Christian) task", suggests Douglas Meeks, is the shift from *How?* questions about resurrection's possibility, necessity and meaningfulness, to *What?* and *Why?* questions that link suffering and exaltation, crucifixion and resurrection.⁵⁴ Namely: *Why* is God's essential form so unobtrusive? *What* essential form of activity links God and servant? *Why* did the resurrected and exalted one have to suffer and die as he did? *What* is the relationship of power and suffering? *Why* do we suffer? *Why?*⁵⁵

54. Ibid, p.36.

55. Ricoeur, "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation," p.37. In a pertinent 'why' question, about the difficulty of ego consciousness conceiving a "dependence without heteronomy", Ricoeur reflects on the imaginative addresses of an internalizing historical testimony, and concludes: "Is it not because we too often and too quickly think of a will that submits and not enough of an imagination that opens itself."

Given to *The Man Who Was Thursday*,⁵⁶ that anarchist-undercover detective co-opted into the secret service of lawful and graceful government, was the gift of asking *why* questions and uncovering (the real meaning of apocalypse) an answer that satisfied his "reason" as much as his "heart and soul".⁵⁷ Following a long chase that leads to an old garden, *Thursday*, along with his other day-named cohorts, become embroiled in a riveting dialogical lament with their fellow anarchist, *Sunday*. They complain about his many offences, his many disguises, and the not-so-merry chase on which he has led them. In response to their questions about his ape-like backside, identity and purpose, *Sunday* replies, "I am the Sabbath. I am the peace of God." This irreverent and inconsistent revelation about being the "ultimate reconciliation"⁵⁸ is too much to swallow and waves of protest engulf them. They complain, "If you were our father and our friend, why were you also our greatest enemy?...It seems so silly that you should have been on both sides and

56. G.K. Chesterton, *The Man Who Was Thursday*, (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, [1908] 1986). The book has an intriguing plot with a 'widdershins' trickster twist. The real anarchist, Lucian Gregory and the real undercover detective, Gabriel Syme, exchange the truths of their real identities, pledging themselves as men of honour, to secrecy. In a clever ruse, Syme forces an exchange of roles by getting himself elected to the position of *Thursday* on the Supreme Anarchists Council. It was his way of stopping Gregory from assuming that position. This is accomplished by the clever application of some inspired advice on disguises give by *Sunday*, the President of the Council, to Gregory and subsequently shared with Syme. The former, having tried and failed in various disguises, received the following recommendation on hiding himself. "You want a safe disguise [as an anarchist], do you? ...Why, then, dress up as an anarchist, you fool." (p.24)

57. *Ibid*, p.180.

58. *Ibid*.

fought yourself."⁵⁹ Then Gregory, the real anarchist/accuser arrives, cursing and accusing all the ruling 'days' for their guardianship of law and order, and their comfortable law-abiding position of power and safety, and unbroken naivety.

Springing up to face this accuser, *Thursday* suddenly sees the truth of the situation and poses his *why* questions about the valiant and lonely fight that each individual creature faces in fulfilling its own nature, and responding to a "commanding valour and unnatural virtue."⁶⁰ He concludes with the reason answered in his quest.

So that each thing that obeys law may have the glory and isolation of the anarchist. So that each man fighting for order may be as brave and good a man as the dynamiter. So that the real lie of Satan may be flung back in the face of this blasphemer, so that by tears and torture we may earn the right to say to this man, "You lie!" No agonies can be too great to buy the right to say to this accuser, "We also have suffered....We have been broken on the wheel....We have descended into hell....we have not been happy. I can answer for every one of the great guards of Law whom [Gregory] has accused. At least -'

He had turned his eyes so as to see suddenly the great face of Sunday, which wore a strange smile.

'Have you,' he cried in a dreadful voice, 'have you ever suffered?'

As he gazed, the great face grew to an awful size... filling the whole sky; then everything went black. Only in the blackness before it entirely destroyed his brain he seemed to hear a distant voice saying a commonplace text that he had heard somewhere, 'Can ye drink of the cup that I drink of?'⁶¹

Two questions emerge. Firstly, What is the connection between a bombing anarchist and a good man? The short and simple answer is that

59. Ibid.

60. Ibid, p.179.

61. Ibid, pp.182 & 183.

both have a code of honour and integrity that may well link them over opposite sides of the fence. Their actions and attitudes, however unconventional, are deeply motivated and sustained by certain guiding principles of integrity. A second excellent contemporary example of the honour code turned on its head is the novel *Jig*.⁶² The second emerging question is, "What are the contents of Sunday's baptismal cup?" The answer to the cup's contents will be dealt with in the concluding chapter. For the moment, it will be sufficient to look at a reason for the cup of suffering.

One reason for the cup of suffering is the transforming grace and empowering dignity given to human beings to fling back the lying accusations that the religious and spiritual life is cushy and safe, and protected. Whereas, covenantal promise only guarantees God's faithful presence and enlarging purpose in all the precarious ebbs and flows of real life, including one's own sins and those sins committed against one. The black-clad accuser, in the view of the Council of Days, was dressed in the same suit as the other blue-clad servants in Sunday's household.⁶³ This provides a clue to black and blue bruising and hot-

62. Campbell Armstrong, *Jig*, (London: Coronet Books, 1987). A troublesome counterterrorist police detective named Frank Pagan is assigned to track down an Irish hit man codenamed Jig the dancer. In their seedy world of violence, corruption, and backhanders of various kinds, these two world-weary men shine in a strange alliance of tremendous moral honour. Their gentlemanly code is a provocative and salutary contrast to the conventionally labelled "good guys" around them.

63. This motif of the accuser as a dark servant in God's household has been a provocative guide in my own spiritual journey. It is also an important trickster motif in dreams and myths. Thus after several years pondering and practicing with that motif, I recently learned that in the Eastern Orthodox Church, Satan the accuser is seen to be no more than a butler and footman in God's household. This

water steepings that humanity must endure. The power to suffer the historical oppression and evil that abides through existential time is not brute force but the gracious paradoxical power of being weak and vulnerable and knowing it. There is a strength which comes to those who can face and admit their brokenness and death-defying need for covenantal relationship. When we get to rock bottom, we find The Rock. "The power of the weak" is Victor Turner's way of describing those who have genuine religious power, as contrasted with the institutionalized jural-political "power of the strong."⁶⁴ God's strength is accomplished in weak and needy people. Not only that, the power to bear with suffering circumstances can challenge and repudiate the very heart of a 'victim mentality'. To be genuinely victimized, oppressed, abused, scapegoated, etc. is one thing, but to be strengthened in one's innocence in face of lying accusations is another. What we label weakness and powerlessness from the outside may actually be a very different kind of internal strength, grace and equanimity, able to accept the reality of unchanging circumstances. Companionship with dying people teaches this lesson repeatedly.

The mutuality of God's active initiative and a sufficiently faithful human response operate in corresponding parallels, creatively shifting one's perceived and conceived values, human and divine. By relating the mutual conditioning, enriching and transforming

information was given in a class lecture on *Death and Dying* given on 11 Oct.1990.

64. Turner, "Passages, Margins, and Poverty," p.395.

cohabitation of power and suffering, God in action is God in passion.⁶⁵ When human beings permit God to display both, that reflects well on their own partnered capacities to actively and passionately contain and transfigure their own suffering and power. Autonomously generated human consciousness values itself as the main speaker and player on life's stage. Covenant reorders that opinionated option, and lifts the veiled backdrop of mask and disguise on a wider and more creative dramatic scene. Covenantal dialogue does not destroy the human voice and onstage presence. On the contrary, a creative union disciplines human being in the exercise of more accurate and fulsome projections of voice and body language drama. This disciplined exercise responds to the stage position and vocational part that is called forth and prepared by the weakness and failure of sinners.

The passionate staying-power of God is to be found in the most unlikely places and on the most unlikely faces. "For instance, [it is] on the faces of those who remain in the crucifixion spots of the world. Such an image of this crucified power is the suffering Mother Love of the Father as reflected in the face of Mary....Persons who enter the process of liberation with suffering power become more passionately interested in the crucifixion spots because they find their own freedom reflected and promised therein."⁶⁶ Yes indeed! The bittersweet refreshment of looking the accuser in the face with the twofold

65. Meeks, "The "Crucified God" and the Power of Liberation," p.36. Also, "God is not pure act or simply the God who acts in resurrection. God is himself passion. Where there are acts (*opera*) of God there are also passions (*passiones*) of God" (pp.37 & 38). God sings in personal and collective history!

66. Ibid, p.38.

responses of "You're right!" and "You Lie!", according to particular and personal, not tribal, circumstances, cultivates an inner liberation script of immense value.

J. Courts of Perilous Paraklesis

"Perilous paraklesis" is the term used by Frank Lake⁶⁷ to describe the Holiness of the God as that predictable quality which is present to and alongside the broken, the oppressed, the imprisoned and the desperately needy. Holiness, is usually twisted into the very opposite of aloneness, often being used to delineate distance, unapproachability, immutability, etc. Whereas, being 'called alongside' to help a person involves an advocate role nuanced in a particular sense. The perilous aspect of being called and 'coming alongside' despair, desolation, darkness and the plagues of 'sickness unto death' is a reminder that such activity is costly. This is especially so when a person's moral equilibrium has been seriously disturbed by circumstances beyond their power to control. In a reflection based on I Tim.4:16, about the need to attend to oneself and to the truth to be taught, Lake notes the inextricable partnership of these two facets. "The care-giver must embody the truth he teaches. This is no academic pursuit. The man must be, in a root sense, an 'amateur'. He must love the truth he pursues for the good that it does him and deliverance it

67. Frank Lake, *Tight Corners in Pastoral Counselling*, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1981), p.77. Frank Lake was the founder of the Clinical Theology Association in Great Britain, an association concerned with the integration of psychology, theology and the holistic training of pastoral counsellors.

brings to others."⁶⁸ Mutuality of transforming experiences seem to be a key to the empowering language of the Holy Spirit in communicating the glad tidings that carry and tide us over the thresholds from death to life.

In light of the just and unjust accusations hurled at *Thursday*, there is a doublesided courtroom ministry operating in the following lines of reflection. The advocate "finds words for us when we cannot find words for ourselves to answer our own inner and outer accusers....He accepts the responsible task of keeping the defence moving until it 'rests' successfully against all the prosecution can do to destroy our self-esteem."⁶⁹ Some very important particularities of this advocacy role are most wholesomely filled by the Holy Spirit's mission of coming alongside a person. Most notably linked with matters of faith, "God is revealed in the person and passion of his Son as on our side, welcoming not blaming. He is alongside us whenever we fall or fail and are accused, justly or unjustly, of culpable failure. If he is there sustaining us when we have done wrong, he is all the more present when we feel that our very existence is a mistake. The role of the Holy Spirit...is not to draw attention to himself but to make this advocacy, representation and mediation of Christ, in the face of our accusers, a settled fact of our experience."⁷⁰

The beautiful wave line role which is part of the concentrating essence of the Holy Spirit is one of courtroom defence and refuge.

68. Ibid, p.79 & 80.

69. Ibid.

70. Ibid. Though Lake uses 'he' rather than 'she' in these references to the Holy Spirit, the spirit of his intent is clear.

Especially this means even the refuge from the mistakes and willful failures that plague our lives and environment. Imagine the kind of linguistic defence strategies required to protect us during the perils and dangers of being on trial and in fear for our lives. Given the eventual disclosure of Leda's prenatal environment, we may well appreciate the advocacy required to redress her own sense of a stricken and perhaps mistaken existence. To be given rest and a dwelling place, whether justly or unjustly deserved, is a mercy indeed for all those who are impoverished and oppressed, innocent and guilty alike.

The less obvious line, but equally important regarding the Holy Spirit's intimate advocacy, is the example she sets for us. Her teaching role gifts us with some important lessons on *how* to go about conducting our own rightful defence. As *Thursday* suddenly saw clearly, the purpose of pain and suffering in varying degrees is neither punishment oriented, nor to be stoically endured. Rather, by the grace and counsel of God, we learn to rightfully protect and guard our own innocence and sanctity from marauding attackers and invaders. "You lie!" The energizing conviction of such words are tremendously liberating. Of course, there is a rightful seriousness for appropriate and prudent protection from the foolhardy dangers of an 'inflated' sense of innocence and righteous indignation. But on the other hand, one of the valuable lessons to be learned and exercised in praxis is that of making friends with one's enemy or apparent enemy. This latter figure is especially important for an enemy disguise can actually turn out to be the most elaborate and laughable game of friendship. Pick up the 'you lie' gauntlet and accept its challenge. "You lie!" flung back into an adversary's face can be a moment of dissolving laughter, when the trickster turns tail and tale,

and reveals its transparent true-blue colours of friendship. Not all trials and tribulations need be demonically sinister, but rather critical and decisive moments for testing our mettle and training our eyes and ears for the far horizons. Trickster turnarounds are often the unexpected and surprising moments for an awesome transference that leaves one both laughing and crying with release.

Under the wings of the Holy Spirit's tutelage, life becomes a no-win and no-lose contest of strengthening one's partnership with reality. Of course, it is important to discern the real dangers and evils that lurk, without any discount of their reality. Cheap bargain defences are indefensible. But equally, the apparent battle fray may not be at all what we first perceive. Thus we gradually learn the supple grace of malleable and adaptable attitudes that are adaptable to circumstances, without the fear associated with loss and getting lost in life's complexities. Those who are at home with and in their body-selves have a greater and more dynamic capacity for change, being less susceptible to egoistic woes. Likewise is one's transformative capacity strengthened by the experience of being 'in love' with another, for then the drive for change and required movement is positively fueled.⁷¹ One of the benefits of bodily integrating sexuality and spirituality, is the Holy Spirit comfort and affirmation of being at home in one's own body-self, and at home with an increasing range of up, down, and around circumstances. The tolerance that comes with the raised guilt and pain thresholds via the Spirit's defence, and the lowered defensive

71. See Nelson, *Between Two Gardens*, p.14.

thresholds of joy, relaxation and zany humour, are gifts disciplined by running the gauntlet of death's and life's challenges.

K. Veils, Masks, Disguises

Why is *Sunday* veiled, masked, and disguised? Why the veiled sovereignty? Why is the spatial nearness of God's kingdom hidden? What is the relationship between judgment and mercy? Why the gap between "the coming of the kingdom veiled in the vulnerable and powerless Jesus and the coming of the kingdom in manifest power"?⁷² The dynamic simplicity which creatively orders the tension of these tearing questions is this. The veil, mask and disguise which darkly curtain God's hidden but accessible presence are the Holy Spirit garments of mercy, compassion and gentleness. See the torn veils and ragged vales of Mt.27:51, Mk.15:38, Lk.23:45; Heb.6;19, 20 & 10:19, 20. These garments clothe the hands that speak of healing, and all who dress the wounds of the injured, tend the sick, feed the hungry and thirsty, visit prisoners, support widows and orphans, and proclaim God's favour now and always.

In discussing the parables as vehicles of the Kingdom, particularly the leaven sufficient for three measures of flour (Mt. 13:33), Walter Kaspers provides some hints and clues to Christ's veiled presence. "What is mightiest is hidden and active in what is most humble. The Kingdom of God comes in obscurity and failure....It is hidden [not in

72. Together, the following two references give points to ponder, and help to clarify the issue of God's hidden presence in the world. See Lesslie Newbigin, "Christ, the Clue to History", ch.9, in *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing, 1989); also Mooren, "Theology at the Crossroads".

heaven as apocalypics mean but] here and now in the most ordinary events whose real significance no one can see."⁷³ This returns us to the faith reality of a sideways perspective on already existing material reality. One needs to be initiated into the real interpretive significance of the ordinary events of which human life is created and composed.

Another reason for Christ's opaqueness strangely reflects on the deity's self-controlling and fruitful quality of strength under control (meekness). The glimpses and flashes of unveiled glory are almost too much to bear. Too much reality, like too much electricity flowing through a circuit, can blow out all the fuses, or worse. A CHIT (cold heat induction transformer) is a safer method of charging human beings with much needed energy and genuine enthusiasm. Though the word contains a polysemic wordplay, it basically refers to an induction transformer coil which operates on indirect and oblique lines. The national power grid and the domestic supply of electricity produce a step-up and and step-down method of regulating the flow of energy through a transformer. These methodological steps are an important safeguard for one's personal domestic circuits.

In speaking of this energy transformer model, Robert Johnson distinguishes between the conduction model of hot air ego inflation and the legitimate induction of conscious enthusiasm (en-theo-ism, full of God) which is in close but indirect contact with God, or with unknown and unconscious contents manifesting themselves. "All transformers work on the principle of induction. Electricity of proper voltage goes through a coil and back out where it came from. Other coils, very close

73. Kaspers, *Jesus the Christ*, pp.75, 76.

by, get a indirect charge of energy excited by induction and take their energy off for their own household use - at a lower voltage, generally. But no energy from the first set ever enters directly into the second set."⁷⁴ This important distinction serves to differentiate types of energizing experiences by the results they produce in our lives. Thus the life-giving growth of the fruits of the Spirit in the short term and over time, is an important evaluative indication of testing the spirits which energize, vitalize, and motivate our existence.

The safe, controllable transformation of energy is likened to the myth of Semele, mother of Dionysius. "She was able to be impregnated by Zeus because he appeared to her transformed; she received the god by induction. In this way we can stand close to God...and be safe....[But] when Semele looked directly into the fiery face of Zeus, god of the thunderbolt, she was incinerated."⁷⁵ In this safely energizing light, it is important to note that Jacob wrestled with God during the darkness of the night. This would also account for the doublesided account of God's face and backside being revealed to Moses (Ex.33:11-23). As it was, after Moses had been in God's presence, he had to veil the unbearable radiance of his face from the people (Ex.34:29-35).

A final reason for God's hiddenness is located in the context of crucifixion and resurrection. Though both were historical events, the former was open to the public scrutiny, while the latter is made known only to the few witnesses of the hidden kingdom and king. The open and everlasting possibility of conversion and transformation is what

74. Robert Johnson, *Ecstasy: Understanding the Psychology of Joy*, (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1987), pp.49 & 50.

75. *Ibid*, p.50.

accounts for God's concealed presence and discretion. "The unveiling of the glory of God's kingdom in all its terrible majesty could leave no further room for the free acceptance in faith which Jesus called for. Only when that glory was veiled in the lowliness of the incarnation could it call out freely given repentance and faith."⁷⁶ God is not in the business of flaunting raw power but in serving and connecting us with each other, with our world, and with our God-images of transcendently ultimate value and power. God-images are induction transformers. They downstep the powerful voltage of the reality and truth of God's presence and purposes into a safe, domesticated form. God's hiddenness is our freedom from fear, advocated and mediated by the Holy Spirit who asks nothing for herself but points to her co-heir. Even within the folds of our own lives, God's hiddenness is our freedom of exercising and disciplining choice. God's hiddenness is the bridal freedom of unbridled response to the trinitarian networking lures and love catches of side by side, and face to face companionship and friendship. God's existential transapparency remains on this side of the grave, and what still waters, green pastures, and banquet tables remain here and beyond, is truly a mystery worth living for.

The mediating mission and sideways position of images and symbols gives practical reference points for discovering Christ's hidden presence and purposes. Language games often expose and reveal a trinitarian transparency hidden in words and word picture plays. The mutual transformation of learning to make friends with the enemy/accuser and offering hospitality to strangers is the unpredictable way in which

76. Newbiggin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, p.108.

God reveals life-giving and space-making experiences. These bring the unexpected and unanticipated benefits and blessings of mercy and grace to bear on many otherwise existentially conflicted situations. Often a change of interpretive position and perspective enables saving grace to reveal its comely form of advocacy and mediation. Images, symbols and symbolic communication give us tools and equipment for helping ourselves and, at the same time, enable us to become open to being given the Spirit's sideways help that mediates the Christian message into the depths of existence.

In the next chapter, some practical *theos-anthropos* applications of depth evangelization will be considered. The inborn theological attraction to death, rooted in the unjustifiable human family curse, benefits from the counterbalancing blessing of being addressed with life-giving and space-making themes of trustworthy renewal.

What can I say for you?
With what can I compare you,
O Daughter of Jerusalem?
To what can I liken you,
that I may comfort you,
O Virgin Daughter of Zion?
Your wound is as deep as the sea.
Who can heal you?

Lamentations 2:13

CHAPTER 7

COUPLING THEMES: RENEWING THE FACE OF THE EARTH

A. New Foundations

"A way must be found to make it possible to participate in the substance of the Christian message....To make faith possible, means placing symbolic truth on a new foundation - a foundation which appeals not only to sentiments, but to reason."¹ A renewed and mature foundation for an intelligibly and passionately reasoned account of symbolic truth, focused in and through Leda's images and symbols, has been a guiding concern of this thesis. Healing the split between the physical and the spiritual, body-soul and spirit, literal and symbolic, subject and object, man and woman, visible and invisible, these are also motivating concerns. Photoknit pictures and their ensuing explorations have sought to address these motivating concerns by knitting together the expressive triaxial parameters of literal, metaliteral and symbolic

1. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, CW 5, par.339, 336. Reason is holistically integrated thinking (Logos) and feeling (Eros) functions that conjoin head and heart in dynamically directive and connective-affective relationship.

reality. These ways knit together the meaning found in the strands of ordinary living experience coupled with Christ's Emmanuel story of God-with-us. Together, they facilitate the mutual sharing of, and transformational participation in, the Christian love story of free and easy access to God. Such unrestricted access to the inherent power of an informing inheritance and transforming love story is the greatest possible scandal and challenge to all the externalized laws of religious and social systems and the 'traditions of men'. It is undercover anarchy in the healing name and reconciling power of the Holy Spirit to mediate Christ and the Christic experience of God into the depths of the individual and collective psyche.

Photoknit pictures serve a particular directing and connecting purpose in this chapter. Their anthropological and theological development and presentation provide a foundational analogy for making other thematic and principled applications which are relevant to present and future-oriented dialogue between the gospel and culture. Selected images and symbols access some universal common ground and a common wealth of cross referencing materials. Each of the following sections contains an accessible item, theme or principle of communicating value and relevance to Christian mission and dialogue. My hope is that these analogical applications will inspire the building of renewed foundations for the best and peaceable goods which the renewed Christian message has to offer.

Renewed foundations invites a loving reintegration and wedding of accessible material reality with the spiritual and symbolic truth embodied in their union. Their unifying value helps to bridge the communications gaps between *theos* and *anthropos* images, language, and

experience. A wedding of 'one flesh' unity does not blur the diverse differences and distinguishing traits between bride and groom. The pomegranate is an ancient symbol of the fruitful reconciliation of unity with diversity,² that well mirrors the marriage of heaven and earth. Recall that, "whereas the Pentecostal fire descends upon men from above, as on the Apostles' heads, for women it arises out of the earth."³ The wedding of pentecostal fire from above and from below is the Christic Holy Spirit power pouring out love and overflowing compassion on all creation and revelation. The love of a New Adam and New Eve for each other generates and empowers imaginative and creative human being and doing, in order that the physical face and future of the earth and its inhabitants may be renewed in spirit.

Principled thematic applications must be, in the final analysis, most carefully, specifically and individually tailored to fit individual

2. Giriot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, p.261. Its predominating significance arises "from its shape and internal structure rather than from its colour, [being] the reconciliation of the multiple and diverse within apparent unity. Hence, in the Bible, for example, it appears as a symbol for the Oneness of the universe. It is also a symbol of fecundity." See also, Carroll Whittemore, *Symbols of the Church*, (n.p.: Abingdon Press, [1959] 1987), p.24, where pomegranate's meaning is given as that of a Resurrection symbol with the life-power to burst forth from the tomb. In Greek mythology, Persephone ate one pomegranate seed and thus was committed to return to Hades for a portion of each year. Thus in the unifying theme of life bursting forth, one may fruitfully ponder the partnership between cultural and Christian symbolic meanings. Pomegranate is derived from the French for apple, *pomme* + full of seeds.

3. Layard, *The Lady of the Hare*, p.236. The author actually gives an example of his point about fire in some dream images of a buck and doe rabbit. Their respective, above-ground and below-ground dwelling places bring a beneficial union to two kinds of wisdom, from above and from below. Interesting how the ascending-descending theme keeps reappearing! Layard also notes that this earthly pentecostal fire may also be found in dreams where shoes catch fire, or where floors and the low levels of buildings get set alight.

and cultural circumstances, as befits the wind's whimsy to cut and sew/sow, knit and blow according to God's purposes in Christ Jesus. The best way of giving a faithful account of the Christic hope which ever sustains us (1Pet.3:15), first requires that we be filled to overflowing with the senses of grace that favour and flavour our human needs with goodness, mercy and a secure place to dwell. Inner enrichment sustains outer poverty. Therefore, in lifting the lid on the overflowing contents of this chapter, wedding and coupling themes direct and connect its diverse details. In Australian slang, a 'glory box' contains all the materials that have been gathered and prepared for a marriage. Here the three strands of a challenging quest introduced at the beginning, blessing on human nature, integrity in mission, and death-to-love-life transformation, now come together in the universal covenant promise of a common ground and a common wealth accessible to all people. This promise is symbolized by the strands of a braided ring.

B. The Sacramental Question

"Of what use are analogies?" ask Manfred Eigen and Ruthild Winkler.⁴ "They teach us to formulate better questions, perhaps even the right questions....Our questions must bring out the contours of our problems more clearly....The sharpening of contours can be achieved by

4. Manfred Eigen and Ruthild Winkler, *Laws of the Game: How the Principles of Nature Govern Chance*, (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1981, from the original German, *Das Spiel: Naturgesetze steuern den Zufall*, 1975), p.299. Their remarks are found in chapter 17, "The Art of Asking the Right Question". This delightful book deals with the importance of creative play at work in the physical universe as much as in human behaviour, in facilitating transformations and metamorphoses in our understanding of the observable world.

our choice of specific boundary conditions."⁵ The heartrending and problematic boundary for Leda and many other people, is a doublesided one. They are spiritually starving but simply cannot swallow and stomach the nonsensical and stale conceptual contours of onesided Christian language and practice. They long for fresh, colourful garden produce, where a choice selection is colourfully designed and displayed, served by and taken in the company of colourful people. Thus Marion Woodman's wisdom rings very true, in that "without the metaphor, the mind may be fed, but the imagination and the heart go hungry."⁶ Heady Christian language is insufficient to meet the problematic and driving hunger for wholeness. The colourful and multivocal language of image and symbol, analogy and metaphor is to be much valued "because it carries an emotional and imaginative charge as well as a meaning....The continuous intercourse between matter and spirit is thus apparent in the very nature of language. Language, therefore, presents us with a world in which matter and spirit are intimately linked."⁷ Colourful prophetic and poetic language is a creative meaning-making tool for articulating and coupling the union of material and spiritual issues in daily living and dying.

Questions, about the holistic value and importance of learning the verbal and body language of images and symbols, have been sharpened by sideways companionship. Recall that both Leda and Rose Aaron were dying, one literally, the other symbolically. It is only by living and

5. Ibid, pp.299 & 302.

6. Marion Woodman, *The Ravaged Bridegroom: Masculinity in Women*, (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1990), p.27.

7. Ibid, pp.24 & 25.

dying, working and playing, on the outcast and marginal boundaries that questions about meaningful life and death exchanges can be grounded in the art of the possible. Making meaning and sense of stark life and death questions paradoxically affirms the ultimate value of life by befriending and de-terrorizing the reality of death and the fear of judgment. Boundary questions, taken in company with spiritually exiled and starving people, is the particular context which has sharpened my mission quest for substantially renewed and participatory foundations for the Christian message. Colourful prophetic language, therefore, fashions and designs fitting existential garments and alternative frames of reference for communicating and bridging the meaning of the gospel according to the contours of modern life. The Christian experience of faith and symbolically expressed spiritual truth would do well to learn 'secular' languages for sharing the message of Christ. Integrity in mission survives and thrives on the endless adventures of bridging games and challenging exercises for initiating and forging refreshing dialogical links between the gospel and culture.

The mediating mission and sideways position of images and symbols in dialogue is one way of making it possible for modern people (Christians and non-Christians alike) to participate anew in the essence and substance of Christ and his message of free love. Participation occurs because of the way in which the meaning of images and symbols act as referential storage bins for human knowing and valuing. They draw upon universal archetypal and thematic reservoirs to supply them with an empowering and resonating network of significant cognitive and affective references. So one starting point for spiritually hungry modern people can be the reflective quest for the significance of "a totally different

spiritual reality superimposed on the sensuous and tangible actuality of the world."⁸ Those suffering from symbolic impoverishment are separated and uprooted from their natural and God-given spiritual heritage diversely expressed in the material world. Fundamentally, the gnawing and transcending question of the famished and fainthearted, "Where is bread and wine?" (Lam.2:12), is a sacramental question about ultimate sources of enduring spiritual sustenance transparently embodied in accessible material reality.

It is insufficient and oppressive, however, to exhort people to have faith, to be faithful, when they don't know where, or what, or how to seek, let alone enact it. Proposition belief is not necessarily experiential belief. The helpful shift of horizons from propositional belief systems to faithing actions of trust, loyalty, confidence, fidelity, opens and offers some important guidelines in making possible and reasonable, the numinous experiences which engender active faith. The need exists for new and refreshing ways, means, maps, and locations that point to and participate in the reality of creative faithing at work and at play. "With the loss of appreciation of symbolic language to a large extent, contemporary culture has deprived itself of the clues and the road map for the development and growth of the spirit."⁹ Language games creatively facilitate numinous avenues that link people with the positive message and empowering Spirit of Christ in language, images and concepts they can understand, and of which they can make sense. The benefits of physical sense experience and affective feeling

8. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, CW 5, par.336.

9. Clift, *The Hero Journey in Dreams*, p.26.

values in making the gospel intelligible (sense-able) is of paramount importance if free access to God is to be positively communicated.

As Leroy Rouner notes so clearly regarding attentiveness to questions, "openness to the future means openness to the deepest questions which people are asking about the most critical issues in *their lives*."¹⁰ Questions form and sharpen the context, not necessarily for answers, but for further quest and exploration of the issues being raised. In dialogue, as in other interrelationships, the exploration motif is an important corrective for up-front assumptions about mutually shared and understood frames of reference. Careful and extensive listening, at length and at depth, usually precedes the discovery of genuine common ground, and thus precedes access to a common wealth of thematic referential resources. Questions and listening to the questions others are asking may simply be the opening bid in sharing a critical issue that needs to be laid out on the table.

Questionable experiences baptize the human faculties with the power of a reasoning and discerning receptivity to the transparencies of the spirit embodied in matter, when the substance of the tangible and actual world is accepted and loved for its own sake. The art of asking the right questions is an essential oasis for modern pilgrims and travellers on the road to and from numinous experience.

10. Rouner, "Theology of Religions in Recent Protestant Theology," p.115. Italics are mine.

C. Fifth Column Theme Music

The fifth column theme provides a unifying image, idea, or motif whose basic essence or tenet is implicitly repeated and developed throughout this thesis. In theme music, a group of notes form a recognizable melodic unit which is consciously recognizable but nonverbal. Being beyond conscious words is not being beyond the reach of meaningful communication. Confusion between the language of verbal concepts and pictured images arises because of the problem of their mutual interpretation. As moral development researcher, Carol Gilligan notes in commenting on differing interpretations of experience and thought, a different voice is "characterized not by gender but theme."¹¹ Attentive listening to and looking for thematic and poetic split references expressed in plastic and verbal images simply trains, disciplines, and exercises the ears and eyes, and other senses, in a different analytical style. Picture language is music to the ears! Various training exercises sensitize one to discerning and detecting the *themes* that indicate a transcendent presence and purposes concealed in imaged and concepted language events and body language enactments. The virtue of attentive ears and voice is the province of the Shekinah/Holy Spirit. She is the mistress of oral wisdom and refining language that can communicate the wonders of God in culturally recognizable ways. Her spirit resides in the positively stated wisdom of Jesus, "You *shall* love God, you *shall* love your neighbours as yourself."

11. Gilligan, *In A Different Voice*, p.2. She notes the differing approaches taken by men and women to the issues and contents of moral evaluations. The approaches aren't necessarily opposed to each other, but are simply different.

Themes yield transpositional metaphors and analogies for bridge-building dialogue. For example, music themes constellate around some characteristically meaningful notes, bars, and longer cross referencing refrains. The very familiar eight note introduction of Beethoven's 5th Symphony, the longer hero motif in Richard Strauss' *La vie d'un héros*, Elgar's *Enigma Variations*¹² all illustrate unifying thematic references recognizable by the ear and consciously communicable to the mind. The characteristic theme of each piece, like a characteristic gesture, may be readily recognized even when reappearing in specifically new forms, orchestral instruments, and tonal keys. Mahler's 5th Symphony, in its music and a sleeve jacket description, presents itself as an indepth opportunity and analogical exercise in hearing some split references that bridge back to the thematic contents of this thesis. This musical exercise will explain why a conventional summary of the contents of this thesis will not be made. It will also illustrate the vital importance of renewal by themes.

Mahler's Fifth Symphony is a musical example of a "striving towards a new orchestral style, towards an enrichment of the sound palette and towards a symphonic form more closely knit and more coherent (numerous

12. Edward Elgar, *Enigma Variations*, cond. Pierre Monteux with the London Symphony Orchestra, Decca Record Co., SPA 536, 1979. "The title, *Enigma Variations*, is a little misleading, for the title on the score is *Variations on an Original Theme*. The tune was in fact a countersubject to another theme but what that theme was Elgar would never say." In a strange serendipity, five days after an occasion when Rose Aaron had been listening to these Variations, Leda commented that Rose Aaron was an "enigma" to her! This occurred during one of their hallway pilgrimages. Such synchronicity and serendipity help to verify the motif, but most importantly, their unexpected cross-referencing are a clear signal to pay attention to the image, context, and surrounding events that accompany and connect the same image together.

thematic recalls, an interdependence of first two and last two movements, each pair coupled to form together a single "part" of the symphony.)"¹³ In the light of the concern for integrity in a renewed vision of Christian mission theology and praxis orchestrated and rehearsed in the fiery welcome of non-invasive, non-dominating, and non-intrusive tones of voice, Mahler's orchestral knitting provides an empowering mimesis, to go and do likewise. This reflects the innovative freedom of the children of God.

Mahler's innovative orchestral technique interwove thematically plotted material in his characteristic fashion "from a group of cells." For musical history, this meant that it was unnecessary to return to the original tonality and the precise opening key of his musical score. Thus, freed from a return to the exact opening key of his music, *what* Mahler was freed to do was return to the principle *themes* "derived from earlier material. This method of drawing from a thematic reservoir frees the composer from the bonds of predetermined form." Such a compositional move is not the abandonment of form but its refreshing renewal, such as that renewal being applied to mission theme scores. The use of the themes of covenant, and salvation as life-giving and space-making, illustrate this principle.

This liberating thematic reservoir is especially found in the Symphony's 4th and 5th movements. The very slow and memorable *Adagietto*

13. Unless otherwise indicated, all quoted references in this section are by Henry-Louis de La Grange, sleeve jacket notes for Gustav Mahler, *Symphony No.5*, cond. Guiseppe Sinopoli with the London Philharmonia Orchestra, Deutsche Gramophone 415 476-2, 1985.

(4th movement)¹⁴ is likened to be "a simple 'song without words'....It is a time for dreaming and for escape from the things of the world," and is closely and thematically allied with the song *Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen* (I am lost to the world). The seemingly chance introduction of assorted and variously garnered thematic motifs harken back to the instrumental horns and *Wunderhorn* song themes¹⁵ playing the Funeral March of the first movement. The *Adagietto* reappears almost verbatim, but played at a very fast tempo.

Stated in clear conceptual terms, Mahler's musical finale "symbolizes the decisive victory of the forces of life over anguish, grief and death." Mahler's critics, however, found his optimistic conclusion too ambiguous for their ears. But the real reason suggested for their criticisms is that "they could not accept Mahler's distortion of the *Adagietto's* ecstatic melody,¹⁶ transformed from ethereal to

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14. The *Adagietto* is especially memorable in connection with the film *Death in Venice*, of which it was the theme music. The film is based on Thomas Mann's story of the same name.
 15. *Wunderhorn* is a cornucopia, or "horn of abundance", Cirlot, *Dictionary of Symbols*, p.62. A cornucopia is often seen at Thanksgiving to represent the bounty, abundance, and blessings of harvest time. Here Mahler is using the literal horns to speak meta-literally of other "horns" of both material and spiritual bounty.
 16. *Ekstasis* in Greek means to stand outside or stand aside, that is, to be detached, or having a position without involvement. Paul Tillich uses the term 'ecstatic reason', to show the interaction of faith with truth and value. Thus one can be outside and alongside oneself without ceasing to be one's self. See Paul Tillich, *The Dynamics of Faith*, (San Francisco: Harper Torchbooks, 1957), p.7. Also regarding the correlation of ecstasy, reason, and the revelation of God's mystery, and the opaque-transparent themes manifest in Christ, see idem, *Systematic Theology*, vol 1, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p.106 ff.; also, for a pithy and thoughtful discussion of ecstasy in the context of differentiating emotion and feeling, see Rowan Williams, *Christianity and The Ideal of Detachment*. In his summing up, Williams is stating the value of what he calls 'dispassionate feeling' and notes some clues to the importance of

earthly utterance." Mahler's art is chiefly sustained by its underlying current of ambiguity which thus "contribute[s] to its inexhaustible richness and its perpetual relevance. If the work had ended with some straightforward apotheosis, it could not then have challenged us, in the way Mahler still does, with increasing force as time passed."

Mahler's musical innovations provide some vital metaphors and analogies applicable to mission theology and praxis. Thematic renewal, in re-expressing and re-imagining the essential foundations of Christ's experience of God, is a truthful and faithful way of returning to the essential spirit of the ancient paths of metaphorical covenant relationship. Life-giving and space-making themes, rather than a predetermined key form is one way in which missionaries may reorient themselves with integrity to the renewed tasks of mission service. Recall that Rose Aaron did not have any keys, musical or magical. What she saw and sees

still speaking of God as passionless, free from passion. "Let me refer you," he says, "to the way in which some Eastern Christian writers, by the seventh century AD, had come virtually to identify *apatheia* with *ekstasis* and *kenosis*, outpouring and self-emptying love" (p.11). Earlier, he had noted Simone Weil's special version of renunciation as being "bound up with the idea of a purified, clarified vision" (p.9). Her type of renunciation is akin to Metropolitan Anthony Bloom's use of passion and feeling (not equated with surface emotion) to mean 'open vulnerability'. Weil's alternative to a detached person is either the tyrant or the slave. "Those who cannot come to terms with their mortality, who cannot love humanly, are destined either to be trapped by the compulsion to rule by force, systematically overriding and negating the otherness of others, or to be crushed by this force in the depersonalizing wretchedness of mass society."; by contrast, M.D. Meeks, "The 'Crucified God' and the Power of Liberation," presents a very important and intelligibly reasoned case for God's passion appropriately disconnected from Western philosophical presuppositions. In my view, these varying perspectives on God's passion and passionlessness are part and parcel of the wrestle with the unsatisfying imprecision of words to articulate the experiential depths of a satisfyingly human spiritual encounter with God's power of love.

is an open door of opportunity and a window of vulnerability that needs dressing with eye-catching and affordable fashions. Suitably timeless and unaltering themes clothe our existential nakedness, even though the changing styles of fashion are relative.

The gift of serendipitous verification, worn on the sleeve jacket of Mahler's Fifth Symphony, brings a type of 'garment' gift exchange. It illustrates how unfolding history verifies important subject-object split references which purposely converge at particular crossroads in time and space. When events occur in these ways, their independent contexts are both mutually informative and transformative bridges. This is where the realm of wonder and mystery begins to initiate us into its open secrets. For the power of converging circumstances, far beyond one's power or imagination to influence, let alone control, is faithful and trustworthy as full circle hermeneutics in providing self-interpreting action. To be at the mercy of such convergence is awesome indeed.

New participational foundations for the experience of faith must couple the visible and invisible, the physical and the spiritual, the tangible and intangible. This is especially important in laying innovatively renewed foundations and orientations in mission praxis, as stated at the outset of this chapter. Like and unlike Mahler, the lyric-connecting quality of this chapter's theme song with words, is a dreamtime song of upside down escape to the things of the world, that embodied material and physical meeting place of spirit with Spirit.

D. Bridgit Bridey - Soul Symbol

Wedding preparations are especially relevant for all those wise and fully expectant 'virgins'¹⁷ preparing and ready to join in the wedding feast (Mt.25:1 ff.; Lk.12:35 ff). Being virgin, being one-in-oneself means being able to be receptive to the power of love, in sufficient command of oneself as a spiritual container that is consciously willing and able to surrender with trust and confidence.

The very real and fearful problem of deafness and blindness (Is.6:9, 10; Acts 28:26, 27) illicitly lodged in our Christian heritage, is the split expressed by the infernal dualism and demonized oppositions of body and soul-destroying unrelatedness. "Too much soul is reserved for God, too little for man. But God himself cannot flourish if man's soul is starved."¹⁸ Outright and blatant survival is the one aim of famished, oppressed and threatened people, who will go to great lengths in order to barely survive. Ultimately imaged sources of living renewal

17. See Marion Woodman, *The Pregnant Virgin: A Process of Psychological Transformation*, (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1985). In modern psychological language, the meaning of the virgin motif does not pertain to sexual experience or its lack. Far more importantly, virgin spirituality means healthy and purified self-containment, being "one-in-oneself". This means that the virgin is neither motivated by the ego desire to please, to be approved, nor to gain power over another, but is empowered by what is true. Thus "chastity is being open to the life of the spirit...saying yes to life...the yes of a higher innocence that is consciously involved in sacrifice. Surrender to the Spirit opens the virgin soul to the full range of Beingness, the carnal and spiritual passion that burns at one's centre but is not personal. Recognition of the fire as nonpersonal allows personal ego to be burned clean. No longer identified with instincts or spirit, one is human, open to the love of Sophia and the fertility that comes through that love" (p.168). Though the language is Western and Christian to some extent, this understanding of the purifying of ego desire is comparable to the idea of nirvana in Hindu and Buddhist thought.

18. Jung, "Women in Europe," in *Aspects of the Feminine*, par.275.

come from a transcendent source of principled and dynamic goodness beyond all human and cultural dimensions. Thus, salvation, saving grace, is not to be found in any cultural or religious scheme of merited righteousness.

In poetic and linguistic imagery, the dynamic coupling of the invisible spirit with the tangible actuality of the visible and physical body, is termed soul.¹⁹ Soul, (*anima* in Latin, *psyche* in Greek), is represented, both for men and women, as consciously illuminated femininity. Soulful receptivity "is endangered equally by disembodied spirit and by concretized matter, but her distillation is imperative in laying the foundations for a new relationship between the sexes."²⁰ Bridgit Bridey is a punning symbol to personify a mediating soulful relationship which is supple and strong enough to promote and uphold the best of patriarchal consciousness, while taming its killing excesses and

19. See Marion Woodman, *The Ravaged Bridegroom: Masculinity in Women*, (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1990). Chapter 1, "Dragon Slaying: Murder or Sacrifice?" is noteworthy, especially the section "Dragon Slaying, Soul Making and Metaphor", pp.22-35. Woodman suggest that the soul-destroying *causa*, as portrayed by Othello and Desdemona, is an unquestioning acceptance of "the dragon-slaying myth of the solar hero....Love in the service of murder is what the solar myth has become in its arrested form, a form which [Woodman] would identify with patriarchy" (pp.22 & 23). The need for appropriate sacrifice is essential, but what is being sacramentally questioned is the blind, deaf and unquestioning assumption that what one loves most must be killed or murdered; the Hymn or the Song of the Pearl, found in the gnostic *Acts of Thomas*, offers a creative alternative to dragon-slaying. The hero, in order to take the treasured pearl, hidden in mud and guarded by its tail-swallowing, snaky custodian, sings the names of his father, mother, and brethren over the roaring serpent, and puts it to sleep. See Stephan Hoeller, *Jung and the Lost Gospels*, (Wheaton, Ill.: Quest Books, 1989), p.158. In Hoeller's text, he does not mention putting the serpent to sleep, but in his public lecture to the Ottawa Jung Society meeting, 23 Feb.1991, he stressed that point at length.

20. Woodman, *The Ravaged Bridegroom*, p.22.

tending its woundedness. At the same time, she is supple, sufficiently strong and womanly-wise to address the excessive dangers of oppressed and outraged matriarchal tendencies to wreak havoc and revenge on the existing order. Thursday's example of virtuous and grace-filled undercover anarchy is one thing, but vengeance and retribution have no part in healing schemes. In her combined Logos-Eros function, empowered by the Holy Spirit, the symbol of Bridgit Bridey is a personification of the empowering ability to bind up the heartbroken feminine woundedness in the consciousness of modern men and women. Her power-sharing symmetry on the formal and archetypal level of symbols is balanced by informal and asymmetrical right and left handed configurations of giving and receiving between Christians and the world in which they live, move, and have their being.²¹ In some traditional societies, for instance,

21. Notions of balance connected with symmetry and asymmetry are becoming increasingly noticeable and important in a variety of disciplines. See Patterson, *Photography and The Art of Seeing*, pp.121, 122, where the author is discussing photographic picture composition, and the balancing of various elements; see also, Eigen and Winkler, *Laws of the Game*. Especially in chapter 7, "Symmetry", the authors give a fascinating account of the interrelations of symmetrical and asymmetrical formations in chemistry, biology, physics, and its role in art, as the result, not the cause of the evolutionary process. Snowflake crystals, epitomize the asymmetric vagaries of symmetry with their "infinite inventiveness...and delicate execution of one and the same pattern" (p.105, quoting Thomas Mann, *The Magic Mountain*). Their explanation is that "symmetry has to embody a selective advantage; otherwise it could not hold its own in the interplay of chance and necessity, of mutation and selection" (p.120). They give two examples and conclude that "we find so many symmetrical structures in biology today because they are more efficient in exploiting their advantage and consequently won - a posteriori - the selection competition. They did not win because symmetry was - a priori - a necessary prerequisite for fulfilling their function" (p.130); see also, Theoni Pappas, *The Mathematical Calendar*, featured in the MIT and Science Service News catalogs. The month of July features a discussion and illustration of the two Penrose tiles, given as examples of mathematical problem-solving. The problem of asymmetrical symmetry is related to tile-like phenomena in a

the power associated with asymmetrical bride-giving circulates equally and reciprocally throughout the whole extended group, through a carefully rehearsed strategy of exchange. One family exercises power by the right-handed giving of a bride to their specified kin group. With their left hand, they receive a bride into their own family circle. This analogy serves to illustrate the way in which the gospel and culture need to interact in a life-giving exchange of dialogue and other gift-giving mutualities.

The healing and wholesome nurture of soul-starved men and women requires, not the annihilation, but the conscious receptivity of a sufficiently adequate and permeable ego container. Then the charisma of the soul's conscious femininity may become a complementary and embodied source of creative spiritual power freely and abundantly poured into earthy clay containers of human being. A doublesided Christian-cultural renewal returns womanliness to her rightful role in creative order and maintenance, and releases her from the oppressive chains of culturally and traditionally defined chaos. God's scathing charge, via Jeremiah, against the Israelite's is a twofold one. "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns, that can hold no water" (Jer.2:13, RSV). People with broken and fragmented containers of consciousness, and with broken body-soul relationships, cannot sufficiently hold fountains of living water. One issue which modern people in the modern world must face is God's death-transforming and creative soul-making resurrection power. In exercising the symmetrical

turtle's shell, fish scales, skin cells, mosaic formations, metal alloys, and Escher's art.

advantage evolving from the human power of choice to misuse, refuse, or accept the challenge of life-giving and space-making power impelling evolutionary growth, "the only viable conscious choice is to take the right-hand path in the direction of continuing to claim feminine power but learning to work with it in a disciplined fashion, responsibly and morally."²² In this way, the positive giving and receiving of humanly receptive soul power shares out the physical and spiritual benefits, blessings and bounties of initiated consciousness to and within the whole community of men and women. The spiritual foundations for humanly expressed trust, confidence, loyalty and fidelity to God, are most clearly partnered and expressed in the soul-filled face of Jesus Christ.

E. The Hope of Tangible Companions

The conviction that effective gospel communication starts with tangible and accessible objects, events and images, rather than with theological concepts has been confirmed and verified in many ordinary situations of dialogue with secular people. A recent conversation with a spiritually hungry friend, unknowingly, from her point of view, touched on every single item in this chapter. In confessing her hunger and spiritual need, her heartfelt lament was for something "intelligible", "substantial", "tangible", something which "made sense" of faith dynamics (I wondered if she'd had a sneak preview of this thesis!). Her willingness to surrender appropriately to the Spirit of Christ was predicated by questions of how to visualize and objectify that

22. Laurie Layton Shapira, *The Cassandra Complex: Living with Disbelief, A Modern Perspective on Hysteria*, (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1988), p.115.

experience which nourishes the soul-making of body-spirit coupling. In context, she needed hope in facing the unknown and somewhat threatening world of the much needed Spirit. She was empowered to express her longing and need for unqualified love and acceptance. At the same time, her fear of rejection and being unworthy was enormous. Initially, I introduced her to the image of the dolphin and anchor²³ as a visible expression of help and hope, both being the friend of human beings who are 'at sea' and riding out the storms of life. The avoidance of shipwreck and wrecked relation-ships is a vital one. From there, I was further able to introduce the motif of Christ as anchor of hope (Heb.6:18, 19) in being able to approach God with confidence (Heb.4:16), and be sure that acceptance is not based on worldly merit and worth. Fearless access to God is at the heart of good news. Images of hope anchor us in learning to trust ourselves to Christ Jesus and his initiating steps that lead behind the curtain and into the inner sanctuary of God's presence, front, side, and/or backside. Hope concentrates, like other essential but invisible spiritual ingredients. are best and universally expressed with visible images of a multivalent sacramental capacity for transference.

My friend made the necessary joint connections between the tangible and the invisible reality and meaning of Spirit invited to come and to dwell in her, through the visual analogy of the dolphin and anchor. She experienced the theme of hope communicated through the anchor's meaning,

23. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, s.v. dolphin, p.84. The dolphin and anchor are closely allied symbols of salvation, and are connected with Eros. When they are intertwined, it signifies arrested speed, that is, prudence. Hence the *bon mot*, to make haste slowly.

but changed that key form for one more expressive of her new journey in body and spirit. A handrail is her equivalent of the anchor! Image and symbol, then, are the "external expression of these inner changes."²⁴ A pleasing and rather colourful image, such as the handrail, may wholesomely satisfy the physical senses whilst also feeding the mind and spirit with an inner network of associations. These networks have the creative capacity of rearranging and reconnecting subjective ideas, feelings, and other images experienced in company with the external object, but without confusing the inner dynamics solely with the external reference. Once again, the 'both-and' partnership reconciles.

The growth and conversion experience of falling in love with God²⁵ is mediated by God-images and symbols of sufficiently ultimate value and worth. Though relative and provisional, the image of a handrail is as good an anchor as any, for conveying a sufficient and substantial spiritual value. This thematic application means in part, that external perception is partnered by inner images and experiences of longing for God that can heal the original garden fear of God's condemning approach and reproach. Thus one type of 'fall' may heal the fear of the other, where existential human frailty, willfulness, and shame are doctrinally expressed as the 'fall'. Trickster poison cures.

My friend was also having deep and postmodern trouble with the conventional and condescending interpretation of Eve taken from Adam's

24. Happel & Walter, *Conversion and Discipleship*, p.17.

25. Ibid, pp.16-22. Religious conversion is a radical change of horizon that moves a person into a profound vertical shift understood as unreservedly falling in love with God. Such a powerfully transforming fall "creates simultaneously a new subject and a new horizon" (p.16).

side. She literally couldn't stomach this 'horror' story, especially as we'd recently attended a wedding where the offending passage had been read. Once again, I was able to introduce her to the reinterpreted theme of sideways partnership as it has been developed in this thesis. Wholesome *anthropos* and *theos* analogical parallels were drawn in, between Buddha born from his mother's side, and the New Eve in sideways partnership with the New Adam. They helped to effectively bridge and communicate the theme and positional level of required transformation. The need for the transformation of base materials into gold at the 'side' or 'heart' level is powerfully communicative in healing split references.

Like all loving unions in good times and in bad, the realistic and paradoxical celebration of apparent opposites, the physical and the spiritual, the tangible and the invisible, life and death, invites a certain qualified acceptance and attentiveness which "consists of a unique symbiosis of joy and suffering."²⁶ This is what is known in Buddhist terminology as "the joyful participation in the sorrows of the world."²⁷ Existential compassion, co-feeling, gives a unity to the human capacity to feel and experience the ebbs and flows of joy and sorrow without numbness and without blurring their distinctive and interweaving contributions to the fabric of daily life. They are authentic and 'sensible' expressions of experience and value which also serve to remind us of the earthly reality of Jesus' experience (Heb.12:2). The 'both-and' partnership does not blur its distinctive

26. Williams, *Christianity and the Ideal of Detachment*, p.7.

27. Campbell, *This business of the gods...*, p.104.

components but does create a healing and reconciling symbiosis that enables diverse couples to live together in mutually transforming interdependence. The experience of living and dying on the margins and boundaries of existence can teach one anew that the dynamics of genuine living include both up's and down's, in's and out's, but that they don't have the final word. To be able to fully experience joy and sorrow, union and separation, however, expands one's tenacious capacity to endure and go through whatever circumstances bring. For Christian disciples called, commissioned and equipped to be fishers of men and women, there is a profoundly anarchical and subversive quality to this capacity to willingly accept reality. It has a subversive anti-power power of being weak and at the mercy of situations beyond one's control, but without the deadly and despairing passivity and apathy of enslaving resignation. Particularly to be empowered to accept a harsh outer reality without the fear of it being a punishment is a profound and weighty gift. *The Man Who Was Thursday* learned through his many trials and feats of endurance that being friends with God is not the safe and cushy option. At the same time, though, such friendship provides the nurturing values that are most sustaining in the long run. Whatever other benefits and blessings, and trials reality brings to one's own personhood, identity and vocation, it is also other-oriented in facilitating the sideways companionship that can walk people through their own experiences of joy and sorrow without ultimate despair.

The promise of hope means being free to approach the mystery of God with respectful confidence (Heb.4:16). Equally and symmetrically matched, is the deity's hope and longing to be free to approach human beings without their fear of being overwhelmed by the complexities of

short-circuiting fear and speechless paralysis. Hence is the necessity of *Sunday's* seeming masks and disguises which veil²⁸ the power and radiance as much as the unknown darknesses of the deity's presence and purposes.

The communication of symbolic and spiritual truth is far more poetical than mystical to begin with. Language games provide means and ways, and tools for knocking on mystery's door (Mt.7:7; Lk.11:9). And mystery readily reveals itself in the opening experiences of God's presence (Rev.3:20) that may be very difficult if not impossible to articulate without the multivocality of images and body language. Either way, mystery may be equated with the opening and unfolding of the unknown, but not the unknowable. A reasoned and intelligible, and sensible understanding of poetic and symbolic communication makes creative, attentive and accessible inner space for otherness within the individual and collective psyche. Then the true mysteries of directing and connecting love, power, purpose and relationships between the visible and invisible, the physical and spiritual world may be thought, felt and imagined more deeply. Then they can be lived more completely and fully in sideways modes of companionship and friendship with God.

Whilst imagination and creative imagery are not exclusively perceptual and tangible, the physical sense dimension is a communicating door and portal of expressive opportunity for Christic fishermen and women. In the Aran Isles and Fair Isle of the north Atlantic, visible

28. The derivation of words connected with veil, reveal, revelation, re + veil, etc. come from Norman French *veile*, from Latin *vela* sails, plural of *velum* covering, from which parchment derives. The descriptive definition of veil is a piece of more or less transparent material, i.e. opaque.

anchors of hope were often knitted by the womenfolk into the sweaters of their fisherfolk men. They were a practical expression of hope, not a magical wish, but the hope-filled quality which values the safety and continuing life for those who must go to sea and be at sea. No matter what, such knitting is a visible expression of God's truth manifest in Jesus, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." However veiled, glory in the sense of being clothed with saving enlightenment and wisdom, is an open secret for those with consciously initiated and baptized ears and eyes taken in company with their other senses.

F. Bounty Hunting Tricksters

Bounty hunters in the days of yore were paid handsomely for their labours in tracking down and cleaning up the social and physical environment. Their task was sanctioned in the name of social law and order. But as *The Man Who Was Thursday* discovered, along with the other day-disguised members of Sunday's anarchist council, there is a very different kind of grace-filled and fearless law and order at undercover work and play. Fractal images and contemporary chaos theory²⁹ are

29. Chaos theory is a tongue-in-cheek expression for an inherent phenomenological order in nature which seems chaotic, but only by present-day standards and limits of scientific ignorance. Unpredictable = chaotic, by current theories. The astounding beauty of these apparently random patterns generated by circular, and non-linear mathematical equations, is awesome, breathtaking, and energizing. Watching them unfold on the computer screen is a wonderful experience of observing unpredictable patterns of integrating orderliness. Non-linear equations account for factorial differences without eliminating their individual spheres of influence. See James Gleick, *Chaos: Making A New Science*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1987).

current examples of *Sunday's* anarchy in initiating and introducing a new intelligible order of covenant faith and accessible Sabbath rest.

For those so desperately in need of famine relief and spiritual regeneration, foundational renewal by the strengthening of Christic themes is the open door of mission opportunity for our day. For the Christian and missionary, humanly growing and religiously transfiguring conversion means first of all self-conversion, "so that my own self may get more and more transparent for the trinitarian divine bounty."³⁰ The beneficial blessings and bounty of renewal start at home and within the Christian household of faith praxis, before it moves forward to genuine and open dialogue with others. Taste-filled bounty, "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps.34:8), can start with a Bounty chocolate bar! Its selling point motto proclaims it as "the taste of paradise." Instead of selling red hot promises of judgment and damnation, a sideways mission could well and freely promote life-giving and space-making promises which introduce a taste of paradise into present living. In this way, we are simply and surely following in the way which Christ inaugurated, in bringing heavenly blessings and benefits to earth in tangible experiences of encounter with God's goodness. In Christ Jesus we have an accessible and literal taste of God's messianic bounty. The age of the Holy Spirit to be ushered into existential parameters, as Massyngbaerde Ford notes, means that practical Christian mission is meant "to bring to fulfillment the work of Christ and inaugurate a period of abundant blessing, material and spiritual. It would be a

30. Mooren, "Theology at the Crossroads", p.8.

return to paradise and to the innocence of Adam and Eve."³¹ This raises questions. Is it possible to return to the shameless and fearless innocence of being friends with God? Can we be fearless partners with God's presence and purposes for daily living? Is it possible to be naked without being shamed?

The bounty of principled and thematic renewal serves as an opening lead for making visible and invisible connections that savour a taste of heaven on earth, now in the present time. The taste of life before death is a more powerful motivator than the fear of death after life. Sustaining images nourish and fuel faith with a precarious and flowing vocational call to adventures in paradise on earth. Jesus' filial reality nourished him to live as though everywhere was within the bonding relationship of an inner paradise garden, even if it looked like an external wilderness.

In like manner, the enticing experiences and tastes of *Sunday's* grace and peace are sheer chaos and anarchy to the 'traditions of men', sheer dynamite to explode the terror stories concerning God's judgment and punishment of moral and social lawbreakers, misfits, and outcasts, i.e. sinners. Moral and spiritual truth remains but the relativity of human expressions of these realities require periodic re-imagining and re-conceptualizing renewal. In light of the numerous scriptural perspectives on God's positively life-giving bounty,³² trickster

31. Ford, "The Holy Spirit and Mission in the New Testament," p.440.

32. The derivation of the word bounty means *goodness*, from which other associated meanings flow: generosity, kindness, love, plenty, abundance, ampleness, liberality, satisfying sweetness, something freely given as a gift, etc. Translations vary but the broad sense of bounty remains. See Jer.31:12, 14 (NIV), Ps.65:11; 68:10; Dt.28:12; 1Ki.10:13; Prov.22:9; 2Cor.9:5, 11;.

pursuits of bounty offer some contemporary updates on God's redemptive love stories that can refresh a jaded postmodern palate. Such yarns address us in attention-getting and attention-satisfying ways because of the poetic power of combined verbal and mental imagery to provide openings onto vistas and horizons of new possibility. In terms of the poetic power of revelation, symbols can be said to "seduce us into God's presence before we are aware of the pull of love."³³ The poetic quest for serviceable images and symbols thus invites the search for the hidden bounty which will combat and explode existential terror, most especially expressed in the numbing terror and denial of death perceived as the enemy-other. Whereas, in broadcast and/or hospitality exchange terms, death may actually have a very loving and friendly face.

Liminality is a type of anti-structural anarchy for initiating *communitas* members into mature adulthood. It is also a place of refuge. But liminal anarchy is in partnership with social structure. Structure and anti-structure belong together. The permissive and nonpunitive freedom from normal societal sanctions is to be used responsibly, not simply to destroy the existing order, but to renew it. However, renewal is not a cheap option. The cruel and inhuman side of social law and order, enacted and enforced in God's name is well illustrated in the story of *Mutiny on the Bounty*. The tyrannical, inhuman and ungodly parodies of social and religious order, unquestioning duty, and tortuously killing power masquerading as 'bounty', may well force decent, law-abiding Christians to finally jump ship.

33. Happel and Walter, *Conversion and Discipleship*, p.22.

Jesus' death was a power collusion of human laws on the apparent blasphemy of knowing himself to be a boundary-crossing son and heir of the God of living mercy and compassion (Jn.19:7). Jesus' crime, so to speak, was being able to live in harmony and peace within and without the ritual boundaries of his day that defined access to God. At least in part, the rise of secularity can be understood, in this light, as being a measured and unfolding response to the worst and excessive aspects of abusive religious, social, political and economic power funnelled into the tyrannical hands of a few noble 'warlords'. The cleansing and renewing of the temples of social and religious order and structure is costly, for in truth, all fruitful human living requires a certain and flexible kind of interregulating order. But the hope is that this year's chaos theory and anti-structure will be next year's saving grace.

G. The Opening Theme

Radical openness and costly vulnerability are two strongly advocated themes current in mission literature.³⁴ And indeed, in currently espoused theories of textual hermeneutics, the 'opening' onto a world or issue in front to the text is an important perceptual and conceptual shift. Such openings in the understanding link subject and

34. For an example, see David Bosch, "The Church in Dialogue: From Self-Delusion to Vulnerability," in *Missiology* 16 (2, 1988): 131-147. In speaking of vulnerability as the pre-eminent characteristic of Christians, the author notes that "we cannot approach [others] when we are confident and at ease, but only when we are contradicted and at a loss" (p.140). And again, "dialogue takes place where a deep faith commitment goes hand-in-hand with respect for the other" (p.141).

object within a larger sphere of ongoing and unfolding revelatory disclosure.³⁵ The theme of opening and being open is a doublesided one. A brief consideration and exploration of its potential downside is important in balancing the emerging perspectives which are in danger of self-sabotage. Firstly, in a simple compensatory mode, openness reflects the radical reality of a broom closet firmly closed and locked on a lot of unearthly skeletons which will never see the light of day. The espousal of open and welcome relationships to the 'other', to the 'stranger', to other religious and cultural expressions, must also consciously attend to the accompanying questions of motivation. The implications of open and vulnerable relationships is the domain of Eros in the best sense of longing and belonging to be found and exchanged in meaningful connections with certain other valued people. But a God-given longing for healthy and life-giving relationships with significant others is also open to unconscious and unwitting misapplication when literal Eros is feared and denied. The problem is unconsciousness, not longing for an integrating relationship with the many manifestations of otherness.

Secondly, the theme also indicates an unwitting ignorance of human growth and development factors, as will be noted in a moment. It is a dream that cannot be made to come true because it goes completely against the inculturating grain and natural direction of orderly personal and societally structured 'maps'. Certain social structure configurations are described metaphorically as locative, utopian, and

35. For example, see Ricoeur, "Toward A Hermeneutic of The Idea of Revelation."

incongruity maps.³⁶ These maps describe world-view boundaries by which persons and society construct and defend their identity, systems of organization, and paramount values. Locative and utopian maps are at extreme odds with each other because, in the most fundamental way, their symbolizations of 'world' differ completely. The important aspect in analyzing and understanding their differing expressions of a map's value, and hence power, is connected with imagery rather than concepts. Those that live within the confines of a well-ordered and bounded world, as they define the terms, find a utopian openness too ethereal and threatening in practice. "That which is open, that which is boundless is seen as the chaotic, the demonic, the threatening. The desert and the sea are the all but interchangeable concrete symbols of the terrible, chaotic openness. They are the enemy *par excellence*."³⁷ The important point to note is the relativity of these two world-views, for one man's chaos (anti-structure) is another man's order (structure), and vice versa. Thus in terms of conversion and transformation motifs, symbols as well as people require conversion.

Social change that prefigures personal and collective change can be seen in emerging and growing social symbols. This is one reason for heeding the image of woman emerging and arising (being birthed and berthed) in social consciousness. It bodes transforming upheavals and changes in social structures which are best prepared for by men and

36. See Smith, "The Influence of Symbols on Social Change", and "Map Is Not Territory" in *Map Is Not Territory*. Through an isotopic shift, map also can be taken as an epigram of Mater and Pater, and associated with "the Mother love of the Father", see M.D. Meeks, "The "Crucified God" and the Power of Liberation," p.38.

37. Smith, "The Influence of Symbols on Social Change," p.134.

women, in the wake of its tremourous appearances. Preparation means outer and inner realignments in the psyche and in society. The tide of history is flowing around us as Christians, bringing important crises of risks and opportunities galore. If the signalled directions and sign language that herald its coming can be read sufficiently well, then we may commit ourselves to whatever adventures and services that may be asked and required of us.

One problem with the 'open' concept of mission is the lack of significant visual images with which to ground its meaning with navigable and negotiable metaphors of orientation. To some people, images of the desert and the sea may well be understood to represent chaos, relatively speaking. Whether one agrees that they are chaotic is another matter, for they may well represent places of deep joy and intriguingly coloured light and space.³⁸ Most importantly as images, they have the power of an economical shorthand communication in an accessible and common language. Though one might not agree with the viewpoint, one can appreciate how the sea or the desert may seem threatening or enlivening to the other. As David Bosch comments, "you do not really understand another faith until you have been touched by it, until it has given you a new insight into yourself. You have not understood another faith until you have been compelled to interpret your faith in a new way, and unless you have - somehow - been tempted by its insights."³⁹ As openness to otherness is such an important mission concept, the search for appropriately expressive images and symbols is

38. For some wonderful desert scenes, see Patterson, *Portraits of Earth*, (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1987).

39. Bosch, "The Church in Dialogue," p.140-141.

helpful in facilitating meaningful dialogue. The shifting use and facility with conjoined images and concepts enhances effective communication because it provides an 'as if' mode of analogical explanation. A useful and relevant rule of thumb indicates that concept is univocal and image is multivocal. Conscious and analytic attention to both image and concept facilitates dialogue.

The considerable danger of inherent self-sabotage exists in the ungrounded ideology of an 'open' and 'vulnerable' theology and praxis of mission. For many Christians, including missionaries, the ideal of such radical openness and vulnerability is mission: impossible. In daily practice, an unqualified openness is both foolhardy and dangerous. The abusive trespass on one's and another's personal living space, for instance, must be properly maintained while being free for appropriately undefended relationships. Unqualified and unimaged concepts of openness can be, therefore, extremely burdensome and unrealistic expectations. Accountable reasons for this are well documented and signposted in the work of James Fowler⁴⁰ on faith development stages. He identifies six orderly and progressive stages of continuous spiraling human growth and religious conversion. Though they are on a fluctuating continuum of lifelong growth, the sixth stage, called Universalizing Faith, most corresponds to the mission theme music of vulnerable openness and kenotic service to and friendship with the other, and the enemy-stranger. Gandhi and Mother Teresa are two examples of people at this rarely achieved stage of human growth. However, after some careful consideration to the criteria for and characteristics of such faith

40. See Bibliography for details of Fowler's work.

development, I conclude that I have begun to meet an increasing number of these anonymous and unsung heroes⁴¹ who are certainly moving into these Universalizing circles.

One thing to note, however, in terms of the foregoing maps, is that those who are able to live with the flexibility of the incongruity map, can more readily and openly tolerate the permeable boundaries needed to universalize faith. They seem graced with the facility to cross and recross the diverse frontiers of experienced world-views and vocational identity with comparative ease, at least so it appears from an outside view. Comparative is the operative word, for such transitions, seen from the inside, are costly for those called to such places. And some people will never be able to leave the apparent security of their small horizons, for a wide variety of reasons. Jonathan Smith describes the "fit-no fit" experiences of the incongruity map as situations which are meant to give "rise to thought",⁴² and feeling, I might add. In teaching people to discern worthy belief from the make-belief that appears in initiatory or jokey and incongruous disclosures of significance, Smith insists that "it is precisely the juxtaposition, the incongruity between expectation and the actuality that serves as a

41. Heroes may be both men and women characterized by their ability to respond to the call to adventure and change, notwithstanding the differing directions and tasks their journeys may take. Heroines, by contrast, are those who need to be rescued. See Biallas, *Myths, gods, heroes, saviours*. Regarding men's heroic paths, see ch.8, "The Heroic Task"; for women's, see ch.9, "The Gentle Hero". While the heroine motif serves a certain purpose, its rigid stereotyping runs counter to many women and anima figures who neither want, nor need to be rescued, though they willingly welcome a virile masculine principle into their lives. Thus the early church emphasis on Jesus as life-giver before rescuer is a significant one, see Bourgault, "The Gift of Life."

42. Smith, "Map Is Not Territory," p.300, 308.

vehicle of religious experience....They neither deny nor flee from disjunction, but allow the incongruous to stand."⁴³ Universalizing Faith and the mission theme of openness and vulnerability are worthy of further investigation, but are beyond the scope of this thesis. Proper attention to the practical and humane requirements for open living, though, can help to eliminate or avoid some of the inherently self-sabotaging obstacles and pitfalls strewn in the paths of unwary and utopian idealists.

While many are called to live creatively and holistically on the stages of Christian life where they are, few seem to be chosen for the type of vulnerable openness so insistently advocated and espoused in the current mission literature. It requires lengthy exercises and sustaining disciplines that empower one to live creatively with and beyond the stages and experiences of ambivalence and paradox. Without the healing and healthy psychological development that is part of all human faith and trust experiences, and taken in face of increasing odds, the danger of self-sabotaging mission is considerable. Most people are not psychologically, morally and spiritually destined or equipped to carry out and live up to such expected radicality. The kind of ministry and dialogue required by opening themes, therefore, is not self-emptying service and its conceptualized impoverishment. Kenosis is ego-emptying love, not service per se. The conscious sacrifice of one's small ego limits is a releasing and a letting go, but it does not have to mean the killing of the ego. Dying...yes! The conscious laying down of one's existing ego life...yes! But this is not ego murder. It is certainly

43. Ibid, p.301 & 309.

neither loss of consciousness nor of self. More to the point, *kenosis* is overflowing and unending love serviced and supplied by the unfailing jug of oil and jar of grain such as sustained Elijah, the widow and her son (1Kings 17:7 ff.). The rhythm of emptying and filling, giving and receiving, goes with the natural grain and polishing harmonies of spacious living. Space voyagers must be carefully prepared and provisioned for their pioneering explorations. Those who live in the open are in danger of dying from starvation and exposure to the elements unless they know where and how to find food and shelter. Voyages by land and sea must be properly provisioned from an unfailing source that complements the mature self-supporting skills and initiatives of these vocational travellers (Heb.6:1). One may well be emptied of one's small ego limits and defences, which means, not the loss but the fulfilling transformation of ego as a precious, treasured, and beloved container of consciousness. Ego consciousness transformed by the bequeathing of a God-given name or names, and vocation, becomes that consciousness which is lovingly and gratifyingly allied with a transcending presence and purposes which are worth living and dying for.

Such an alliance empowers the person to enter into God's rest. The 'dwelling place', inner refuge and sanctuary which rest confers, is the space-making place where one ceases from one's own labours and enters into a dimension of partnering companionship with God's dynamically active purposes for the material world. Rest-filled activity is that third place Eliot mentions, between the two nettles,⁴⁴ further

44. Eliot, "Little Giding", III, 156,

paradoxically characterized in the haunting words meant for those who are called to be explorers.

We must be still and still moving
Into another intensity
For a further union, a deeper communion
Through the dark cold and the empty desolation,
The wave cry, the wind cry, the vast waters
Of the petrel and the porpoise.
In my end is my beginning.⁴⁵

♦ The rest of openness and vulnerability, that so characterized Jesus' ministry to others, requires that one must first have an unending and trustworthy source of sustaining life. Clearly, Jesus' experience of familiarity and favour with God as Abba, was the way in which the life poured into him was, in turn, freely poured out. Jesus lived with external and literal poverty, hunger, and the hardships of a peripatetic ministry, but he was never really homeless nor hungry (Jn.4:32, 34). Bestowed and inherited wealth, visible poverty and invisible wealth, these are paradoxical poles of Christ's and the Christian's inheritance. Recall Leda's age of majority at 25, be it years, steps, or doorway dates. At Christmas, on the 25th of the month, Christians celebrate the birth of light that comes at the darkest time. The Jewish holiday celebrated at that same time of darkness, Chanukah, is based on "the Hebrew *Chanu* ("they rested") and *kah* ("25th of the month," of Keslev)."⁴⁶ Even though the light of the world was disguised as an

45. Eliot, "East Coker," V, 4 ff.

46. Lawrence Jaffe, *Liberating of the Heart: Spirituality and Jungian Psychology*, (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1990), p.69.

anonymous servant, Jesus was ever master of himself and his household of faith.

Majority and minority poles are operating in a new sense of reversal, for the Christian majority faces the serious transition to an external minority position. Redemption of the external move, which could be seen as a kind of exile, may be reciprocally balanced and paralleled by the reclamation of one's inner 'majority' and inheritance. This redressing and rebalancing can give access to a sustaining wealth that makes reality tolerable and not suicidal. Psychic suicide resulting from transitional body-spirit despair and desolation of ultimate proportions may be safeguarded by a redeeming feast of images that satisfy the heart's desires with real food. God's grace and love of Jesus were sufficient unto that day and this. No doubt the emptying and overflowing terms reflect men's and women's differing experiences and perspectives on the reality of *kenosis*. In any case, such highly charged living is not everyone's cup of tea.

H. Crystal Trinity

The free gift of trinitarian bounty transforms opaque and icy hunger for loving and live-breathing communion into transparent crystals. They are especially satisfying when their sparkling facets and their inherent, structurally determined cleavage points are transformed into jewels for Jesus' crown. Crystal, Greek for frozen water, symbolizes the union of invisible spirit with tangible matter, that is, a union of opposites. Whereas in metaphoric language, one may refer linguistically to this union in its intermediary or present body-spirit state as soul, this coupling is visually portrayed by a crystal

or a polished gemstone. A brilliant and sparkling intellect is also closely associated with spirit, and is symbolized by the crystal and its penetrating and wondrous clarity. The soulful definition and combination of a visual image or icon, and a verbal metaphor, help to clarify and make transparent an experienced truth. The meaning is that of the mysterious and satisfying experience of the Holy Spirit incarnating the living reality of Christ in ordinary daily living. The crystal, as a visual and linguistic metaphor acts as a bridge to span and heal the symbol gap between the material functioning of the body and the invisible functioning of the spirit embodied in existing material reality. Crystal is "a 'state of transparency' defined as one of the most effective and beautiful conjunctions of opposites: matter 'exists' but it is as if it did not exist, because one can see through it. As an object of contemplation, it offers neither hardness nor resistance nor suffering."⁴⁷ Thus the union of opposites, physical and spiritual, finds a most beautiful and accessible reality in the crystal.

A certain crystalizing coldness is essential in being able to realistically contemplate and invite the saving hope that helps to heal and renew the split relationships between a heavenly and earthly reality. Such necessary transformations introduce "the hot place of consciousness"⁴⁸ into the crucible of base material experience, and thus

47. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, p.74., s.v. crystal. See further links of meaning, s.v. Jewels and Gemstones, and Stone.

48. Happel and Walter, *Conversion and Discipleship*, p.19, quoting a term used by William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience: A Study in Human Nature*, (New York: Collier, 1961, n.p.). The 'hot place of consciousness' occurs when a moral and religious shift of horizons brings the heat required for the transforming process which moves a person through the disorienting and realigning focuses of change.

convert, transform and realign the multifaceted centres of personal energy in the direction of transcending transparence. The *communio* experience of sustaining and dynamic trinitarian relationships both directs and connects individual centres of interest and integrates them within a larger order of existence. Trinity and trinitarian principles may feed the mind with theological concepts of freedom and dynamic relationship, but the crystal's visual image of spiritually embodied and colourful transparence nourishes other vital organs with a charge of affective energy and significance.

The spiritual meaning and linguistic concept of transparence also finds a pleasing visual counterpart in the study of earthly crystals. The unparalleled growth in the study of crystallography during this century has yielded and unveiled some exciting discoveries about the crystal-like structures of many physical elements. As a way of re-imaging and revitalizing the theological concept of trinity with images of appropriate yet accessible complexity, crystals also have dynamic interconnections between their three component orientations, planes of symmetry, axes of symmetry, and centres of symmetry. Each aspect is a study in itself. This three-in-oneness represents a significant metaphor for transposing meaning between multidimensional domains. Overall crystal symmetry links an internal and invisible structure with observable exterior characteristics. Thus the visible and invisible dimensions of Father, Son and Holy Spirit in dynamic spiritual relationship is mirrored in an accessible physical reality. This dynamic plus the visual and linguistic notion of material transparent to reveal spirit, helps to bridge the communication gap with refreshing and accessible images and analogues which facilitate gospel communication.

The symmetry of crystals, especially in the mirroring aspects of its surface planes, can be a simple expression of bilateral symmetry as communicated by *Voice of Fire*. Yet the thematic principle of non-domination and non-hierarchical relations pictures the same configuration of interdependent cooperation. However, the three-in-oneness of crystallography opens up and holds together diverse interrelationships in an orderly and meaningful way. As the modern world has discovered, reality is far more complex and dynamically interrelated than previously modelled in the simplistic and reductive paradigms of science. Like the braided rings of Saturn, observation is not explanation and interpretation. Thus the accessible yet sufficient complexity of crystals are an earthly foundation for renewing and revitalizing the understanding of trinitarian dynamics.

Drawings of crystal lattices present their molecular structure in a direct or a complicated visual picture of interconnecting links. The elements bond a crystal's constituent but diverse parts into one whole interconnected structural network. They may be in a fairly simple series of links like a fishing net, but many of them are multiple interwoven points connected over and under other ones. Thus they are joined in an overall mesh of inseparable relationships, though not every point is directly connected to every other one. These lattice structures visualize what I have sought to do in linguistic and imagistic networking with Leda's images and symbols. The linguistic, imagistic and experiential links bond literal, metaliteral and symbolic communication together in a meaningful parts-whole lattice-like configuration. The three dynamic and complex interconnections of crystal symmetry may be hard to grasp in a technical and conceptual form but are readily

communicated by visual aids. The same is true of the technical concept of trinity and trinitarian dynamics. The crystal structure offers a new possibility for communicating an accessible and visual representation of invisible spirit manifest in material form. Literal triaxial and symmetrical dynamics are a powerful analogy for trinitarian dynamics. The idea of crystalized material and sacramental transporence can be readily grasped and communicated.

A second place for visualizing the complex and abstract theory and mathematical formulas of crystallography and its mirroring symmetry, is seen in the artwork of M.C. Escher.⁴⁹ He visually and graphically represents some of the most complicated mathematical equations and theories, and philosophical speculations about the nature of reality, derived from the study of crystals. The complex patterns of multidimensional reality can hardly be articulated in words, yet can be easily and accessibly experienced and understood in his pictures and pictured metaphors. Escher considered his drawings to be picture games of playing with associations,⁵⁰ and thus he expresses in visual art what I have attempted to draw in the linguistic art of joint connection networking.

In the context of mission study and praxis, Escher's visual and physical manifestations of extremely abstract concepts and principles of paradox provide very vital and accessible sensory images. These can be used for explaining ideas of theological paradox of relationships like continuity and discontinuity, multidimensional plurality which is

49. See J.L. Locher, ed., *The World of M.C. Escher*.

50. Ibid, p.16.

orderly rather than chaotic, traditional patterns and change, human growth and religious transformation, the invisible grafting of narrative elements and abstract structure, and their two-way movement,⁵¹ the boundaries between singularity and plurality, bounded space and infinity, time and eternity, unity and diversity, the links of past, present, future. "The central problem of modern art," as also found in modern philosophy, anthropology, mathematics, theology, mission praxis, etc., "is how to organize coherently the many different visual elements without reducing the uniqueness of each. Escher's basic thematic material is essentially connected with this problem."⁵² The triaxial symmetry of crystals and Escher's visually crystallized art forms help to formulate communicable Christian language and analogical illustrations that readily picture the trinitarian oneness of active and energetic integrity which is so vital to our understanding of God.⁵³ The referential meaning and network of crystals is one good place with plenty of scope for mission investment in the earthly foundations upon which faith experience may be built.

51. Ibid, p.17 & 18, 27. Abstract in this sense is related to linguistic study and the discursive or thematic levels of communication.

52. Ibid, p.25.

53. In a less familiar visualization of the trinity, the motif of three hares with ears interlocking together in a central point is a way of depicting the trinity. Recall that one hare represents the soul. See Child and Colles, *Christian Symbols, Ancient and Modern*, p.44. The same motif of hares set within a symmetrical mandala graces the cover of Layard's *The Lady of the Hare*. In this light, a further reflection on the punning conjunction of hair, heir, and hare verifies the trinitarian blessing, benefits and bounty of God's free gift of grace operating in disguise in dialogues between Leda and Rose Aaron.

I. The Distance Principle in Mission

A creative change of position and language facilitates the art of seeing renewed Christian mission from alternative sideways thresholds. In breaking with the habitual visionary cramp of conventionally applied photographic rules, Freeman Patterson advocates the following exercise: Instead of looking at a half-filled picture space and moving *closer* to fill up the centre of interest space, reverse the language and the direction. See the picture space as half-empty and retreat from the centre of interest in order to show more of the environment and give a greater sense of space.⁵⁴ A creative Christian retreat from dominating the centre of interest, and attention to a more spacious frame of context, are two important aspects of what I have called the distance principle of mission. It has some important tactical and methodological lessons for mission theology and praxis. Its main tactical purpose is the positive exercising of the biblical cultural mandate of dressing and not excessively disturbing an existing situation. This is not to contradict *Sunday's* and *Thursday's* grace-filled anarchy but to mimetically express and live out the cold heat paradox of love, compassion, and comfort of messianic favour. The directness of a clenched fist salute and challenge to an established system may have its social confrontation necessities; but the real kingdom-commonwealth reign of God inaugurated by Jesus cannot be found, let alone taken by violent force (Mt.11:12; Lk.16:16).⁵⁵ There are other, powerful,

54. Patterson, *The Art of Seeing*, p.35.

55. On the theme of nonviolence, see Ford, *My Enemy Is My Guest: Jesus and Violence in Luke*.

subtle, and less obvious ways of subverting and converting a godless situation. The anti-power disguise of a gentle human touch may well conceal the rod of iron or the hand of iron in a velvet glove. In the long run, the loneliness (solitude is perhaps more descriptive) of a long distance runner can only be nourished and sustained through an indirect *modus operandi* of renewal that can equally fly, run and walk (Is.40:31) to the finishing line of faith. The scriptural basis of the distance principle is found in God's question in Jer.23:23, "Am I only a God nearby, and not a God far away?" It is also in Eph.2:13, 17, "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near."

Utopian geographical 'conquistadores'⁵⁶ have been dealt with to some degree in mission history, but power-dominating and invasive attitudes are ones impressed deeply on the Western psyche and its feudal and colonial history. This 'ancestral heritage' must not be suppressed and denied. But at the same time, its pagan or secular restlessness must be evangelized in depth so that its energies are tamed of their brutalizing and inhumane, and trespassing excesses. Creatively rechannelled energy can then be adventurously reapplied to present day problems facing our global societies and environment.

The capacity of perspective adjustment is a learned human response; therefore renewed spiritual perspectives on the salvific reality of

56. This term is used to illustrate the attitude of earlier Christian mission outreaches who came to the New World in search of a literal utopia and earthly paradise, see Ford, "The Holy Spirit and Mission in the New Testament."

forgiveness and salvation for "all flesh" (Lk.3:7; Is. 40:5)⁵⁷ brings the benefits of blessing on all human nature, and death-to-love-life transformations. A sideways move of integrity in mission involves a change of focusing perspective. For instance, in Escher's picture of two strong contrasts, *Circle Limit IV*,⁵⁸ there is a complete interlocking design of white angels and black devils, especially noticeable where their wing points come together. What one sees most, black or white, depends upon which element one focuses. Much real life experience, as we know, contains many grey tones. In photography, grey is not the colour but the middle range tonalities that betoken relationships. For instance, between the palest flesh tones and the deepest, darkest reds, there is a mid grey area. A move away from the stark bleakness of black devil and white angel contrasts helps to facilitate genuinely spirited but mixed grey human relationships. Conscious attention to the grey area enables the photographer to determine the amount of available light and thus adjust the length of time and aperture opening required to expose the film to sufficient light required for its proper development. Middle grey is not a colour but an observable relationship. By accepting and determining the light and exposure qualities in dialogue for instance, attention to grey,

57. Ford, *My Enemy is My Guest*, p.23, suggests a strong like between the term "all flesh" to include all the created order, the animal kingdom and slaves and women included, which harks back to the creation stories of Genesis 1-9. She suggests that such an inclusive notion of salvation would not have found favour with the Jewish revolutionaries of Jesus' day, who wanted vengeance on and destruction of the gentiles.

58. Locher, ed., *The World of M.C. Escher*, p.247.

especially the dove grey of the Spirit, is not confused with devaluing spiritual mediocrity and unsavoury lukewarm compromises.

The retreat alternative, in photography, is a way of introducing and creating a different type of balance and harmony between compositional elements. A unifying picture need not have one dominant centre of interest in order to balance and harmonize its diverse components. Thus in exercising the distance principle of mission, retreat from the centre of interest is not defeat unless defined with negative battle imagery and language. Genuine religious retreats bring Godly refreshment and renewal to body and spirit. Breaking with a key form is not breaking or emptying the thematic reservoir of Godly initiative and renewal.⁵⁹ The specificity of the Holy Spirit's pictures of mission advocacy made in apparently non-conformist action and passion, will not be bound by the confining chains and cages imposed by cultural Christian traditions and norms. The warnings in Mt.12:32 and Heb.6:4 are a reminder about slandering the name and work of the Spirit that blows where's he chooses. In Leda's case, the distance principle meant close companionship that learned where and how to maintain an appropriate and non-disturbing distance, with Christian mission integrity. This retreat was enacted in order to transform a death space position with healing and non-threatening, and life-affirming distance. Her images and symbols invited and welcomed attention even as she fought against the invasive conventions of stale religious conceptual language.

59. Recall God's scathing complaint about Israel's apostasy is found in Jer.2:13, "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns, that can hold no water."

A green light invitation, rather than a forced invasion, is the key to distance mission.

Close distance and distant closeness are, of course, a fine example of paradox. The paradox of images and symbols permits one to be both close and distant, hot and cold, at the same time. In the context of undercover secret service mission, the reasons for this 'both-and' position have been considered. For those suffering from deep psychic and spiritual wounds and hunger, the distance principle is an important guideline in learning to serve the purposes and ministries of the Holy Spirit concealed in situations that require undercover service. Both personal and social wounds and hunger may need careful dressing and nurturing. Creative space-making also enables one to listen at length and at depth to a person and a culture in order to hear and respond to their contextual questions. Retreat permits a saving space to be created in the midst of the aggravating and numbing terror of a literal or metaphoric death space, so that the situation can be addressed indirectly and obliquely without overload. There is an appropriate place for veiling and distancing the overload power of Jesus' name, and veiling our own power as his diplomatic ambassadors commissioned and sent by the Spirit.

There are only a few people like St. Paul, who can face an enormous amount of light shining all at once into their gloomy despair and darkness, without being permanently blinded and incapacitated in body, mind and spirit. A candle, or even the brief flare of a match, may be a sufficient and tolerable light for those who live in terrifying darkness. And severe and chilling cramp, for whatever reasons, needs a firm, gentle and gradual application of warmth so that the limbs may

unfold without undue pain and permanent damage. Mission retreat is not rebellious insurrection and mutiny per se, but an alternative move in the direction of life on the sidelines. "The Spirit is life and peace" (Rom.8:6). The Holy Spirit freely hears and acknowledges the laments of the angry, the brokenhearted, the oppressed innocent and guilty alike. She also hears the sighs and groans too deep and articulate for words, and intercedes and intervenes with appropriate advocacy (Rom.8:26). Liminal thresholds are those specially protected umbrella places and in-between spaces where there is the true freedom to be dead and come alive in new ways and colourfully new relationships.

A trickster change of position and language facilitates undercover mission which is distant from the obvious attention focused on the centre stage. Working and playing as a stagehand on the sidelines and in the wings of life's dramas can be quite advantageous because of the obscurity and anonymity which such undercover positions provide. An oblique and indirect approach to behind-the-scenes mission strategy can be very beneficial in making meaningful contact with ordinary people. Before good news and glad tidings can be shared, new and renewed lines and networks of communication must be established. Wings and sidelines are places ripe for the undercover trickster development of the term 'anonymous Christian'.⁶⁰ With playful respect, I suggest that the term be retained but applied to genuinely knowing Christians acting as

60. The term 'anonymous Christian' was coined by Karl Rahner to break with the exclusivity of Roman Catholic teaching about no salvation outside the church. For a review of this issue, see Paul Knitter, *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions*, (New York: Orbis Books, 1985), p.128 ff. For other challenges to the untenable nature of anonymous Christian theology, see Mooren, "Theology at the Crossroads," p.8, ft.nt.16; also, D. Bosch, "The Church in Dialogue," p.143.

anonymous servants and friends in the same mission service vein as that of their master's and mistress'. Being an undercover detective sent on secret service missions is one way of preserving and maintaining a certain appropriate integrity in mission. Especially in situations of great numbing distress, spiritually receptive eyes and ears may not simply be calloused but nonexistent. Poetical meaning-making may take a lot of extensive groundwork before the Christian message can be received and understood. Only genuine passion and compassion, and co-feeling sideways companionship, can help to penetrate numbness. When a person or a culture is wounded, starved and oppressed beyond belief, their symbol gaps are usually filled to overflowing with religious terror images and judgment stories. So it may take a long time for the repeated telling and enacting of a love story which is strong and supple enough to cast terror out of the plot. Such spirited strength may be most especially concealed in great and genuine weakness. It may even be an utter disservice and disaster to directly mention God, Christ, religion, etc. as the answer, when the contextual questions are unknown. That being the case, an anonymous and veiled exterior presence may well facilitate a gently powerful and authoritative mercy mission. The comfort mission of a gentle poetic and symbolic touch combines closeness and distance, applied through prayerful but silent split reference appeals to the paradisaal benefits and blessings of trinitarian bounty.

Without overly exaggerating either the distance or the close side of the anonymous Christian image, one considerable risk of distance mission is the conventional misnomer that mistakenly equates being distant with being cold and uncaring. But in certain transforming situations, a cold heat induction transformer (CHIT) is essential to

undercover mission. Particularly in present and future-oriented mission service and dialogue, the prerequisite life-mapping and space-making expeditions and horizontal boundary-crossings are situations of tremendous incongruity. Those missionaries sent on such challenging explorations must be appropriately and creatively dressed with alternative materials that can withstand the freezing hostility of one's own kind, which is so often associated with being an adventurer. Thus I suggest the wearing a colourful knitted Map coat⁶¹ that may serve to well conceal and preserve missionaries sent on distance missions requiring open and vulnerable exposure to many other unfamiliar and strange elements. A colony of tent caterpillars always requires that a few rogues to go out on a limb so that the whole group doesn't suffocate. Boundary-crossing rogues like Jesus bring fresh air and depth perspective into otherwise closed and suffocating religious situations. Roguish trickster activity is a life-giving and space-making service *par excellence*.

J. Peacock Tales

Fieldwork, as the anthropologist James Peacock informs us, is a distinctive conjunction of experience and method. "The peculiarly demanding combination of physical hardship, psychological disorientation, and intellectual challenge that constitutes fieldwork

61. An amusing visual illustration of an incongruous map is the colourful knitted Map coat in Fasset, *Kaffe Fasset at the V & V*, p.71. It is worth noting, too, that the word 'chit' derives from the Sanskrit word meaning 'brightly coloured'; also, for a pithy discussion of identity and mapping and marking boundaries, see Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1985).

can be understood only by those who have done it."⁶² Peacock's details of this process⁶³ characteristically resemble and resonant with other interdisciplinary types of interim disorientation which could be called *the school of hard knocks*. Threefold processes are universally indicative of the human need for spiritual growth and transformation, conveyed by a host of diverse names. All these transforming experiences of movement and growth may be poetically expressed as *the rhythm of becoming*. A necessary disorientation⁶⁴ creates a space in which shifts and realigning perspectives and perceptions can take place in timely ways.⁶⁵ For instance, the praxis and poetic schooling in hardship, disorientation and challenge required to learn and practice the distance principle of mission, is an adventurous fieldwork and playground ripe for faith investment. In schooling and partnering the "drives" of cognitive and affection faculties with the "draws" of moral and

62. James Peacock, *The Anthropological Lens: Harsh Light, Soft Focus*, (Cambridge, M.A.: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p.x.

63. Ibid, p.55 ff.

64. This discussion of a disorientation is not theoretical. As I started this chapter, I discovered that my computer had 'died' as a result of the earth tremour on 18 October, 1990. All my files, but for this thesis text, were lost. Interim measures resulted in the use of a second computer, with a new keyboard situated on a knitting table. Eventually my own computer was resurrected, but altogether the keyboard processes required three disorientation and reorientation stages.

65. This interim place is called the neutral zone by Fowler, *Faith Development and Pastoral Care*, p.109. It can also seem like , or a dark night of the soul, or a place of Godforsakenness (p.51). He has many helpful suggestions and comments to make about the neutral zone. Most especially, there is great wisdom in meditating on one's deep hungers and contemplating what un-lived portions of life would remain unfulfilled if one died today.

religious transformation,⁶⁶ new life is generated, nurtured and sustained through active faithing adventures with God, others and the environment. "Part of learning to trust the Spirit of God in our spirit is to trust that what we most deeply and truly yearn for has something profoundly to do with what God wants for us."⁶⁷ Peacock's fieldwork school of wisdom has much to teach us about a serving partnership and friendship with God and with the world.

"Blue heaven, green earth;" These opening lines were written by Emily Carr, the acclaimed Canadian painter, in her short story, *The Heart of a Peacock*.⁶⁸ She continues, "betwixt the two the big old cheery tree in full blossom, with the sunshine drawing the sweet, heavy scent of honey from the blooms till the air was almost sickly and even the bees were gluttoned. Suddenly into the honeyed sweetness burst the passionate cry of a peacock with its long-drawn tang of bitterness." At first Emily envies and is threatened by the appearance of his "shower of glory", even though his beauty pleases and attracts her attention. But

66. Happel and Walter, *Conversion and Discipleship*, p.31 ff. The terms 'drive' and 'draw' are used to describe the bi-polar sources of moral and religious experience in the expansion of consciousness. It comes from the "dynamic search for moral meaning (drive of intentional consciousness and human inclinations and needs) and an attraction or lure to discover and participate in value (draw of social world as value-laden and God's grace calling us to authentic humanity) not grounded solely in our own desiring and choosing."

67. Ibid, p.110.

68. Emily Carr, "The Heart of a Peacock," in *The Heart of a Peacock*, (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, [1953] 1986), p.3. The remaining quotations from this four-page story will not be footnoted, so that its flow is not disturbed. A very fine retrospective of Carr's paintings was on display in the National Gallery in Ottawa, from July to September 1990. The blue and green of these opening lines is most especially visible in her painting entitled *Above the Trees*. She lived between 1871 and 1945, mainly in Victoria, B.C.

his mincing steps and arrogant preening and strutting in front of a mirror made her feel "like the poor shabby little girl at the party." Thinking he was conceited, she turned to her work, commenting, "Vain creature! Pretty you'd look if they turned you inside out and showed your selfish, shabby heart."

The peacock, however, persisted in visiting Emily daily at her studio and gradually she realized that he was both drawing something from her and returning it tenfold. Suddenly, she sensed "the loneliness of this creature....No kith, no kin: his looking-glass self the only mate he had ever known." So Emily, great animal lover that she was, learned his call. They would screech a mutual greeting and spend long companionable hours together. Then Emily went abroad for five years. On the first morning of her return, she screeched a welcome out of her studio window, even though the park was out of eyesight and earshot. She little realized that the peacock was not only alive, but that he was already hurrying toward her, not the mirror, and that he was unmindful of his tail as he came. "Oh, peacock! Now I know that if they did turn you inside out your loyal heart would be lovelier than your feathers!"

Alas, this happiness and loving freedom was curtailed by the city officials and the grumbling 'traditions of men' who locked the peacock in a public cage. "Pen the peacock." They could neither bear the peacock his freedom of choice companions, nor his naturally endowed and God-given plumage. His feathers and his so-called pride were broken in his attempts to escape. He became very shabby, and "the glow and sparkle of his plumage dulled, went out." Emily tried her best to get him freed, but he died, and even his feathers were disposed of. "They wasn't worth saving. All the glint went off 'em when his heart broke."

Heartbreak, for whatever reasons, qualifies for messianic favour and attention (Is.61:1). One reason why Emily was so sensitive to the loneliness of the peacock was that she too lived with great loneliness, without a mate, and with deep spiritual faithfulness to a prodigious Godly talent that was very little understood and appreciated by the social milieu and religious conventionalities of her day.⁶⁹ Though she considered herself to be shabby in comparison with the peacock, Emily slowly learned another and very different story by being in close and loving proximity to him. In a certain wholesome and bittersweet sense, she and the peacock became soul mates, and were deeply and mutually enriched by that. In the bittersweet experiences of sideways mission and its associating realms of disorienting fieldwork, shabby experiences may be redeemed and distorted perspectives turned around. Proximity, even distant proximity with a faithful heart, is a way of healing heartbreak and great loneliness. The bittersweet taste of hope redeems and partners greyness of many kinds. Drawing people out of their distorting and cramping sense of shabbiness means offering them a non-threatening relationship with beauty, or whatever else it is that will empower them to let go of their me-cramp.

Emily Carr ruminates on this question in her diary entry for 26 January 1933.

What is beauty? - God. What is that vital thing, in ugly as well as lovely things and places, the thing that takes us out of ourselves, that draws and attracts us, the unnameable thing claiming kinship with us? - God, the divine in us

69. The themes of loneliness and faithfulness are well conveyed in Emily Carr, *Hundreds and Thousands: The Journals of an Artist*, (Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1966).

calling to the divine in all else, the one essence and substance.⁷⁰

Substance is a key word here for it refers us back to foundations necessary for participating in the Christian message. Fear and competitive rivalry do not have the liberating power to drive, draw and lead us out of the small confines that define habitually conditioning routine. In mission praxis, therefore, there is a very appropriate and timely place for finding and using communicable themes, images and concepts that satisfy the physical and spiritual senses - music, crystals and Escher's artwork being three examples - with wide-ranging and accessible appeals, literal and metaphoric, to a broad spectrum of experience and people. Visual and auditory power, and the other senses, can creatively communicate *anthropos-theos* images and concepts that then become transformed and transfigured in their power for tangible goodness in mission ministries, service and dialogue.

The peacock's feather or tail, is an ancient visual symbol of the resurrection.⁷¹ It is, in my view, a stronger and more supple image and symbol of the earthly reality of resurrection, than that of the butterfly. The metamorphosis of the chrysalis can convey utter transformation, which is very important, though it requires that the cocoon be split open. But the recorded pictures of Jesus' intact, cocoon-like shroud speak of a different reality at work and play. So two questions emerge? How to get the dead silkworm out without damaging the cocoon? Why is an intact cocoon important? In the production of

70. Ibid, p.33.

71. Child and Colles, *Christian Symbols, Ancient and Modern*, p.212.

silk, the silkworm must die in order to leave its case intact. To my mind, the softening and unwinding processes involved in reclaiming the silk filament for use as a natural material, as wool, cotton and linen are, are connected with word and picture plays and trickster pronunciations. The unravelling or unwinding process retrieves and produces a natural and continuous life thread which is like the healing process which faces some people. Injuries are wounds, so the double pronunciation of wound-unwound and the wind-unwind-rewind motifs are all connected with the healing touch and refabricating activity of the Spirit. The silk thread, on its own or in combination with other natural and/or man-made fibres, can be woven or knit into serviceable material for garments and furnishings. From the sidelines perspective, silkworms and butterflies do have their own unique contributions to make to the overall theme of resurrection, as indeed, does the peacock motif.

The peacock is linked with the themes of immortality and renewal through the analogy that "when it sheds its splendid tail this plumage is brilliantly renewed."⁷² Its tail, or the metonymy of one feather, stands for the blending together of all colours, which means that it represents a blaze of insight. In this way, it therefore signifies a multivalent totality which is connected with resurrection, with ideas of immortality and with incorruptibility of the soul. Thus the theme of new life, new birth, rebirth, reappears in a new thematic image. A deep consideration of Leda's soul language signals, baptismal enactments, and searching 'good fig' persistence, raise many interesting and provocative

72. Ibid. Additional amplifying and corroborative details are also found in Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, and Tom Chetwynd, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, (London: Paladin, 1982).

questions about 'seeing' the veiled spiritual jewel (crystal) or treasure that resides in the inner sanctuary of human body-self.

The eyes in a peacock's tail signify foresight or insight. Like the stars in the sky, and fishes eyes in the sea, they "see in a different way from the sunlight of conscious vision. These independent eyes (centres of consciousness) provide a vision which extends far beyond that of Ego-consciousness."⁷³ Hindu tales of the peacock's 'eyes' are associated with dusk and twilight and thus balance the sun's brightness when at its zenith.⁷⁴ Eyes that see 'in the dark' school us in the wisdom of neither having to fear the dark, nor mindlessly equating darkness with evil. Recall the blind friend mentioned earlier. She 'sees' in the dark all the time. Though it would be murder or suicide to suggest she take leaps of faith into the unknown, every step of her every day is based on steps of sufficient faith and risk-taking. Her adventurous spirit is an infectious and living testimony of walking by faith. And yes, I have seen her running down the street with her guide dog, in order to catch the bus, jumping off the dock into the water, and climbing headfirst into a kayak!

Although very beautiful to the senses, the visual contemplation of the peacock motifs was intended to represent beauty apprehended by the mind. Powerfully associating clusters of spiritual truths are thus beautifully contained and expressed in the peacock as a visual medium and metaphor. These truths are connected with the *meaning* of the

73. Chetwynd, *Dictionary of Symbols*, p.52.

74. This juxtaposition of noonday and twilight is very interesting because the exact language and motifs are found in Ellis Peters, *An Excellent Mystery*, mentioned earlier about the sleuthing detective, Br. Cadfael. He refers to two characters as noonday and twilight.

resurrection power which raised Jesus from the dead. Imagine the beauty of the insight and oversight of the resurrected Jesus. Of utmost significance, urgency and benefit is the retrieval and renewal of the meaning of resurrection. The peacock's bittersweet cry and beauty of the peacock need to be reassociated with its wealth of transapparent spiritual truths. The disorienting shift from questions about how the resurrection could have occurred, to those concerning what the meaning of the resurrection is, as Doug Meeks pointed out earlier, impels significant horizontal shifts in one's consciously focused attention. The very improbability of the resurrection can empower questions and space probing contexts for questioning the meaning and intelligible reasons of such events. An intelligible appeal to affection and to reason raises penetrating questions about spirituality imposed on the tangible actuality of the observable world. A reasoning and intelligible foundation for faith comes about by deeply sustained and questioning reflections on the incongruity and experiences of resurrection reality. The peacock's appeal helps to ground the intensity of these imaged conceptions.

The danger, as Emily Carr's story shows all too clearly, is that of misunderstanding the peacock's manner and misreading and misinterpreting its shower of glory or brilliance as pride and ego. This brings us back to the voice from the other side, and a woman's carefully reasoned wisdom reflecting on the differing and complementary male-female perspectives and experiences of ego consciousness. There is a certain deathliness and death space existence which is not that equated with Brueggemann's negative analysis of "ego sufficiency and royal consciousness", as was mentioned in the previous chapter. Ego willfulness and

selfishness need taming and rechanneling, not extinguishing. The cultural mandate mentioned above in connection with the distance principle of mission, means building up, preserving, dressing, and conserving the ego as a blessed, not a cursed, container of consciousness. This mandate is intimately connected with the soulful resurrection of a lovely, moral and faithful kind of royal consciousness and ego sufficiency, the value of which is so necessary for all healthy human psychic and social foundations of trust, loyalty and fidelity. The impress of the Holy Spirit regarding the resurrection and depth evangelization of the woman archetype being raised up in these days must not and will not be denied. But neither is it a threat unless perceived, projected and conditioned in battle and rivalry images and language. The denial of the rightful place and side of conscious womanhood is the ultimately dangerous denial of the reality of the soul and its expressive images of transparency. As Cirlot notes, "on Roman coins, the peacock designates the apotheosis of princesses."⁷⁵ The peacock as an image and symbol of resurrection helps us to rethink and refeel its experience, meaning and communication for today. In the light of Jesus' trickster remarks about the rendering impress on Caesar's Roman coins (Mt.22:21; Mk.12:16, 17; Lk.20:25), God's due may well be the soul-filled impress of wholesome and enlightened experience of royal consciousness on men and women alike.

The inexorable death space gap wherein takes place the eternal and perpetual murder or killing of the ego to and for some greater good or purpose, is a onesided lie. I speak of murder, not sacrifice and a

75. Cirlot, *Dictionary of Symbols*, p.251.

rightful dying process. It is an idolatrous lie of the most fearsome and terrifying apostasy. It smacks of the most unwholesome, disease-ridden, and ungodly mentality, most centrally dominated by the exclusive and vested power of religious patriarchal voices and emasculated traditions the world over. Wherever is mooted a spirituality mind over matter and body, the murder of the ego is of paramount importance in dominating and controlling the body. This charade of sacrifice of the ego is actually the murder of the body and especially the murder of phallic energy and wholesome relationship with the feminine principle in ordinary embodied forms. It is seen in every great religious tradition, Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic, Christian and has become highly spiritualized. As these great traditions have only told one side of the story, the need for womanly perspectives and articulations of embodied spirituality is all the more apparent. The erotic art of India, for instance, is strictly symbolic and not to be embodied in real relationships.⁷⁶ Phallos has a mind of its own,⁷⁷ thank God, and no matter how that is denied, its reality remains a bodily and daily fact of life. Especially

76. For a discussion of this contradiction, see Ananda Coomaraswamy, "Sahaja," in *The Dance of Siva: Essays on Indian Art and Culture*, (New York: Dover Publications, [1924] 1985). In speaking of the allegory of Krishna and the milkmaids (as men's souls seduced by God), the author notes, "The relation of the milkmaids with the Divine Herdsman is not in any sense a model intended to be realised in human relationships, and the literature contains explicit warnings against any such confusion of planes" (p.104). See also the discussion of a man's view of ethereal womanhood in the author's essay "The Status of Women." Not to devalue this beatific vision in any way, I simply point out that this is a man's story about woman, and not a woman's story about herself, and her heavenly and earthly, and trustworthy bodily reality.

77. For a healthy view of this Godly and bodily experience written by a clergyman-analyst, see Eugene Monick, *Phallos: Sacred Image of the Masculine*, (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1987).

in REM states of sleep, dreaming and penile erection go hand in hand. So the profound life-destroying danger comes in ritually murdering what cannot be controlled, phallos and women being two noteworthy examples. The question of displacement arises regarding the unbearable and inhumane loneliness of the religiously ascetic life that opposes mind and matter. What nonsense! Mind is matter, brain matter first of all. Genuine loneliness and separation from the feminine principle, may then become uncontrollably transferred to, and mistranslated and misapplied as, the fear of woman as snaky temptress. On the other side, no thanks to Freud's limited and reductive views of sexuality, the snake-phallus shape can become a symbol of the terrorizing fear and brutality of the penetrating power of the masculine principle. Abuse of power is the real issue at stake.

This is not to deny the value, importance and necessity of ascetic religious vows which are situation-specific. The contemporary example of Cliff Richard, the Christian pop star, is a fine model of voluntary celibacy that lives by the spirit of the law. My point is fundamentally the pursuit of the question of fear, its denial and displacement, and the fear of ultimate separation allied to death. The Christian treatment of death and separation from God, and death as final and ultimate enemy is too closely associated with Eve and garden story shut-outs to be denied and ignored. The question is how to heal the historical and theological split without vengeance for past wrongs. If there is any battle to be fought it must be in company with the Spirit's doublesided sword of peace. "Let forgiveness be my sword."⁷⁸

78. See, or rather listen to the "Peace Song" on the recording entitled *A Dwelling Place*, by the St. Louis Jesuits.

The danger of putting Christ in a manmade cage and curtailing his freedom to display his glory, except within human bounds, is considerable. The important point which Emily Carr, for all her feelings of shabbiness, came to experience, was that the peacock was not a rival but a complement, and that whatever was drawn out was returned in superabundance. God's glory manifest in veiled form in Jesus, in the resurrection blaze of the risen Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, is not a rival comparison with the shabbiness of human sin. On the contrary, God's glory is our glory, were our cramping conformities and autonomous shabbiness transfigured and transformed by a newly initiated and baptized perspective.

Consider these twin feathers. The first is found in the common motif of two peacocks symmetrically arranged on either side of the tree of life, or drinking from the fountain of life or the Eucharistic cup in Christian imagery. Such a motif offers a universal insight and reflection on the nature of human beings. Firstly, there is the psychic duality of flesh and spirit which is connected the mortal-immortal relationship of the *Dioscouri*, the Gemini twins. They loved each other and would not be separated. In 2Cor.5:1 ff., St. Paul discusses this same mortal-immortal theme. The inextricable reality of life and death face and balance each other from the sidelines. The rightful centre is the tree, the water fountain, and the Eucharistic cup of blessing and refreshment for the world-weary and the soul-sick. This cosmic tree is a symbol of transpersonal life, and therefore of a triaxial unity and directional totality. Both sides live from, and drink from the centre. Death is not removed, and the longing for life in the face of death remains. Even the distant acceptance of death as a friend is mutually

transformative; it is not passive resignation but active attention to the bracing nature and dialogue of both parties. Thus, for a Christian partaking from the fountain of life or the cup of salvation, one is refreshed and dressed with an experience of life incorruptible. Such quality living is not subject to decay. No matter what he looked like, in a glorious display or shabbiness of feathers and a broken spirit, the peacock's heart was a faithful heart.

At her core, Leda too had a faithful heart of longing for a fresh, satisfying, and unifying relationship with God. But she was so terrified and so terrorized by "red hot promises" that she didn't believe the good news. Indeed, it is important to understand that the New Testament word for 'immortality' does not simply mean 'deathlessness' but more like the quality of life that is enjoyed.⁷⁹ Quality, not quantity, is a priority for dying and living people. Thus, in the love story about Barnabo transitions, garment exchange initiations, and the green light waiting in the wings, there is a most amazing story of dramatically enacted inculturation. It plays out the experienced meaning of God's pure gift of love given equally to sinners and just people, without exception. During the last three weeks of Leda's life, Rose Aaron too was in the symbolic process of dying. Death for death, life for life. This exchange offers an intriguing yet hospitable perspective on the possible means and cost-effectiveness of conversion and self-conversion. It was, and is a profound experience of being initiated and baptized into a new sense of consciousness regarding

79. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, p.249.

God's foundational gift of freely bestowed love and jubilee favour poured out on all flesh.

The second feather portrayed in the symmetrical arrangement of mortality and immortality drinking from the same cup has a particular meaning when experienced in the twilight world of the resurrection. By drinking from the fountain of living water and partaking from the Eucharist cup, the Christian pledges himself and herself "to drink of the Chalice that Christ drank of and to be baptized with that with which He was baptized."⁸⁰ Sunday's question to Thursday and all the other week days is not rhetorical. The question invites an answer. The question of the biblical theme of the 'wrath of God' and the 'day of judgment', remain as 'red hot promises' to be considered in the next and final chapter. Peacock images and tales have a bittersweet reality which can sustain faith and hope as little else can. They appeal to the senses, the mind and the heart, and the body, in unfathomable ways that can reconnect us with the principle themes that can renew the Christian heritage and message.

We have been considering ways of renewing the foundations of faith and making it possible for people to experience and participate in the Christian message of life-giving and space-making shalom. An intelligent grasp of the symbolic significance of the peacock requires fieldwork experience and method, and all that that entails! The bittersweet quality of a peacock's tale/tail speaks of a previously unheard-of event that can be used to draw people out of their cramping

80. Child and Colles, *Christian Symbols, Ancient and Modern*, p.213.

confines and into the glorious filial freedom of being God's rightful heirs.

K. The Numbers Game

There is a trickster lesson in honouring symbolic numbers which integrate the spiritual (3) and material (4) worlds with Mahlerian themes of earthly renewal. The heavenly number of the spirit is signified by trinity, the threefold concept of humans as body, mind, spirit, also by beginning, middle, end and by past, present, future. The tripartite movements found in rites of passage, in the unfolding drama of parables,⁸¹ and in the hero journey⁸² all qualify for spiritually integrated inclusion. Four in materially grounded terms represents the four compass points, the seasons, the elements of earth, air, water, fire, the cross, the four evangelists, the four rivers of paradise. So a union of the spiritual and material worlds makes seven, and it is pure serendipity that this chapter shares that number and the concern for unity in body-soul and spirit. At the place and in the space where these paths of three's and four's intersect, some universal foundations can be re-established and reconstructed in ways that make it possible for people to experience once again, the refreshing vitality of the Christian message of good, good news. The universal accessibility

81. See Ricoeur, "The "Kingdom" in the Parables of Jesus" in *Anglican Theological Review* 63 (1981): 165-165; Ricoeur also uses the term, threefold mimesis, see Hilkert, "Retelling the Gospel Story," p.150 ff.

82. For applied details of Joseph Campbell's monomyth of the hero journey as a motif of spiritual growth, see J. & W. Clift, *The Hero Journey in Dreams*.

of key material images, symbols, and principles acts as important referential and navigational points. They help to ground the reality of spiritual experience and truth in ways which manifest the promise of life-giving and space-making relationship with God. As the wunderhorn abundance of this chapter so clearly illustrates, existing material reality is a foundational glory box and treasure house. They are full of common wealth images and symbols upon which to draw, to share, to enjoy, to participate in, and to invest, with as much transparent liberality as possible.

If number seven is regarded as a symbol of rest and completion, and a kind of finishing line, then eight is the number of fresh beginnings, rebirth and baptismal regeneration. This is why so many baptismal founts are octagonal. Through its shape, eight is associated with the intertwining snake motif of the caduceus as a symbol of healing, and the balancing of the spiritual and the natural order. Though an innocent man, Jesus was purposely numbered with the transgressors (Lk.22:37) and assorted anarchists. So it is fitting that the eighth day of the week is also the first day of a new order, starting with Sunday. As well as the day of Pentecost, Sunday is the regular feast day of the Holy Spirit, and a time for celebrating the resurrection of Christ with the elemental materials of bread and wine. Thus we now turn to the regeneration of the *Second Cup* offered and accomplished by Jesus, the author, initiator and finisher of the renewing foundations of faith, the one who invites free and favourable access to God.

What shall I render to the Lord
for all his bounty to me?
I will lift up the cup of salvation
and call on the name of the LORD,
I will pay my vows to the LORD
in the presence of all his people.

Psalm 116

CHAPTER 8

SECOND CUP INCULTURATION: GO THE DISTANCE

A. Introducing the *Second Cup Theme*

"In my beginning is my end....In my end is my beginning" are the words which frame the universal wisdom of "Eliot's trinity" about birth, the coupling of man and woman, and death.¹ In the symbiotic face of life and death, the healthy 'coupling of man and woman' generates a love story and song of human well-being connecting the past and the present, and directed toward future generations. The spiritual meaning of a human-divine coupling expresses the synergetic sideways partnership of Logos as direction and Eros as connection. In Jesus, their creative

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1. "Eliot's trinity" is the delightful turn of phrase used by Peter Winch, "Understanding a Primitive Society," in *Ethics and Action*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), p.44. 'Coupling' is also an important dream motif of mine from several years ago; all of which combined to inspire Chapter 7's title. Winch refers to T.S. Eliot's poem "East Coker" in *Four Quartets*, and uses the phrase to sum up his arguments about where some genuine and accessible human universals can be found. He did a comparative study of primitive magic rituals discussed in anthropological theory involving certain ethnocentric presuppositions. He emphasizes the expansive value and wisdom to be learned about ourselves, our own systems, and philosophical and scientific presuppositions, through the study of other social and tribal traditions.

union empowers the living word of God to become embodied in the flesh. In terms of the creative human union of these Logos-Eros qualities, "its truest meaning for life and society is an overcoming of personal isolation and selfish reserve in order to take an active part in the solution of present-day problems."² Death, in its triaxial manifestations, is one of the deepest theological problems and most critical social issues facing the modern world.

As the final chapter of this thesis begins to come to an end, we return to the initial Introduction and the braided ring quest, in order to refocus directly on the problem of the denial of death and fear as the key to denial, the question of how to befriend and welcome the enemy/stranger, and the answer to be given in the *Second Cup*. Hans Castorp, the commonfolk hero in Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*, had to be initiated into a 'higher state' of life-oriented consciousness that broke his inborn attraction to the fear associated with death, yet without denying the dark mysteries and realities of death and life. Evolving contours are sharpened by boundary conditions, and questions sharpen the contours of a problem. Death's problem is that of befriending and welcoming the enemy-stranger and offering mutually transformational hospitality. Christ Jesus is the *shalom* cupbearer *par excellence*, graciously initiating human being into his life-giving and space-making steps. In following in his steps, the *Second Cup* initiates the healthy, triaxial, and symbiotic friendship between death and life.

The *Second Cup Theme* was the all-night parting dream gift, "sheer gift", following a whirlwind romance with a disguised trickster who

2. Jung, "Women in Europe," par.262.

gently dropped me and my 3-D, six point paper-folded mandala into mission studies.³ Clearly the joke was on me in being given the *Second Cup* as an answer to an unknown quest and question! Over time, it has become a doublesided *anthropos-theos* cup of bittersweet initiation, one that human beings are universally pledged to drink, just as Christ drank from it. The fear and guilt (true and false) associated with law-breaking, however religiously, ethically and socio-culturally defined, are universal human experiences with which people must come to terms. In the name and spirit of Godly and intercessory compassion, Jesus became a lawbreaker, at least by the conventional definitions and traditions of his own culture. The scandal surrounding his birth and his genuine sharing of the existential human condition of those beyond the pale, bring the good news of another kind of unpredictable 'law and order', the unstinting grace and mercy of God's favour to those in need of and receptive to its life-giving qualities. The twin symmetry of fear connected with law-breaking *concealed* in the paradise garden of Genesis (Gen.3:10) is competently rivalled⁴ by the fear *revealed* in the Gethsemane garden. Jesus' agony of fear is all too transparent. What did he fear? Why was his agony so great? Clearly, whether his Garden "cup" is full of curses or blessings, Jesus will have to taste its

3. The amplifying details of this dream image of the *Second Cup* Theme are found in Appendix 2.

4. See Moore, "Ritual: A Moving Act of Imagination," in *Rituals of the Imagination*, esp. pp.1-4. Moore notes that the derivation of 'ritual' means flow, run, rush, or stream; rite is river or stream and is related to 'rival', one who uses the same stream. "One arrives or derives by approaching or leading from the river". There is an important difference between the external formality of ritual and a ritual sensibility. The imagining ego is like a musical instrument used to arrive places. "A ritual sense gives life to the ten thousand things, to multiplicity unimaginable" (p.3).

contents for himself. This is an initiating reality and experience which all human beings must face. Is death an ultimate punishment or a life fulfillment?

The *Second Cup* is an answering image and symbol given for reconciling the ultimate friend-enemy-stranger symbol gap through the motifs of *kissing the snake* and *drinking the firewater cup*. Paradoxically, the process of change and transformation requires that one embrace and love the things one fears most, symbolized by the snake. The snake and its earthy connections will be used here as a multivalent *anthropos* image to symbolize the fear of, and curse on, human nature. In learning to kiss, love, and value our own personal and collective human nature, as God does, then we will have positively redeeming good news to share. Entering into a healing dialogue with the root causes that trigger the fear of human nature is a way of learning the Godly wisdom of compassion. Fear is linked with condemnation and judgment, and the unhealthy separation from sufficiently secure relationships, human and divine. The cursing, condemning, and vengeful *theos* image of 'wrath of God' directed at original sin, is symbolized by the firewater cup. Its blessed and beneficial contents are actually cool, bittersweet and innocent refreshment. However, the *Second Cup* must be tasted to be trusted. In these literal but metaphorical images and symbols that couple *anthropos* and *theos* in a sideways relationships, the braided ring quest will rest its case for the mediating mission and sideways position of images and symbols in dialogue. The distance of the braided ring quest has been an alternative point of departure for participating in a

mutually shared mission context of "awesome depths"⁵ which is hospitable to many kinds of disguised strangers and otherness, is vulnerable and at the mercy of real and apparent enemies, and is still open to mutual transformation. Welcome to the home stretch!

B. The Question of Exchange

Leda had rightly walked away from institutional "red hot promises." In palliative care literature, the ironic turning point toward a healthy reconciliation with death often comes at the moment of turning away from false authority figures. Nevertheless, along with Leda's true and deeply buried moral fibre, one can detect the manic and demonizing fear-impress of eternal damnation which continued to plague and terrorize her for the longest time.

Just imagine the situation (15th visit). Leda pointed to a blank wall saying in a cross voice, "See! Look at that writing on the wall!" A chill went through Rose Aaron's bones, for the context of wall-writing and finger-pointing (Dan.5), as she well knew, is a warning about a person who has scorned God's history lessons. Leda warned, "Don't frighten me" and then proceeded to frighten herself. She made a rhythmic "ah, ah" sound of distress which continued for a long time. In the face of such overburdening distress, the truth is that Rose Aaron

5. Meeks, "The "Crucified God" and the Power of Liberation," pp.36 & 37. He is reminding readers of the awesome depths of others and ourselves which also reveal the awesome depths of the internal life of God. From out of the glimpses of God's manifest internal life are created places of freedom and shaping for human life. Though usually concealed, these resurrecting depths, when disclosed, counter our trends to trivialize ourselves and God.

turned a compassionate blind eye and completely overlooked the obvious contextual line of the writing. An unexpected interruption gave her time to think and plan a coping strategy. The detailed reality of Leda's own radiant and orient-lustrous smile was the ordering power-over-chaos image that Rose Aaron fed back to her. On that occasion, Rose Aaron was rewarded with a radiant smile of farewell.

The next visit was Leda's "my friend is my enemy" exchange of terribly stabbing words. Leda herself felt too tightly "encased and cramped", though the bedclothes were loose. Immediately Rose Aaron appeared, Leda began her distressing "aye, I-eye" chant, which continued throughout the whole visit, with short interludes of 'normal' communication. Though terribly unnerving, Rose Aaron eventually learned to accept and go with these distressing signals. She was then able to feed Leda with other distractions and diversions. In context, she mentioned Leda's literal picture of Leda and the Swan, and fed her on detailed Barnabo material. Spontaneously, Leda responded, "I had wanted to say something nice, something good, about the wings", but she never did, at least not directly. In dialoguing about Barnabo symbolism, they rehearsed how he had faced his misdirected sense of guilt, fear and shame. All the while, there continued the same non-stop, "I-eye" distress signals. Rather than ignore them, Rose Aaron remarked on all the insightful eyes on a peacock's tail, and spoke about its beautiful bluey, greeny, turquoise colours. These colours were literally and conversationally connected with the same ones in a real picture of a partially concealed 'mystery man', hanging on the wall outside Leda's bedroom door at home. This was also the occasion when Leda, via Marco Polo's mimed hand gestures, positively reinforced the message that hand

gestures were the most amusing, satisfying, and attention-getting means of communication, albeit silent and indirect communication. Feeling like a banquet-scene traitor, Rose Aaron hoped most fervently that a silent and indirect communication of implicit good news would get through to Leda, somehow. Rose Aaron also fed her a pineapple ice lolly. Most notably, Leda asked for Rose Aaron's home address so she'd know where to get in touch with her when she needed to!

Serendipity provided Rose Aaron with some Tantalus-amplifying food for thought a few hours after this friend-enemy encounter, for she was quite distressed at being accused of being a twin traitor, a betrayer of Leda, and a betrayer and truncator of the religious tradition of repentance via Dan.5. *Hybris* is scorn of the gods first of all,⁶ not pride nor vainglory. The peacock's apparent vainglory is nothing more nor less than the proper fulfilling of its true and God-given nature, just as Jesus fulfilled his, even though it cost him a one way trip to Jerusalem. Recall *Thursday's* insight about the necessary fight of each creature to courageously fulfill its nature, its inherent virtue. This type of fulfilling glory is a far cry from scorning the gods, and is to be valued at all costs. The half-concealed 'peacock-man' hanging over this situation became an opaque-turned-transparent redeeming feature, whose meaning and life-giving blessing on this friend-enemy exchange motif became clearer as time passed, and most blessedly transparent as the final analysis of this chapter was in preparation. The question of Leda and/or Rose Aaron scorning God was open to question, but Rose Aaron

6. See the Tantalus myth in Reinhold, *Past and Present*, pp.265 ff.

could not feed Leda with any finger-pointing doom,⁷ and only emphasized the glory of the banquet scene itself. It was a position of integrity she could maintain through compassion for Leda's deep distress, but without knowing its source. Yet it was also quite a fear-laden position, by going against the religious customs and 'traditions of men' regarding repentance. She purposely and consciously cut out some of the distressing, if not offending, material context of Dan.5. Ah!, little did she know of what was in store...

The open question and sufficiently sustaining refreshment of the immediate situation was connected with mitigating the fear circumstances of an inherited family curse of tribal proportions. The real twin issues at stake are not questions about repentance and true-false guilt, but rather sensitivity to the *timing* of a repent-believe message, and to the devastating, unwarranted, and overburdening legacy of a family curse. This issue continues to haunt and curse the universal human family with the collective tribal guilt tradition of original sin. This man-made tradition is the origin and source of the 'inborn theological attraction to death'.

However, negating a traditional and conventional theological explanation for death is insufficient liberation without putting something powerfully positive and releasing in its place. The power vacuum left by little or sweeping changes is perilous when positive benefits are not immediately introduced (Mt.12:44; Lk.11:25; Ex.23:29, 30). Between negation and positive input, however, there is a certain

7. Re: the wall-writing and finger-pointing motif, there was the lighter side, with an inane and constant reminder of some old comic T.V. skits about the "flying fickle finger of fate." Jesus' finger writing was also thought-provoking (Jn.7:53-8:11).

life-initiating passage to be traversed. Symbiotic friendships aren't, and indeed can't be forced, for by their very nature they are of positive mutual benefit. The paradoxical and positive benefit and blessing of grief and/or anguish is its gently releasing and unnumbing power which is meant to prefigure the experiences of joy (Jn.16:20-24). Though death, loss, devastation must be carefully listened and lovingly responded to, the final grace-word is reserved for the power of God that raises up new life. Resurrection power raised Christ with new life and continues to raise human nature. But death comes before new life.

Grief work in the present is the prerequisite for ushering joy into the future. As Walter Brueggemann so knowingly explains, "those who have not cared enough to grieve will not know joy. The mourning is a precondition....It is not a formal, external requirement but rather the only door and route to joy."⁸ Grief before joy, death before life, crucifixion before resurrection. Paradoxically, these are the hope-filled themes of the theology of the cross willingly and lovingly embraced. The simple reason is that these heights and depths are equally the healing and reconciling experiences of conscious initiation into life. They may become coupling opportunities, through filial friendship with God, to share and participate in the human empowerment fed by loving God's grief and joy. The grief and lament of Jeremiah is a positively subversive example of a person able to feel and think the reality of numbing denial. In his day, the flock were without the blessing and benefit of enough Godly, religious and political leaders. Jeremiah's heartfelt rebuke to the leaders was the false peace that

8. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, pp.112-113.

lulled the people with an unjustified and unsatisfying political and spiritual complacency (Jer.8:11, 21; 10:21). Among many religious outcasts, exiles and those dying in spirit, and often hidden in their indifference or antagonistic anger to the Christian message, there is a heartrending but mostly denied grief directed at the Christian tribalism that splits and curses human nature. This is the voice of a dialogue partner worth listening to. God's grief, rather than the tribal wrath motif, is a timely contemporary motif open to sideways exploration and very beneficial for life-initiating experiences. "To live is such a privilege, to love is such an art that I need your help to start..."⁹

The life-coupling question has great bearing on the hospitality theme of welcoming and befriending the enemy and stranger as a guest, for genuine "hospitality is a form of exchange, not a one-sided beneficence."¹⁰ The chastening challenge of hospitality is the mutuality of its exchange value. The exclusive experience of being host on home ground may be a very far cry from being a nervous guest on strange and unfamiliar ground. Opportunities to participate in both roles are valuable in horizontal expansion. Most especially in the context of inter-religious and inter-secular dialogue, the need for facilitating a hospitable and mutual exchange of give and take must be born in mind and heart. The danger and power of being the host at the

9. From the song sung by Joni Eareckson Tada, "I Am A Servant," from the tape *Spirit Wings*, (Word Inc., WC 9621, 1982). Joni was paralyzed at 17 years in a diving accident, and knows what a privilege it is to be alive.

10. D.M. Dooling, "Focus," *Parabola* 15 (4, 1990): 2-3, p.2. The whole issue is on the theme of hospitality, and all contributors spontaneously agreed on the importance of the reciprocal exchange motif.

dialogue table is that of being or appearing to be patronizing. It takes doublesided power and practice to serve without being enslaved in a servant role, or any other role, for that matter. Equally, it requires the gentle and humbling power of grace to be a guest, especially an enemy-guest, and allow oneself to be seen as the enemy in order to serve a life-giving and space-making purpose.

The hospitality exchange is twosided. Guest and host were once the same word, as were give and receive.¹¹ So the paradox involves the alternations of being equally host to a strange guest and enemy-stranger, and guest of a mysterious host. The 'both-and' theme becomes a delightfully reconciling one. Even the exchange of common 'please-thank' courtesies give an alternative perspective that acknowledge something given and received. In English, *thank* originally meant to think and feel, while in French it meant *mercy* and in Spanish *grace*.¹² To be thankful is to think and feel deep gratitude for an informing grace and satisfying mercy bestowed. Two very astutely probing and discerning questions ask, "Why should it *please* someone to give me what I ask for? What is the pleasure of the host?"¹³ Deep reflection on this question in its human and divine dimensions is very enlightening. Christ positively encourages us to ask (Jn.14:13; 16:23, 24). Instead of the obvious line of considering *what* might be asked for, an alternative question sharpens its focal contours on a different horizon altogether. All too often the benefits and blessings of questionable

11. Ibid, p.2.

12. Ibid, p.3.

13. Ibid.

learning opportunities are short-circuited by the shortcut of an anticipated answer. Whereas, the real essence of a satisfying situation may often reside in the things that puzzle us with unsolved enigmas and unanswered questions.

In the context of a hospitality exchange, the importance of mystery is that it invites questions and prompts us to ask, to knock, to seek. Answers don't come until we are sure of our questions, of what we are asking? Without the searching questions embodied in this thesis, the *Second Cup* answer is irrelevant and meaningless. A welcoming and mutually beneficial exchange "seems to correspond with a human need even deeper, and far harder to satisfy, than physical hunger. Its nature is a profound mystery....Without mystery, where is the question? And without the question, where are we?"¹⁴ Especially in areas where we are very sensitive and vulnerable, seemingly accusing questions need to be courageously welcomed and interpreted in their proper light. The accuser may well have and yield a trickster quality that brings the most astoundingly joyful and grace-filled discoveries about human being and a true moral nature. To be accused of being enemy and traitor, and discovering one's self to be a loyal friend is riches beyond compare. The Lord is pleased to bless the hungry with good things.

In the disclosing light of the mystery man partly concealed in and hanging over the earlier photoknit picture, the invitation was issued to Rose Aaron and I to question both our still unsatisfied, 18-month hunger for Leda's and God's pleasure rooted in that enemy-friend situation. Our original emphasis on the glory of the 'banquet' took a surprising,

14. Ibid, pp.2 & 3.

revealing and deeply satisfying turn of events during the writing of this chapter. In being able to discern what we do and don't hunger for, and where our betrayal-fidelity boundaries are, trickster questions led to a rapid and fearlessly reversing interpretation of that grievous and wounding friend-enemy exchange with Leda. It relieved and pierced the me-cramp veil of our lingering, generational, grief at being called 'enemy', which is part of a family curse. In Lk.5:27-32, Jesus accepts the scandalous invitation to dine at a 'great banquet' with sinners (taxmen et al.) and thereby consciously places himself in a situation of ritual impurity. In the later banquet and open invitation context of Lk.14:1-24, it was the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame, i.e. the permanently unclean, who were invited in off the streets. In the New Testament, the word 'great banquet' (*doche megale*) appears only in these two Lucan passages, and then in only three other Old Testament references. They are Gen.21:8, Isaac's weaning; Gen.26:30, the reconciling covenant meal between enemy-cum-friends Abimelech and Isaac; and in Dan.5:1, Belshazzar's feast!¹⁵ For a heart hungry to know God's approval and pleasure, this transparent and revealing exchange came as a very welcome and healing touch.

A distant (18 month) and cleansing perspective on that scene, teasingly suggests the strange paradox of fear and trust operating at the same time. In her own strange way, Leda was grateful and thankful to Rose Aaron at that very time, that the latter could share her distress. Leda communicated her trust and 'verbalized' the issue, 'talking' about deepest concerns by transmitting her fear, distress,

15. Ford, *My Enemy is My Guest*, pp.71 & 72.

doubt, and anguish on a wavelength and feeling level to which Rose Aaron was susceptible and responsive. This is an example of the power of metaphorical resonance of "poetic feeling," to imaginatively convey cognitive and affective experience, in the way detailed by Paul Ricoeur.¹⁶ Rose Aaron's distress levels at being labelled 'enemy' can be understood to imaginatively resonate and reverberate with Leda's distress at being labelled 'enemy' of God, because she had walked away from 'red hot promises'. This was extremely privileged information, but it was shared in a hard-to-decipher code, a code which took both time and grace to crack. Grief was then informed and transformed by a fresh interpretation. In the fresh light of the host/guest exchange of hospitality, it is important to appreciate the mutual quality of participating in Belshazzar's feast. Both Leda and Rose Aaron were the welcome and hungry guests of a mystery host who, in his own way and time, eventually revealed his true and transparently satisfying colours.

C. Kiss the Snake

In a ritual setting, a woman faces a black cobra. "She fixes him,...then goes over and kisses the nose of this snake. You see the venom flying all over the place. She had to calm him down. She had to fix him three times."¹⁷ The image, symbol and experience of kissing the

16. See Ricoeur, "The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling," p.153 ff. See also Appendix 1, s.v. metaphor, for comment on poetic feeling and thinking.

17. Campbell, *This business of the gods...*, p.84. Campbell relates this rather amazing true story which he actually witnessed on film many years ago. It was my privilege to see Campbell on film, vividly recounting this story.

snake well expresses the unusual and unexpected nature of the genuine hospitality that welcomes a death-to-love-life transformation of human nature. The snake image, especially in its proxy link with womanhood, and its disastrous theological interpretations, are most woefully embedded in an ungodly power tradition of monstrosly distorted and defamed proportions. The decontextualized and ahistoricized accounts of the 'fall' have become a far greater universal and spiritual human tragedy than ever the greatest physical calamities or disasters. The question at stake is not about sinfulness, personal and collective, but about the lack of an original historical context on its interpretation. However, there is no hospitable dwelling space in this negative perspective, except as a passage toward the open door of opportunity for a positive revisioning of the snake in the context of dialogue.

The literal and easily visualized motif of kissing the snake is a powerful triaxial analogue for befriending and embracing the things of which human beings are most afraid. To return to the Genesis garden means to face and not to hide, most especially the futility of trying to hide from God the things that matter most. Whereas, to face and admit human need is to be blessed beyond measure (Mt.5:3-12). The ambiguity of numinous power may be terrorizing or loving, as contemplating this visual metaphor can reveal. In the given example, the snake was not killed but loved, and lived to see another day, thank goodness. Recall that in Hoeller's amplification of the "Song/Hymn of the Pearl" in *The Acts of Thomas*, the heir sang the snake to sleep. Releasing and shedding one's outworn and confining skin is a kind of dying process that may require a lot of dusty work, but an absolute murder of human nature does not bring any life-giving and space-making renewal.

Paradoxically, so much genuine zestful living seems to depend on encouraged human willingness to learn active and soul-engaging receptivity. A hospitable dialogue with snaky strangers and death-disguised enemies facilitates the healing reconciliation with many dark and unknown elements. Dialogue is facilitated by responding to and through inner and outer images. As *Thursday* discovered, the masked accuser was really God's servant in disguise, in order to teach him certain combat lessons in the healing and loving process that leads naturally into the way of following in *Sunday's* steps. Strange as it may seem, the process of human renewal and transformation occurs when we get a loving *anthropos* 'fix' on fear and its accompanying accusations-turned-benefits and blessings.

This 'fix' is expressed by Helen Luke in the most lovely language by saying, "we don't have to be great artists to (make and respond to all kinds of inner and outer images); every one of us has the ability to respond by at least beginning to say "yes" or "no" to the strangers who knock on the doors of our souls. Even if our clear and honest response is "I am too weak to confront this threatening hostile stranger."¹⁸ Whether or not the door is opened to the stranger and enemy is one thing, but to deny that one even hears the knock brings the dangers of consciously chosen deceit. Often, the real illusions of fear may mask and disguise a deathly and dead-end human spiritual loneliness for which Godly human friendship is the only cure. Kissing the snake is a sideways perspective on the death-to-love-life transformation.

18. Helen Luke, "The Stranger Within," *Parabola* 15 (4, 1990): 17-23, p.17.

Though Jung speaks of the killing of fear, his thematic point is well taken. The killing of fear is also the basis of internalized morality and a new order, personally and collectively.¹⁹ The spirit of his intent is one we share, though our descriptive language differs. Basically, the new order of internalized morality is the covenant writ large and lovingly on the humanly embodied mind and heart. Contrary to a conventionalized law-book mentality, internalized morality is both highly moral and orderly; it is not chaotic as is so often *feared* it will be! The unpredictable orderliness of fractal images are to be welcomed for the beautifully screened pictures of a complementary and non-linear, visual metaphors of an existing moral orderliness. The sideways alternative of loving fear, instead of killing it, is a delicate and tentative answer to the problems of ritual murder as in sacrifice. Love motivates and initiates transformations in a way in which fear never can. Remember, hospitality is a mutual exchange, and so to extend the kiss of peace to death brings life and hope for the future.

Kissing the snake is a triaxial image and symbol of great and precious value which provides a somewhat strange but potentially hospitable meeting place for *anthropos* and *cheos* dialogue. The very dynamic simplicity of a kiss helps to explain the process of *how* fear is transformed into love. More could be said, but basically one learns to exchange fear for love by appropriate study and active engagement with the subject matter. Body language and the growth and transformation process have multidimensional triaxial parameters, so watch a too

19. Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*, CW 5, par.396.

literal interpretation! 'The inborn attraction to death' is the theological death space which must be overcome. The real problem is lack of sufficient Garden space for life-giving growth and healthy human development; the problem is not really with death per se. The dynamic simplicity of the key peace tactics to be employed in a death space-transforming strategy is this: *Make friends with your enemy (accuser)* (Mt.5:25). *Love your enemy* (Mt.6:44; Lk.6:27). To implement this hospitable peace-making tactic is only to follow in the steps of the Master. The genuine exchange value in any death-befriending symbiosis with life is actually a very precious one.

Though kissing the snake does, of course, have the considerable personal conversion benefits and blessings connected with a becoming transparency, it also conveys a very important and principled application when imprisoning theological perspectives are shed. It must be clear by now that one of the crucifying issues of companionship with Leda and the subsequent braided ring quest, involved facing the considerable fear, indeed terror, of betraying Christ in some ultimate way. Such sideways positions in matters of literal and spiritual life and death must be exercised with great moral responsibility. Such personal lessons however, become analogues and extended metaphors for facing and befriending the more impersonal or rather, transpersonal dimensions of terror connected with betraying Christ and the Christian message in inter-religious and inter-secular dialogue. To freely eat and dip into the same bowl with the secular and other-religious equivalents of defined publicans and sinners can be, at least initially, a very agonizing process for Christian people who are highly moral, conscientious, and faithful.

Dialogue on the theme of human transformation and renewal gives common ground and a common wealth image for establishing mutually refreshing communication with other religions and with secularity. So the universal kingdom-commonwealth concern will be pursued here in the remainder of this section for one important reason. The asymmetrical but strongly driving moral force of repentance behind many Christian dialogue invitations, is based on salving the Western Christian conscience of its moral and religious guilt. Leroy Rouner astutely comments on this onesided situation, thus: "The Western Christian invitation to dialogue presupposes a common ground which does not yet exist, since the moral and intellectual motivations for dialogue are Western and Christian in origin."²⁰ He suggests that negative conscience-salving grounds are no grounds at all for the common courtesies of genuine dialogue.

The evolutionary process chooses and promotes symmetry only when it is of overall selective advantage.²¹ In the case of genuine dialogical hospitality, positive and mutually beneficial common ground must be symmetrically established as a prerequisite for a meaningful exchange. If we as Christians offer hospitality to strangers and enemies, then we must be prepared to receive the offerings of others as they are given to us to chew. In this way, we may come into a position of positively

20. Rouner, "Theology of Religions in Recent Protestant Theology", p.109.

21. Eigen and Winkler, *Laws of the Game*, p.130. The authors note the selective and functional advantages of both asymmetrical and symmetrical structures in microbiology. Symmetrical structures "evolve more rapidly because in their case the advantage affects all subunits simultaneously. In asymmetrical structures, on the other hand, the advantage affects only one subunit, the one in which the mutation occurs."

offering and exchanging the graces from our own table. Contrary to militant and imperial tendencies, this sharing is not an inherited and onesided right. It only comes provided that we willingly and gladly learn to welcome and eat foreign food, and receive foreign-sounding communications. Raw fish and dolphin language is fine for dolphins, but between humans and dolphins a lot of conscious attention and training is needed in order to be receptive to strange and foreign-sounding messages and their correct interpretation.

A genuine exchange of hospitality may only be done without the driving and contaminating fear of betraying Christ and the Christian faith. Photoknit pictures portray this principle all too clearly. We need to know where our own betrayal-faithful boundary markers lie. Thus the principle of trusting Christ to be already present and purposeful, albeit in disguised and veiled forms, is to be balanced by appreciating that the wisdom of other-religious and other-secular principles may be also concealed in a Christian framework. An accessible example of this will be given shortly. Eating and enjoying table fellowship, literally and metaphorically, with strange religious and secular guests, in our home and in theirs, may look or indeed even be the equivalent of being "ritually impure." In better understanding the boundary-crossing capacity and patterns of table fellowship dramatically enacted by Jesus, we have a living example of ritual impurity, according to established religious traditions and norms of his day. For those boundary-crossing missionary pioneers following in the steps of the Master, it is very important to have the support and encouragement of the home team, so to speak. Not every one can swallow let alone digest and assimilate strange food, nor even should they be in a position to do so. In any

case, one gives milk to infants and appropriate solid food to children and adults. However precious the cloud of witnesses (Heb.12:1) in the heavenly realms, their cheering testimony is most especially heartening when their spiritual meaning is grounded in meaningful human support structures.

In the mediating mission of images and symbols in dialogue with Leda, the concealed and opaquely hidden presence of Christ has been disclosed and manifested in various ways. Following the composition of the friend-enemy photoknit in this chapter, there still remained a mainly hidden and concealed issue concerning the mutuality factor of exchange. The use of the word 'veil' at various points actually expresses my great indebtedness to the Hindu and Buddhist concept and image of *maya*, the veil of illusion. I confess that I have been working and playing with its meaning on and off in various ways in this text. This is not to divert attention into its technical discussion at this point, but simply to indicate the exchange value and importance of bridge-building communication. Kiss the snake - lifting the veil of illusion. This simple equation does not mean the issue is simple, but that there is a welcome freedom of equal exchange to be had when the horizons of Christian experience are informed by the veiled stranger at the door. Existing material may then be analogically cross referenced to another religious and/or secular register in a way which accesses common ground and common human wealth for all.

To be frank, Rose Aaron and I were grieving Leda's apparent fear of us, and her apparent lack of pleasure in our efforts of black and very imperfect compassion on her behalf. The serendipity of discovering the Lucan banquet linked back to the original Belshazzar setting, helped us

to lift the illusion that Leda didn't appreciate us until her final and parting gesture. By both consciously kissing the snake and lifting the veil on the originating and cursing childhood source of our grief, we then discovered two precious and heart-satisfying transparencies as we wrote this chapter. We had the Christ-peacock's overall approval and pleasure in us at that already existing time, even when we were so distressed at being labelled 'enemy'. Secondly, we came to realize that Leda had privileged us with a strangely coded and hard-to-interpret but trusting confidence. This realization enabled us to lift and reverse our original interpretation of her fear, and thus retranslate it more accurately through the distance principle. The result was a release from the oppressively protective illusion that she didn't ever value us until the very end.

The veil is an Eastern oriental image expressing and representing the Western concept of conditioning through heredity and environment factors. Though human behaviour is a combination of inherent and learned patterns of response, conditioning is never the last word on the growth and development, and conversion that liberates the embodied human spirit. This is where Freud and Jung parted company, in that the former's view of the psychic symbols of the unconscious were reductive to infantile sexuality and oedipal issues. Whereas Jung's patient-observations led him to formulate a constructive and synthesizing purposefulness at work and play in symbolic manifestations.²² These archetypes of transformation promote and energize the forward-driving

22. Such life-giving and energizing purposiveness in symbols is well articulated by Paul Ricoeur, "The Symbol...Food for Thought," *Philosophy Today* 4 (Spring 1960): 196-207.

quality of psychic and spiritual growth towards integrating and fulfilling one's potential with increasing increments toward wholeness. Humans are neither completely free nor completely bound by circumstances and/or personal inheritance. In noting the universal images of the feathered serpent and the winged fish to express this existential and eternal freedom within ever expanding limits, Joseph Campbell sagely remarks, "You don't have to be quit of your bondage in order to experience the release. The two go together."²³ Snakes and veils go together. We can't get rid of them but we can learn to live in meaningful peace and harmony with their already existing reality.

D. Trinitarian Holiness

In a thematic way, Jesus kisses the snake that represents his own fear of betraying the way, truth, and life of his beloved Father. The diverse strands of divine wholeness and holiness are given a human face in Christ Jesus. Thus the face of God's friendship is not empty but full of love, grace and risk-taking truth. The filial and boundary-crossing holiness of Jesus is anarchy to the sacred-profane categories and ritual purity classifications.²⁴ The separation motif of holiness prevalent in the Old Testament and in many other universal religious expressions, was and is effectively challenged by the 'along side' or companionship model of holy integrity first advocated and mediated by

23. Campbell, *This business of the gods...*, p.92.

24. See Malina, "Clean and Unclean: Understanding Rules of Purity", chapter 6, in *The New Testament World*. This book is very helpful in presenting an integrating perspective on the cultural and theological dimensions of the New Testament situation.

Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Jesus didn't simply cross boundaries, he moved and extended their social and religious reference points in dynamic and life-giving ways. Though we now have the benefits and blessings of his courage and singlemindedness, the cost shouldn't be taken for granted. The holiness of God manifest in Jesus shows a new face of dynamically partnered and embodied togetherness. The completely fulfilling oneness of integrity within himself, and within the purposes and presence of God, is the foundational fountain and wellspring of Jesus' filiality. As well as a creative revisioning of strict monotheism, Jesus' integrity (oneness) with the Father benefits from an expressive retranslation of trinitarian relationship. This simply returns the abstract concept of trinity to an ancient and accessible image. 'Dancing together'²⁵ was the term that truly conveyed the creative interaction of father and son in partnership. Dancing together well expresses Jesus' sense of timing and purposeful movement shared in rhythm with his sense of the Father. The very simplicity of this accessible term makes it exceedingly valuable for its expressive quality of living spiritual relationship. Dancing together gives a lively sense of oneness, rather than the static sense of being in one another.²⁶ Thus holy and trinitarian 'oneness' is not the confusion of natures but

25. The Greek word, *perichoresis*, means to dance together. It was used to express the 'oneness' theme in passages like Jn.10:30, 38; 14:9; 17:21; 1Cor.1:10. See Robert Kress, "The Church as *Communio*: Trinity and Incarnation As The Foundation of Ecclesiology," *The Jurist* 36 (1976): 127-158, p.140 ff. The author notes that *communio* both expresses the dynamics of the divine being in itself and in human nature, being expressed in both trinitarian and christological concerns.

26. Ibid. This latter term developed in the 12th C. when being translated into Latin.

their dynamic partnership. Ballroom dancing and ice dancing are two contemporary examples of a dynamically dancing trinitarian 'oneness.'

The integrity of trinitarian holiness then, as seen in the boundary-crossing filiality of Christ Jesus, is an initiating symbol symmetrically competent to rival and handle the power of terror and final judgment associated with a powerful and inborn attraction to death. The dynamic and filial holiness of Jesus is sheer anarchy to the customary universal religious categories that divide and separate the 'in's' from the 'out's'. Whether they be primarily seen in Biblical references or in other religious traditions, Christ's self-understanding as Son absolutely and successfully challenges the notions of God's holiness as separation. Jesus endured great ritual impurity, and though by customary norms and standards his hands were dirty, literally, metaliterally, and symbolically dirty. Yet the inside of his 'cup' was ever clean (cf. Mt. 23:25, 26; Lk. 11:39). He was a man of wholesome and healthy integrity and thus 'one' with God in that sense of dynamic partnership. What and how God in Christ judges the sin of the world is clearly a question open to the hospitality of deep thinking and feeling. Christ reveals a new standard and quality of holiness and profound integrity which is not separation but alongsidedness. Thus the strands of purity and holiness to be represented in the works of Mary Douglas, Gerald Janzen, and Frank Lake, mentioned in chapter 3, are securely and lovingly joined together in the picture of Christ knitted into existing human life. Holy purity is not threatened or dirtied by dirt, defilement, or contaminating contact with any kinds of 'death', especially the living death of the human spirit eternally cut off and separated from its universal and bodily home. In the same way, eating

the fare of other religious and secular expressions is not to be feared for its contamination.

The snake is an ancient and visibly accessible image of the transformation involved in taking off the old, confining skin, and putting on the new, more fitting one. In thematic form, the actions of taking of and putting on are recognizably baptismal and initiatory, where the garment of shame and fear is stripped off and the life of Christ is put on anew. The transformational coverings for the existential human condition are the healing reconciliation with present humanity and not-to-be-feared mortality. As Jesus was himself initiated into a new order, so too the risen Christ initiates and companions his disciples. His forty wilderness days correspond to the forty years' generational preparation needed to cross over into the Promised Land. His crossover point is a symmetrical reversal of the literal and historical one of the Israelites. Clearly his understanding and practice of the Kingdom of God was applied peaceably and metaphorically, and understood symbolically, though the benefits and blessings of God's favour were literal and immediate. The conversion of prevalent conquest and crusader models of mission praxis and theology, whether enacted geographical or psychically, will certainly benefit from a similar initiatory transformation. God's holiness revealed in Christ is not compromised or contaminated by cultural contact. Its very trinitarian foundations of hospitality to otherness, to strangers, to alterity, come as a welcome relief to empower genuine exchanges of dialogue.

E. Drink the Firewater Cup

'Are you the Coming One, or should we look for someone else?' (Mt.11:3; Lk.7:19). Jesus was clearly something of a mystery man to his cousin. John the Baptist was especially puzzled and mystified by one shocking and unexpected aspect of Jesus' ministry. Firstly, it is evident that Jesus' opening declaration of a year of Jubilee, of God's favour (Lk.4:18, 19), stops short in mid-sentence. "The opening words of Jesus' public ministry are ones of forgiveness and healing, not wrath and destruction. Thus his theology is in stark contrast to the revolutionaries."²⁷ In reading the scroll of Is.61:1-2, he omits the proclamation of "the day of vengeance of our God". Research on the Lucan pericope shows the utter amazement and astonishment of the people. They weren't pleased, as most translations of vs.22 would indicate, rather they were outraged and incensed at his effrontery.²⁸ In fact, they were ready to kill him (Lk.4:29). Secondly, his subsequent response to John's question (Mt.11:5; Lk.7:22) again goes completely against the grain of the traditional and conditional expectations of that day. Where is the day of vengeance? What's going on here? Jesus clearly alludes to the positive blessings of mercy which the anticipated messiah-king would inaugurate, but in the amalgam of allusions to Is.35:3-5, Is.29:18-20, and Is.61:1, he once again neglects to mention the threat of judgment. Such scandalous neglect must be situated in the historical oppression and political turmoil of that time, when the

27. Ford, *My Enemy Is My Guest*, p.63.

28. Ibid, pp.61-63. Ford gives a good summary of various translations that help to account for the crowd's hostility to Jesus.

revolutionary fervor of Jewish nationalism was rampant. For Jesus to declare a jubilee that included grace, mercy and favour to Jews and gentiles alike was absolutely unheard-of. His repudiation of the law of talion (eye for eye, tooth for tooth) was quite outrageous to a collectively subjugated population. In repudiating the laws of tribal vengeance, there is also the repudiation of that other tribal legacy, that of inherited guilt.

Jesus' response to John acknowledged the value of his baptismal preparations, yet he reinterpreted John's language in a radically new and subversive way. His interpretation ran completely counter to the standard revolutionary climate of those times, in fact being a countermeasure to completely turn around habitual messianic expectations. The metaphor, "baptized in Spirit", was coined by John to express a twinned message of God's judgment and God's mercy (Mt.3:11; Mk.1:8; Lk.3:16; Jn.1:33).²⁹ In its original contextual usage, John's water baptism was preparation for a much more severe baptism which would usher in the new age. The one to follow John would baptize with Spirit (wind and) fire. The breath (Spirit) of God's fiery wrath and fiery

29. For a very fine and helpful articulation of the water baptism and fire language of John, Jesus, and the early Christians, see J.D.G. Dunn, "The Birth of a Metaphor - Baptized in Spirit," *The Expository Times* 89 (1977-78): 134-138, & 173-175. This article is very valuable for its wealth of thought-provoking scriptural references to fire and baptism. In turn, they link Dunn's mention of garment motifs and other thematic material with that found in Leda's story. A weakness is Dunn's struggle to understand Luke's rendering in the Acts of the post-Easter understanding of being baptized in Spirit, and only implicit fire. Referring to Acts 1:5 and 11:16, he asks, "Why no 'and fire'?" (p.173). Had he known about the cultural story of fiery tongues, and been more sensitive to Luke's thematic development that linked Spirit and fire and fiery language on the narrative level, the issues that puzzle his account with a certain shortsightedness could have been more adequately handled.

purifying mercy were the baptismal river into which people would be plunged and passed through. The expected Messiah was a warrior-king who would not only bring practical and material jubilee blessings, healing, and release to people, he would also bring fiery vengeance and retribution on their enemies. It is important to understand that the vengeance is particularly strong where innocent people are greatly oppressed and genuinely victimized. Vengeance was other-directed towards unpurified sinners, and thus to be especially enacted on the enemies of the Jews. Vengeance and retribution are questions of as timely concern now as they were then.

God's mercy and compassion were clearly evidenced in Jesus' ministry. Where was the baptismal judgment side? John throws down the gauntlet and Jesus accepts the initiating challenge of reconciling his ministry with the expectation of judgment and the refiner's fire. In terms of the quest for positive blessings on human nature which concerns this thesis, John's question is also an important one and will be answered in due course.

Jesus' answer is radical, doublesided and personal. Some clues to his self-interpreted baptismal intentions can be found in the couplet of Lk.12:49, 50. Jesus will both bring fire on the earth and be baptized, implicitly, with fire. In this sense, Jesus was "not so much the baptizer in Spirit and fire but as the one who would himself be baptized in Spirit and fire."³⁰ As a transitional forerunner, John's contextual anticipation of the purging fire is accepted by Jesus but with a special twist in the tale, as shall be seen. In the Old Testament, the purging

30. Ibid, p.138.

fire and the wrath of God are often referred to through the metaphor of the cup motif.³¹ The cup of wrath has to do with the popular expectations of God's anger and vengeance being poured out on evildoers. In situations where ritual keeping of the law and making sacrificial offerings are the means of appeasing and forestalling the anticipation of God's burning anger, then both the expectation and fear of condemnation run very high. Equally, the fear threshold runs very low, and especially so in the tribal context of collective guilt. An individual might be innocent yet subjected to the vengeance enacted against his or her whole tribe.

A further consideration of Jesus' self-understanding can be seen in another puzzling reference, Mk.9:49, 50, where fire and salt are connected.³² The salt metaphor with its unique savouring and preserving qualities has a doublesided sense. Salty tears may indicate bitterness, anger, sorrow, distress, pain. The redeeming dimension is both literal and metaliteral, for as well as the food-preserving function of salt, it is also a symbol of wisdom. To cry one's heart out may be a very good

31. The cup of wrath figures prominently in Ps.75:8; Is.51:17,22; Jer.25:15, 17, 28; 49:12; Lam.4:21; Ez.23:31-33; Hab.2:16; Zech.12:2. Particularly in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the theme of "pouring out" is very marked. Jer.7:20; 10:25; 42:18; Ez.7:8; 14:19; 20:8, 13, 21, 33, 34; 21:31; 22:22, 31; 30:15; 36:18. See especially Lam.2:4, for wrath poured out like fire. Between 'poured out' and 'cup' references in the Old Testament, there is an extensive network of contextual cross referencing connections with Jesus. So there is much food for thinking and feeling when the Spirit is 'poured out' in Acts 2.

32. Dunn, "The Birth of a Metaphor," p.137, also mentions the Gospel of Thomas, logion 82, "He that is near me is near the fire; He that is far from me is far from the kingdom." Dunn makes the point that Jesus' personal presence and the presence of the Kingdom always go together. Mt.12:28/Lk.11:20; Mt.11:5 ff./Lk.7:22 ff.; Mt.12:41 ff./Lk.11:31ff.; Mt.13:16 ff./Lk.10:23ff. This seems to confirm the idea that Jesus connected the kingdom coming through fire.

thing, as Jesus did over Lazarus, and in the Gethsemane garden. Who knows what crying he did in private? What wisdom is required to differentiate between a punishing and a purifying fire? Though salt and fire are connected by Jesus himself, the Marcan context is very significant for Jesus' message, and for giving a validating perspective on the photoknit banquet and amplification in this chapter.

Mk.9:41 mentions the cup of cold water given in Jesus' name, and then proceeds to introduce the salt and fire motif with comments about sinning and cutting off the offending body parts. The habitual line of interpretation takes these words as a warning about causing "little ones" to sin, and the threat of an associated cut out or cut off point. But there is more than meets the eye in this passage. A sideways alternative to the operations of a dominant consciousness, gives a complete turnaround which accords well with Jesus' meaning and standpoint. Being ritually unclean was either a temporary or a permanent affliction among the outcast and marginal people with whom Jesus lived and shared his daily life. Many of the gospel stories show the despair and desperation of those who were permanently separated from God's power and patronage, supposedly centred in the Temple and its rites. Rather than a warning against sinning per se, I respectfully suggest that Jesus is actually positively heartening and encouraging all those who love God in heart but fall into the conventional categories of ritual uncleanness and impurity.³³ They have already been cut out of

33. For a linguistic comment on Jesus' power and authority, see Howard Clark Kee, "The Terminology of Mark's Exorcism Stories," *New Testament Studies* 14 (1967-68): 232-246. Particularly in considering Jesus' power and authority over unclean spirits, as in Mk.1:23-28, the link between the social and religious label of being ritually unclean and having an unclean spirit, doesn't seem to have

the conventional religious picture, and falsely separated from their true spiritual heritage through no fault of their own. Even if they loved God from the heart, their physical infirmities and disabilities were treated as a permanent barrier. Jesus, on the other hand, says that these very 'impure' and 'unclean' ones will enter life; they will enter the kingdom of God, even though they are collectively labelled as outcasts and outlaws. The link between ritual impurity and being pure in heart becomes clearer then, not so much in the moral or ethical terms of keeping the external law, but in the heart's purity of intent. Rather than exclusively focusing on the heart's wickedness and deceit, there is also another side which is innocent, and declared innocent. By cutting out the offending legalistic material regarding the external and managerial applications of ritual purity and impurity, Jesus gives a positive twist to an ordinary life lived with access to God. The accessible essence of the new jubilee law of love is no more and no less

been made. Kee says, "The fact that Mark does not use the word 'demon', but rather the Semitic phrase 'unclean spirit', might not be significant in itself" (p.243). It is highly significant, in my opinion. In dealing with those permanent outcasts and outlaws of Jewish society, just imagine the prevailing 'spirit' of 'uncleanness' in a person who was physically handicapped or maimed. Imagine the social climate and attitude toward such people, and the further wounding such categories impose. In a contemporary context, the sense of personal 'uncleanness,' and its associated mental and spiritual oppression, may be found in handicapped people, those who are dying and thus relegated to the margins of life, and those who have been sexually abused. Jesus' authority over an unclean spirit, in this sense, and his power to bring healing, must be seen in a new light, and removed from this god-awful convention regarding demons per se. Without in any way detracting from the genuine wonder of healing, Jesus' authority displayed in wonder stories takes on a new perspective when the social and psychological conditions of 'uncleanness' are brought together. In an anthropological perspective, because Jesus shares the ritual impurity of those he ministers to, he has healing power over those particular 'demons', which is a shamanic notion.

than love God and love neighbour as self. Love, like other life-giving and life-growing qualities, is the fruit, not of law, but of the Spirit.

F. The Second Cup

The Second Cup in literal and textual form, is presented by Luke (Lk.22:19b, 20) in a most interesting and surprising context. The second cup³⁴ commemorates the new covenant to be poured out in blood, and a new love covenant. The new covenant of Jesus parallels the promise of the new covenant foreseen by his scriptural and prophetic mentor, Jeremiah (Jer.33:31 ff). Jeremiah in turn, developed his idea of a new heartfelt covenant (Jer.31:2-6), which is considered a "good poetic analogue" to correspond to the intercessions of Moses (Ex.34; Num.14:13-25) on behalf of the people.³⁵ Taken from the intercessory perspective of the Gethsemane garden cup, the sweat poured out like blood (Lk.22:44) is linked with the blood of the covenant poured out (vs.20). Pass over the last supper scene again and notice that there are not one, nor even two betraying hands in the same bowl as Jesus (Mt.26:23; Mk.14:18; Lk.22:21; Jn.13:11, 18, 21). There are twelve hands, and perhaps with the fear-filled and doubt-filled danger of a

34. Isn't serendipity amazing! Almost two years following my Second Cup dream, I happened across some comments on a "second chalice", see Pierson Parker, "Three Variant Readings in Luke-Acts," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 83 (1964): 165-170. Of indirect interest is Parker's comment that Luke's "we" sections "appear and disappear in a...disconcerting fashion" (p.169). As was noted earlier in an earlier chapter, Luke's "we" passages are typical of Greek prologues and sea voyages, see V.K Robbins, "By Land and By Sea" in *Society of Biblical Literature, Seminar Papers* (1976):381-396).

35. See William L. Holladay, "The Background of Jeremiah's Self-Understanding: Moses, Samuel, and Psalm 22," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 83 (1964): 153-164, p.164.

thirteenth one being added. What did Jesus see in the Gethsemane garden cup that caused him such fearful anguish? Did he fear death? Did he fear condemnation? Was he terrified of betraying his name and the vocational purpose for which he was born? Did an ultimate possibility face him regarding the betrayal of the Abba source and origin of his life? Was his anguish that of being labeled traitor and blasphemer while being pure in heart? Without being certain of the reasons for Jesus' anguish, his garden symmetry of facing and not concealing himself, as did Adam and Eve, also releases human nature from the fear of ultimate separation from what we most genuinely love, and worship in spirit and in truth. Jesus' suffering is like a second Job, except that the story is lived out in reality, rather than as a literary creation. Jesus did eat and drink his own testament to forgiveness and faced the fearful reality of red hot promises of ultimate condemnation for tampering with the sacred texts. In cutting out the overhanging, doom-laden message of vengeance and wrath attributed to his Father, he did tamper with the sacred texts of his people by taking the law into his own hands, so to speak. Rose Aaron's experience of choosing to cut out the finger-pointing doom associated with the text and context of Belshazzar's feast, gives a small insight into the enormity and audacity of what Jesus did on his Father's behalf. The cost is a king's ransom. The traditional tribal law of retaliation and vengeance, and its associated operational terror, so fearsomely and humanly projected onto God, stopped at the cross.

Jesus wrestled with his basic life-principles in the Gethsemane garden, and this is literally symbolized by girding on his wrestling belt-towel, in Jn.14:4. The light of Is.11:5 reveals the spiritual

virtues of righteousness and faithfulness with which he girded himself for a final and decisive spiritual fight. Alas, for all the insight which Etan Levine³⁶ offers regarding the girding expression of being prepared for a battle, his conclusion unhelpfully opposes belt and towel. "Instead of fighting the decree, [Jesus] accepts it; *instead of donning some symbolic counterpart of the ancient wrestling-belt, he girds on a humble towel, and then proceeds to wash his disciples' feet.* In this moving account, the ancient wrestling-belt has been replaced by its opposite, and physical violence has been replaced by spiritual self-sacrifice."³⁷ The Master-servant's humility in washing disciples' feet is taken as a sign of acquiescence. Nonsense! This was the start of Jesus' greatest and most heroic fight, not his self-abnegating surrender. Cut out this emasculating nonsense that Jesus had no choice but to passively surrender. Jesus chose his moment carefully and freely, and likewise encourages other human beings to do likewise, understanding and living with the masterful friendship service of perfect freedom.

The disciples' foot-washing incident is closely prefigured by and linked with Mary's public washing and anointing of Jesus' feet (Mt.26:6 ff.; Mk.14:3-9; Lk.7:37 ff.; Jn.12:3 ff.). Except for Luke's version which comes in the 'great banquet' scene (Lk.7:), her loving action is said to have preceded the Passover meal by just a few days. Jesus' own relaxed and even eager receptivity to her was certainly an essential exchange ingredient, for clearly he was pleased by Mary's touching

36. E. Levine, "The Wrestling Belt Legacy in the New Testament."

37. Ibid, p.563. Italics are mine.

gesture. Is his the pleasure of the host or the guest? Whatever the triaxial cost of Mary's love for Jesus, his own mimetical application of her example reveals a foot-to-foot and shoulder-to-shoulder companionship with women which is genuinely motivated and wholesomely energized by the great cost of genuinely compassioned and anointing love. Perhaps Mary's great public cost helped Jesus to face his own public cost in being empowered to love much and forgive much on the cross. Jesus' open and easy companionship with women is powerfully symmetrical and authoritative medicine delivered with a healing touch for women who have been driven away from their rightful inheritance (Mic.2:9), and grievously wounded beyond belief (Jer.8:21; 14:17 RSV).

Thematic symmetry is of extremely healing importance in Jesus' love for Mary. Both Old and New Testaments use the imagery of the great harlot and prostitute to record Israel's covenant betrayals. The double standard regarding a 'fallen woman' continues even today as a profound curse to cover up the reality of likewise 'fallen men'. Even if they don't fall, many women are pushed into the snake pit. Be that as it may, sinner or sinned against, Jesus discloses God's true nature in being able to graciously receive and positively welcome the loving touch of sinners (Lk.7:39, 47) and the true innocence of all kinds of "little ones". Such easy access is good news for black and imperfect humans to know and feel deep in their bones. God isn't contaminated by impurity, but warmly invites human nature to come in from the coldness of eternal isolation and unholy and ungodly separation from real sideways living.

While the contents of Jesus' and Sunday's baptismal initiation cup look very similar to the cup of wrath seen from the outside, their true contents must be carefully differentiated by the firewater of Ps.66:12

(RSV) and its contextual verses that speak of fiery refinement and engaging spaciousness. Both the innocent and guilty must drink the contents of the cup of God's judgment (Jer.49:12). Human beings must intimately know and face the humbling taste of feared condemnation pictured as God's face, though often combined with surprising and unexpected results. In this revealing light, the importance of Genesis and Gethsemane garden symmetry takes on a significant exchange value, but in a very carefully qualified and sobering sense.

Jesus' question to his disciples and Sunday's question to his anarchist council of days, is, "Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" Will you be consciously initiated with the alternative red hot promises that freely give life and space to all? Will you kiss the snake and drink the firewater cup? These are important questions which require searching answers. Though the red hot cup looks as though it contains firewater, it actually contains a cool, life-giving draught of bittersweet refreshment.

G. A Question of Judgment

God's judgment call had various referential threads which led Jesus to a renewed perception and active reinterpretation of its prophetic meaning. Judgment had a definite role to play out in Jesus' prophetic ministry, just as other prophets had done in sharing and participating in the past judgments of God meted out on the wayward Israelites. Moses accompanied his people through the desert. Jeremiah accompanied his people into exile. In this companionship way, the firewater cup of staggering woes (Is.51:17-23) to be poured out and drunken became a mixed bittersweet blessing capable of being endured by guilty and

innocent parties. God's Shekinah Spirit went always with the Israelites in Exodus and in Exile. Jesus, that prophet born in the insignificant town of Bethlehem (Mic.5:2), undoubtedly understood his mercy mission in terms of daring to confront and forgive the enemy traitors to be found within his own household (Mic.7:6). Judgment as separation is clearly seen in Mt.25:32,33, where the sheep and goats are separated, but it benefits from the context of Ez.34. The separation motif indicts the existing religious leaders for eating and not feeding the flock, for trampling the existing pasture and muddying the water. Judgment, then, for those who know themselves to be poor, broken, weak, crippled, maimed, hungry, naked, sinners, etc. is nothing to be feared. Judgment is a separation between the "fat sheep and the lean sheep" (Ez.34:20). The spiritually lean and hungry have nothing to fear from God. So too with all those who face their brokenness and not hide their existential poverty and conditional guilt.

Fear is the key to accessible relationship with God. Again and again, the fear of condemnation is negatively associated with the consequences of law-breaking impurity. When law is externalized, then lawful and ritualized behaviour can be regulated and managed but the experience of managing and regulating fear, sorrow, and anguish, and joy, pleasure, rest of spirit are another matter altogether.³⁸ Important and realistic social and religious accommodation had to be given to the fact that keeping the law wasn't possible. Therefore in

38. Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, p.48. In the face of a dominant reality, "people must simply practice the proper *behaviour* because they are not longer able to experience their *experience*. Clearly the regime is interested not in what people experience but in their behaviour which can be managed."

order to nullify the threat of overhanging doom on the collective and national level, a particular accommodation was yearly enacted on the Day of Atonement. Then the high priest went behind the Temple veil or curtain and into the most holy place in order to offer a special collective sacrifice. Later crucifixion references to the torn curtain implicitly link Jesus as the new and worthy high priest whose awesome and anchoring privilege it was to enter into the presence of the Holy of Holies.

The commencement of the jubilee year of God's favour began the Day of Atonement with special prayers for the forgiveness of all sins, witting and unwitting.³⁹ Ford shows that the commencement of Jesus' ministry actually took place at the beginning of a literal jubilee year. What is significant is that Jesus both began and concluded his atoning ministry with the high priestly enactment of forgiveness on all types of sin and sinners, homegrown and gentile. The whole of Jesus' life and ministry was concentrated in a positive and healing reversal that dealt with the fear of condemnation and vengeance, personal and collective. High priestly symmetry is noteworthy here. He was sent with a life-giving and space-making message of salvation, not condemnation (Jn.3:17). Just as Moses led an external bid for freedom from enslavement, so Jesus led an internal movement toward the Promised Land of the inner kingdom of God (Lk.17:20, 21). Even at the last, Jesus omits any theme of vengeance and is thus a remarkable contrast to other martyred Jewish compatriots who thoroughly cursed their persecutors and

39. Ford, *My Enemy is My Guest*, pp.132, 133, quoting Yoma 36b.. The three types of sin were "wrongs" as "deliberate misdeeds," "transgressions" as "rebellious deeds," and "sins" as "inadvertent omissions".

threatened them with God's vengeance.⁴⁰ Jesus does indeed fulfill his literal Passover vow⁴¹ yet metaphorically, he too drinks the cup of forgiveness (Lk.23:34) which he had literally given to his disciples to drink a short while before. In tasting the fiery contents of God's collectively anticipated wrath, Jesus himself is the timeless sign and symbol of the new covenant (Is.42:7) by being the cupbearer (Mic.7:9) of firewater interpretively transformed by baptismal crucifixion and resurrection.

Life-giving and space-making salvation is to be found in the way, truth and life of Christ Jesus. He offers the new covenant cup of forgiveness with positive and negative complements. It means spacious spiritual freedom from the cramping guilt of physical and psychic imperfection, liberation from personal misery and impurity, and a whole range of afflicting and fearful situations.⁴² Saving spaciousness also conveys the senses of bold self-confidence connected with the spiritual freedom of living God's embodied law from the mind in the heart. Such space-making liberation brings intellectual breadth of vision and the accompanying satisfaction of God-given wisdom, the "largeness of mind"

40. Ibid, p.131, quoting 2 Maccabees 7.

41. See Lk.22:17-23, where Jesus' vow of abstinence is connected with the first cup. Jesus' refusal of the wine vinegar sop (Mt.27:48; Mk.15:36; Lk.23:36; Jn.19:29) could be understood in light of this vow and the custom of providing opiates for the condemned. The one to be executed was given "a goblet of wine containing a grain of frankincense in order to benumb his senses, for it is written, *Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish and wine unto the bitter in soul*", Ibid, p.129. It is important to note, therefore, that neither literally nor metaphorically, did Jesus taste any bitterness or enmity toward his taunting and scornful accusers. Questioning sorrow is not necessarily bitterness.

42. Sawyer, "Spaciousness," pp.29-31.

of 1Kings 4:29 (RSV) connected with creative originality. The joyful vision and sweet taste of spiritual liberty (Ps.119:103) is likened to the jubilation and Godly favour expressed in the poetic praise of Psalm 119. Saving space means "the discovery of the possibilities open to one who is guided by the light of God's law, a commandment which is exceedingly broad" (Ps.119:96)."⁴³ The love of God's living and life-renewing word is the love of the wisdom-bestowing Spirit in its life-giving and space-making intent. The glorious liberty of the sons and daughters of God is the freedom, not from sin, but a release from crippling and paralyzing fear. The Holy Spirit's song of jubilation positively promises that human beings shall love God with heart, soul, mind and strength and love neighbour as self.

God's empowering love service to human beings, in recognizable or disguised ways, is to keep the choose-life options ever open and ready for fresh investment. Photoknit pictures show two women who were empowered to exercise their hope-filled life options in the face of very trying and fear-filled circumstances. God's hiddenness is part of the exercise of mercy and compassion, whose very anonymity serves to strengthen our ability to exercise hope and freedom of choice. Human beings need never be left to flounder in the imprisoning victim mentality of accusing circumstances, as *Thursday* so rightly concluded. Hope is a stinging rebuke to any deathliness that would cramp and kill us long before we die. The alterity of Christ's hidden and concealed Sabbath anarchy is absolutely counterrevolutionary to conventionally reified concepts of the triumphant Lord of glory.

43. Ibid, p.31.

For all their initial denials and betrayals, men like Peter, Paul and James give substance to the hope of forgiveness which redeems life and death from the pits of gross failure and abusive despair. The cup of firewater baptized by Jesus with a new covenantal meaning is indeed the cup of salvation for sinners. When Christians are able to live the depths of that mercy mission story, then one may ever hope that sharing the message of where to find bread and wine and fountains of living water may communicate, come wind and weather, come hell and high water. Leda longed to go to the supermarket so she could choose what she wanted in the way of an orderly, well designed and colourfully coordinated palate; she did not send Rose Aaron out with a shopping list. Their heart's desires and hungers were honoured and answered in good time. God's accessible and merciful benefits and blessings on present life are not too good to be true.

H. The Gift of Life

"The origin of our religious experience is not so much a matter of the answers we give, the names we use, but of the questions that rise from our attempts to know and love....Letting our questions take over, our values take root, our loves take charge permits us to experience our lives as a gift."⁴⁴ Jesus Christ knew himself to be the gift of God given to his own people. He was to bring them a very special jubilee of God's revolutionary and holy favour, benefits and blessings, to be tasted first in the present life. Though Jesus was peaceable and non-violent, he did carry a sword. The sword of the Spirit in his hands is

44. Happel and Walter, *Conversion and Discipleship*, p.45.

the gift of forgiveness. The veritable authority and final word of the living God wielded in Jesus' hand, is a final and life-fulfilling word of refreshment regarding covenant promises, broken and remade. The cup of law-filled curses over the failures of human nature is transformed into the bountiful benefits of the Second Cup of blessing and peace with God. The cup of forgiveness (Mt.26:27, 28) is the one which is "second to none." As modern cupbearers, Christians, and especially mission-oriented Christians, must drink and learn to drink repeatedly from its bittersweet contents before offering its powerfully healing and wholesome blessing to others. In service-oriented mission, the first and foremost of all service we can render is God-directed and God-receptive, in order to receive the gift of the life-giving cup of covenant relationship. Such initial receptivity (Jn.20:21-23) empowers testimony about the relational bittersweet love which is written in the body of the mind and heart (Dt.6:5; Jer.33:31; Mt.22:37). Perhaps more than anything else in these present times, the need to forgive ourselves the imposing tribal burden of guilt for our humanness is paramount.

The linguistic significance of forgiveness - as ceasing to blame, granting pardon, releasing from obligation and punishment, making an allowance - provides a significant opening. It is expressed in two aspects of its meaning and derivation, for + give, and the same in French, *par + don*. The use of *for* means an intention to reach, directed toward, belonging to, over a span of time or distance, and comes from Greek and Latin words which mean before, through, in front. To *give* means to present or deliver voluntarily (something that is one's own) to the permanent possession of another or others. The second meaning is also very instructive for our purposes here. Giving is the transfer of

something which is one's own to the possession of another as part of an exchange.⁴⁵ Reciprocal gift giving is a celebration of the loving occasions and connections which join people and God in meaningful forms of kinship.

In theological parlance, God's forgiveness has often been construed as the asymmetrical offering of the life space/death space exchange, of Christ's life for human sinfulness. Without wishing to minimize this view, I would respectfully suggest a fresh yet realistic alternative growing out of God's own jubilee stock of covenanted promises for universal blessing. The image, symbol, concept and story of a ritual divine-human gift exchange favours a two-handed reciprocal giving of value for value. On the one hand, God freely and lovingly offers indelible forgiveness as a generous allowance and initialed receipt for life-giving and space-making humanness. Its initial extension is given primarily because we are of worth to the deity, to each other, and to the world in which we live. The deposited refreshment of the Holy Spirit is meant to limit and bind the fear which otherwise holds us captive to the fearful and shameful face of our genuine mistakes, willful errors and ill-gotten gains, and unacknowledged innocence. Recall Leda's last spoken words, "Pluck the fear."

On the other hand, we freely and lovingly offer our trust, loyalty, confidence, allegiance, and fealty to serve and participate in joint purposes and adventurous undertakings of being, doing and knowing. These stewardship tasks, of dressing, preserving, and building creation, are a return to the garden freedom and filiality of walking side by side

45. For word search information, see Patrick Hanks, ed., *Collins English Dictionary*, (London: Collins, 1979).

with God. They are part of a continuing cultural, ecological, and spiritual mandate, being valuable for the ways in which they may distract us from the inherent psychosis of usurping a source and centre of knowing and being which does not belong to us. Certainly, we participate in the living power of that source and centre but we cannot possess it or too closely identify ourselves with its numinous potency.

Christ's second cup, second to none and no one, is the healing draught which transforms the waste land and the wasted years, returning to humankind the inner kingdom pastures of stillness, peace and rest in which dwell God's trinitarian presence manifested in Christ Jesus. Vocational and purpose-filled adventures are the name of the life game. The return of initial faith investments bring substantial and bountiful blessings and benefits which acts as a beadle for the jubilee of the Holy Spirit. This provides a resurrection opening onto history in which co-heirs with Christ are entitled and encouraged to share themselves with others in a mutually transforming exchange. The mission concern of the New Testament continues to be an up-to-date one. The age of the Holy Spirit "would be ushered in by spiritual persons, would bring to fulfillment the work of Christ and inaugurate a period of abundant blessing, material and spiritual. It would be a return to paradise and to the innocence of Adam and Eve."⁴⁶ The return to innocence and human being without condemnation, is a life-gift positively linked with forgiveness in several ways.

In Luke's gospel, Jesus is declared innocent (*dikaïos*) six times. In terms practical and applicable to life-giving and space-making

46. Ford, "The Holy Spirit and Mission in the New Testament," p.440.

evangelization, Jesus was "innocent of being a violent revolutionary",⁴⁷ and therefore of no political or treasonous threat to Rome. His first and last atoning messages were directly connected with a jubilee ministry to social and religious outcasts and exiles. Jesus didn't patronize human nature, yet he seemed to have a uncanny eye and ear for the inner jewels of genuine goodness and unguilty innocence, even among the fault lines of the worst sinners. A practiced trust in the original goodness of a person can go a long way to bring out the best in them. Attention to this proper innocence is important because it may well be connected with a hidden grief about a genuine innocence which has been profoundly sinned against. Leda is a representative case in point. Thus the link between being innocent as Jesus was, and being able and willing to forgive the guilty one(s) is a costly but healing venture, and certainly a necessary benefit and blessing to and from the innocent side. As well as being costly to the innocent, forgiveness has a very practical and reciprocal side. We never know when the tables may turn, and we will be the guilty party in need. The constancy of a guest-host exchange ensures survival of the innocent and guilty alike, especially alike in God's eyes.

Innocence, however, can also mean "unpunished."⁴⁸ Now that is a good news paradox for human beings who know and live their lives as bittersweet, with both good and evil, pure innocence, and witting and unwitting sin. The filial freedom of being unpunished is not the license of law-breaking freedom to live without life-giving rules,

47. Ford, *My Enemy is My Guest*, p.135.

48. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, s.v. innocent, p.262.

guidelines, handrails, and principles. In positively stated and focused terms it is the costly, beatific grace of living without the paralyzing terror and fear of breaking the rules. Disciplined and exercised innocence, whether pure or unpunished, is a sideways and creative alternative to the dominant cultural consciousness of most secular and religious conditioning. Not only is it freedom from fear, but it is the freedom for adventurous and precarious faith, trust, and loyalty to life and the reality of death. The return to paradise innocence is the depth evangelization and inculturation of the reality that, in God's mercy-eyes, we are innocent. In any case, the deity gives us the double benefit of the doubt. We are taught an imaginative and creative 'make-belief' game, that of living "as if" we are morally innocent. This is what justification means, 'just as if I hadn't sinned'.

Jesus brought practically exercised and unpunished innocence i.e. forgiveness, to three of his notable and well loved disciples, Mary, Thomas, and Peter, as well as to the collective group (Jn.20 and 21). Through an initial teaching emphasis on seeing, they learned another kind of seeing that can walk in the darkness with confidence and trust. This gave them time and space, and room for the development of eyes that see God's presence and purposes concealed in the unknowing ways of darkness.

To Mary, her beloved Teacher brought deep and genuine thankfulness, genuine loving and forgiving acceptance. It meant greater independence and detachment to counterbalance her tendency to holding attachments, especially to her garden grief. On the other paradoxical hand, "holding to the testimony of Jesus" (Rev.12:17; 19:11) is the witness of the faithful in every age, and is a life-giving grip to be maintained at all

costs. Her garden privilege of seeing the Lord first of the disciples, well manifests God's beatific approval of her love and faithfulness. The double importance and value of true and deep grief opens onto joy, and true and deep love empowers and releases new life. Of Mary, able to reflectively sit at Jesus' feet, able to wash and anoint his feet at great cost, able to remain at the foot of the cross, able to grieve her losses and weep freely in the resurrected garden, the words of Yeats ring true.

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you
And loved the sorrows of your changing face.⁴⁹

Along with other women, Mary lived with and through the many changes that transformed death and grief into a resurrected hope and living joy.

To Thomas, his "Lord" and "God" bypassed the twice locked doors, and brought a two-handed and gold-sided 'make-belief' faith to counterbalance the aching futility of ego-exiling doubt. The supposed rebuke about seeing/not seeing and believing (Jn.20:29) actually benefits from a space-making extension which gives access to the less obvious, but greater horizontal relationship with the beloved disciple (Jn.20:8). In both cases, John and Thomas 'saw' and believed, in order that the wisdom of maturing faith and trust in the risen Christ could more easily accommodate and accept the walks in and through the dark

49. W.B. Yeats, "When We Are Old", found as an epithet in Nevil Shute, *The Legacy*. Also known as *A Town Like Alice*, (No further bibliographic information is available to me).

mysterious places of unseeing faith and sacramental trust. Received wisdom was then able to be brought into the light and clearly shared with the hungry community of faith through a meaningful conjunction of *anthropos* and *theos* links.⁵⁰ In the creation and advocacy of such justice-oriented stewardship, "knowledge for power is superseded by knowledge in the service of wisdom."⁵¹ In the context of Jn.14:1-7, an intelligible and relevant exposition of the problems, questions and answers that lead to God through the way, truth and life of Christ, have an important place and foundational contribution to make to the life-giving message of the Christian faith.

To Peter, the Lord brought a triple love-affection-friendship question for healing the wounds of denial and betrayal. This fine and heartening example of God's 'judgment' exercised on repentant sinners is a lesson in the most gracious and welcoming hospitality. Jesus suggests an alternative, one where Peter and the others would find what they were seeking. "Cast your net on the other side." He himself then feeds them with bread and fish (Jn.21:). Probing questions do not need to be taken as accusations, but help to gently touch and heal true guilt without having to face murderous and vengeful accusations. And on the other hand, questions help to heal the split contours in discerning and distinguishing true and false guilt. In this healing sense, Jesus symmetrically counters humanity's original mishandling of the snake's questions in the Eden garden where the first no-confidence vote

50. For a very interesting account of John's Gospel being written after the visionary book of *Revelation*, see Farrer, *The Rebirth of Images*.

51. Schuurman, "A Christian Philosophical Perspective on Technology", p.115.

occurred. Having had his hunger satisfied, Jesus' healing questions open the way to a new commission to feed the flock with human integrity. Who, more so than Peter, could feed the flock of new disciples with the Godly good news principles of unpunished innocence and forgiveness? Talk about mixed metaphors! Though fishermen by trade, the shepherd motif is especially poignant in light of Old Testament shepherds who scattered, trampled on, and did not at all benefit the flock entrusted to them. That new commission is as timely as ever.

In God's loving mercy, the redeeming value of Peter's fear-filled denial of the Lord was transformed into fearless ministrations of good news grace. Peter's far-seeing vision (Acts 10:9 ff), and costly obedience to its mission-message, helped to set and support the covenant resolutions passed at the Jerusalem council (Acts 15). A far-reaching decision to return to the universal nature and simplicity of the Noachic commandments was thereby restored for the sake of facilitating God's already existing mercy mission to secular society. Through an intimate acquaintance with the reality lessons of denial, he was able to receive back his own catch of fish and be fed at Jesus' own hands. In being fed with healing forgiveness, he came to be motivated and empowered to be faithful to Christ at all costs. Most of all, that public cost meant the sacrifice of his traditional 'clean-unclean' definitions. In the transition between the old religious order and the new one being born, Peter's key leadership and exercised responsibility were pivotal in holding the door of the gospel open to the secular 'enemies' and 'strangers' of his day. Peter, being filled with and clothed by the Holy Spirit, first declared the wonders of God in native language. His boldness prepared the way for mission to the secular world.

The universal global, ecological, social, religious, economic problems facing humanity would well benefit from a grief-door of opportunity and an eternity window-dressing jubilee. The best gift that the Christian message has to offer to the problems facing the whole world is the jubilation message of a hospitality exchange, offered in Jesus' name, to the alterity of other religious, cultural and secular traditions. Such a complementary freedom accommodates and welcome enemies as friends and is hospitable to strangers as guests. The mutually transformational exchange of genuine hospitality graces human being and doing with the bountiful benefits and blessings of receiving the universal meaning of our lives as a gift, in order that we may freely offer our gift-selves in the bittersweet filial service of perfect freedom.

The Man Who Was Thursday made friends with his apparent enemy and accuser. The story then moves to its end with them walking and talking together, "like old friends...in the middle of a conversation."⁵² As dawn breaks, *Thursday* "walked by instinct along one white road,...and found himself outside a fenced garden. There he saw [Rosamond], the sister of his [accuser], the girl with the gold-red hair." She is the woman to whom he was first attracted. She was there at the beginning, yet "he never saw her again until all his tale was over."⁵³ Ah!... Do you think the story of *Second Cup* Inculturation will have a happy ending? Nonsense! Love stories never end in the beginning.

52. Chesterton, *The Man Who Was Thursday*, p.184.

53. Ibid, p.16.

APPENDIX 1

DESCRIPTIVE DEFINITIONS

Image: Image is derived from imitate and imagination, and is based on the capacity to envision and reproduce mental and/or plastic pictures. Until recently, an image was understood only as the sensory or pictorial likeness, copy, reproduction, replica or representation of an absent but existing object, person, or situation in the material world. That mimetical capacity to copy reality was originally associated with memory based on sensory perception, and signified a one-to-one correspondence between an absent object, person, or event and its physical or mental image or representation. Reference was restricted to the absent original, and thus became a closed system. Creativity was limited to spontaneous new combinations of old components. The problem with this closure is a too-narrow definition of truth and reality, so that anything which does not exactly replicate the already existing material world is considered to be only an illusion, fictitious (not true), and thus dismissed as being without any truth value. Truth, thus defined, was equated with and limited to the literal, factual, and replicatable.

However, the important shift from perception to language, in understanding the creative role of image and imagination makes room for the introduction of completely new possibilities and perspectives. The significance and application of this change is reflected in this thesis. An image, as used herein, is a poetic image, meaning that it is either a plastic form or a linguistic one (word-picture, image-picture, word-image) which initially presents itself in a condensed and economical

visual or pictorial mode of communication. Thus is it true that: *A picture is worth a thousand words*, provided that one knows the language! The distinctive and important shift in the conventionalized understanding of image, from sensory perception to language, provides a new understanding of the power of language to shape, redefine, re-express and thus extend the boundaries of reality.¹ Image is not simply a replica but a piece of imaginative and creative work, made for a purpose. A coherent and vitalizing connection links the sensory and the inner perception in ways which require conscious articulation and language communication. This shift in emphasis means that the image is to be understood as a visual medium or vehicle - a visual metaphor - which acts as a compact and condensed expression to stimulate greater thinking and feeling about that to which the image is referring. The image thereby acts as a mediating device between the observer-participator and the image's reference.

The shift from perception to language invites and facilitates the exploration of new approaches, possibilities and open questions regarding an image's meaning and terms of reference. In this respect, the "seeing" associated with the producing of the poetic image as a visual metaphor, is allied with an understanding of image as a verbal icon. The rational functions of thinking and feeling are invited to contemplate, not the image or icon in itself, but to actively ponder that to which it refers. Images and icons, verbal or material for that

1. This shift from sensory perception to language can be found in philosophy and analytical psychology. See Paul Ricoeur, "The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality," *Man and World* 12 (1979): 123-141; also, Jung, "Definitions," in *Psychological Types*, CW 6, s.v. image, par.743 ff.

matter, are neither the products of idle nor idol speculation, nor should they be taken simply at face value. Their face or figurative value does, however, provide a certain concreteness to the plastic, mental or verbal form, and this gives a contextual frame or boundary for making sense of the image or icon. Its meaning is not found by 'free association', but is found and bounded by the image's contents, and its relational and referential context. Thus an image's plastic or mental concreteness is not to be taken literally.

Poetic images and verbal icons are transparencies. "Icons are not pictures to be looked at but, as it were, windows to be looked through....They have the power to draw the [observing consciousness] into the mystery they depict."² They invite the viewer to enter into and participate in the experience or event which they depict. That which the image depicts and to which it refers exploit the visual medium to express and link the meaning of one thing, event, person with another meaning. Pondering and participation are key elements in the linking process. Imaging or imagining, then, is a creative and concrete medium for seeing similarities where none were previously seen. An image depicts relationship, and is not simply an absent reproduction of a pre-existing form. Because seeing is an efficient and economical way of communicating, images visualize the *relationship* between apparently unconnected and dissimilar objects, actions, events, etc. because of the creative capacity to develop an internal fiction between the two unrelated things. The productive work involved in making such a fiction uses the 'as if' or 'what if...' function of imaginative make-belief,

2. Sr. Margaret Magdalen, "Jesus - Man of Prayer", p.209, ft.nt.10. Square bracket is my insertion for the original word 'believer'.

trying out new ideas, possibilities and relationships, "seeing" them for their fit or no-fit.

"Seeing into, through", or "looking beyond" the concreteness of the image to its referential core, are metaphorical ways of expressing the idea of transparency as insight or enlightened understanding. Transparency expresses the relational, contextual, and work-productive links of meaning to be made (worked) between the manifest image and its reference. The freshness, intensity and evocative drawing power of an image lies in the birth of new relational patterns. Imagination holds the creative tension of that fertile middle ground where the logical distance of two dissimilar things may remain, while at the same time, their proximity is suggested through "seeing" a relational resemblance between them. But due to the shift from sensory perception to linguistic expression, the resemblance or similarity depicted by an image operates initially according to a poetic resonance or reverberation activated by language, even if it is evocative picture language. A suspension of normal terms of reference allows the imagination to play with and thus display other, fresh, and meaningful possibilities. Reverberation invites us to hear about these new relationships even before we see them. Reverberation facilitates the process whereby "we see some images only to the extent that we first hear them."³ The creative combination of imaginative and relational pictures and language opens up many new and productive possibilities for creatively reinterpreting, revisioning, and re-expressing the truth of a situation, and thus expanding and extending reality.

3. Ricoeur, "The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality," p.134.

Metaphor: A metaphor is an evocative and colourful figure of speech used to transfer meaning from one object, event, action, or person to another. This interactive transposition is done by implying a non-literal but denotative resemblance between otherwise dissimilar or 'distant' things, and thus bringing an allied meaning into metaphorical proximity. Meaning is carried over from one thing to another in the innovative process whereby the literal link between two dissimilar things is broken apart by its incongruence, and then remade by assimilating the meaning on a non-literal level. Through the ambiguity which arises at the non-literal level of application, creative imagination is enabled to "see" more than one view at the same time ("stereoscopic vision" or "split reference")⁴ and thereby stimulating new relational possibilities. The very ambiguity of a split reference thus creates "the double-sensed message [which] finds correspondence in a split addresser, in a split addressee, and what is more, in a split reference."⁵ In poetically 'seeing' and promoting a new and pertinent similarity, the ordinary referential function which denotes a literal meaning is suspended, becoming open and ambiguous. This suspension (epoche, neutralization, negativity, non-engagement) mediates the play of new 'as if' possibilities, but without erasing or destroying the old meanings. The collapse of the literal meaning becomes the poetic foundation for a non-literal or metaliteral reference.

As well as poetic 'seeing' as a way of expressing knowledge born from experience and reflective thought, poetic feeling is part of the

4. Ricoeur, "The Metaphorical Process as Cognition, Imagination, and Feeling," in *On Metaphor*, p.152.

5. Ibid, p.151.

assimilation process whereby the new meaning communicates its contents in a recognizable and acceptable way.⁶ Constructive imagination can picture and present an 'as if' feeling, in an objective, participatory but non-literal and non-possessing way. It is resonance, reverberation or a common rhythm experienced on the feeling level as much as on the cognitive. This creative dimension enables one to truly experience the value of the 'pictured' relationship being denoted by an insightful and descriptively apt metaphor. A new metaphorical, or metaliteral meaning, becomes possible through the process of being able to holistically assimilate its significance on the non-literal level, and thus the metaphor's appeal addresses cognition and affection in ways which produce a participatory accord and rhetorical pleasure with the proffered and innovative insight. Poetic feeling provides an interiorizing link between the idea being offered and the thinker who is receptive to the metaphor's enlightening power to bring about a cognitive and evaluative relevance. Thus the evocation of poetic feeling is an interaction of subject and object, knower and know, in a complex process of linguistic reverberation which conveys the mood which accompanies the "imagination as picturing relationships."⁷ Poetic feeling as well as poetic thinking are creative ways of attuning a person to reality.

6. Feeling is not, in this sense to be unequivocally equated with emotion arising from bodily and mental states which come and go. As Ricoeur notes, imagination and feeling are intrinsic, not extrinsic to cognitive intentionality, but the theoretical models accounting for this are still in infancy. This issue of poetic feeling will be dealt with more fully in Chapter 2, and particularly in Chapter 8, where contexts for clarifying and illustrating poetic feeling will be presented.

7. Ibid, p.154,

Sign: A sign is an immediate time-space shorthand form of representative communication about a thing, event or condition. It conveys its meaning in a direct, practical and recognizable form, either static like a road sign, or dynamic like a hand movement. There is a one-to-one correspondence between the sign and its meaning, from which the information obtained may elicit an immediate, appropriate or accurate reaction. The sign's informative meaning derives from conscious convention or consensus, for instance where a green light means advance and a red one means stop. A sign's meaning is assigned by human activity, and by convention, and is univocal. Many authors do not distinguish sufficiently between sign and symbol, but they are not synonyms to be used interchangeably. Though the word sign is not used very often in this thesis, its differential definition is important in conveying the conscious human activity of assigning meaning to certain, clearly recognizable objects, patterns, and situations.

An important development in the understanding of grammatical signs and sign language is that of semiotics and the structural analysis of language. The interaction between the composition of the narrative structure (manifest surface level) and its discursive thematic structure (deep, hidden, or immanent level) is the semiotic domain.⁸ While semiotics is a valuable and important discipline in itself, such linguistic study has also provided many metaphors and analogies creatively applicable to other disciplines.

8. A helpful and accessible summary of semiotics is given by Walter Vogels, "Semiotics for Bible Study," ch.2, in *Reading and Preaching the Bible: A New Semiotic Approach*, (Wilmington, Del.: Michael Glazier, 1986), pp.30-75.

The use of the word sign, in this thesis, is limited to a univocal meaning, although I recognize that it is used more polysemically in other places. When one moves into the semiotic domain, the sign in its metaphorical innovations may certainly take on and open up many polysemic levels of possible meaning. In the fluidity of linking familiar and unfamiliar, known and unknown meanings, then sign becomes symbol, as described below. There is value in keeping the univocal aspect of the sign to differentiate, not univocality from multivocality, but known from unknown.

Symbol: The symbol is the best representation or expression of something unknown. Bridging the known-unknown axis/gap is the most important function of a symbol. Symbols, like signs, are representational, pointing to an object, person, event, idea, etc. beyond themselves. Unlike signs, symbols participate in the meaning, value and power (energy) of the experienceable but unknown reality to which they point, but without being identical to that reality. A symbol suggests or evokes relationship and points to a meaning, but without being specific or direct. It conveys a meaningful but oblique relationship capable of sustained layers of multivalent or polysemic reference. Such polysemic opaqueness gives to the symbol inexhaustible depths of meaning and reference. The opaque-transparent dynamics are also a way of describing the way in which the unknown discloses itself through the known representation, and thus opens its literal representation to other planes of meaning and significance. Correspondence and analogy are thus important considerations and tools in determining the symbol's meaning and interpretation. A respectful, conscious appreciation for the symbol itself is the elementary and only

starting point of the more difficult task of interpreting the relationship and meaning being alluded to behind the symbol, and between it and its human observer-participator.

Conscious access to the unknown dimension begins by asking questions, particularly about how and what the known representation expresses regarding the unknown. By throwing or bringing together a known and unknown reality in a bridging relationship, symbols [syn. together + *ballein*, to throw] open up other realms or horizons of experience. They open up or disclose (make transparent) levels or planes of objective reality which are otherwise veiled or closed because their truth cannot be reductively expressed in another form, as in art, poetry, movement, myth. This invites holistic subject-object interaction and interpretation between the object and observing subject. Symbols also open up levels of internal subjective reality, unveiling and unlocking dimensions, elements, and experiences of personhood, and thus facilitate meaningful, intrapsychic I-Thou relationships, as well as promoting those knowing relationships with other subjects and objects. By bringing cognition and affection together through a thinking-feeling reaction and response to the symbol, they invite a holistic relationship within a person, and between persons and their environment. The correlation and correspondence thus wrought between subject and object is not on a one-to-one basis, but as distinctive, contributing parts of a greater and interactive wholeness of truth and reality.

Symbols grow naturally, without conscious invention or intention, out of the individual or collective unconscious, and cannot function without an acknowledgment and acceptance at the unconscious level of

being. As living things, symbols grow when conditions are ripe for their acceptance, and die when the situation changes. But be very clear that it is the symbol that dies, not the reality of which it is the representing expression.

The openings provided by interactive subject-object relationships are polysemic (multivalent, multivocal, common rhythm), in giving meaning on many levels at once. The sudden opening which illuminates the symbol's meaning often comes through an association of ideas, giving a sense of revelation of an inner link or common rhythm which joins two realities to their common benefit. The insight experienced as a revelation or disclosure, or the perception of the inner link, always comes as a gift. In this way, a symbol continues to unfold and disclose further meaning, significance and value over time, as its representational power continues to unveil an interconnecting system of meanings. Thus time and timelessness are brought together, meaning that the historical (literal and factual) and the symbolic domains freely interrelate and interreact with one another, without detracting from either.

The evocative, suggestive, and appealing nature of the known-unknown axis is an invitation to think, feel, and imagine more deeply and expansively about the nature and message of that reality which seeks to address consciousness. By using known representative materials and associations, but the whole problem with a symbol is to define, understand, and holistically participate in the nature of that relationality which it invites. It is an appeal, not an order, but as such, it involves an intensity of affect and a metaphorical tension that produces a charge of energy. The symbol, as a representative object,

person, conception, event, idea, has a new value added to it, without violating its own integrity and validity. Having the status of a symbol is not reductive, but rather enriches its concrete, literal or historical existence with other interactive but abstracted levels and planes of significance and meaning. A relational network of associations ensures a power-sharing configuration which opens up many kinds of relational possibility, and eases the isolation of any one element. Though the deepest meaning of a symbol is unequivocal in its context, its unifying power (oneness) is able to creatively hold the tension of opposites in a non-contradictory way. Water, for example, is both creative and destructive. Therefore, the oneness of its meaning is never absolute but contextual and relational, and situation-specific. The symbol's essential unity or oneness comes from being condensed and distilled through its relational links. It thus establishes and maintains a holistic relationship between the knower, the symbol as a bridge or vehicle for imaginative thinking and feeling, and the unknown reality conceived and manifest in the symbol.⁹

Triaxial shifts: The movement between the literal, metaliteral (metaphorical), and symbolic domains of meaning and reference pivots on

9. The material in this section is based first of all on my own praxis experience in work-play with dream images and symbols. Secondly, it is based on a freely adapted and compiled summary taken from the following resources, Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith*, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957), pp.41-43, and Idem, *Theology of Culture*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp.54-58; also, F.W. Dillistone, *Christianity and Symbolism*, (London: SCM Press, [1955] 1985), pp.33-37; also J.E. Cirlot, *A Dictionary of Symbols*, pp.xi-lv; Paul Ricoeur, "The Symbol...Food for Thought," *Philosophy Today* 4 (Spring, 1960): 196-207; Jung, "Definitions", CW 6, s.v. symbol, par. 814 ff.

the use of isotopy [*isos* same + *topos* place], that is, word plays and word picture plays. A word which has a double meaning can be used in two or more places, isotopies, and still make sense. These shifts are the basis of many jokes, puns, and witty plays on language, often operating through look-alike and/or sound-alike words. The ambiguity created by linguistic isotopy is like the stereoscopic vision and the split reference mentioned in the section on metaphor. Isotopic shifts, as used in this thesis, must be understood as multidimensional and multidirectional shifts, rather than simply as a serial move from one level to the next in an orderly progression. Triaxial rotations bring diverse levels of meaning into direct, oblique or ambiguous intersections with one another. Therefore new or expanded references must always be tested for their alignment with the specific context and contents that boundary of the image or symbol. These may be an open and flexible boundary, but boundary nonetheless.

A new meaning and reference is not an arbitrary application, for all the game-playing involved in searching for fresh but appropriate references that amplify the image, symbol or metaphor. A good dictionary is one of the most useful tools for prompting and aiding the imagination to consider alternative meanings and references. Triaxial language games are simply a method of trying to make sense of images and symbols, and provide a practical training ground for both making and finding a suitable reference that makes sense. This is the quest for the split and missing reference.

APPENDIX 2

WAKING-DREAM CONTEXT OF THE *SECOND CUP THEME*

Dream-Waking Context

The dream: *The Second Cup Theme*. Over and over the whole night long I heard these words whispered in my ear and saw them as on a piece of paper, and felt their importance being impressed on me. There was no visual image of a cup, only hearing and seeing the words.

Truly this is a "word-image" and symbol in the sense in which Paul Ricoeur uses it, as a "hierophany, a manifestation of man's bond with the Sacred....All symbols in fact aim at reinstating man within a whole, the transcendent whole of the sky, the immanent whole of vegetation and death and rebirth....[The symbol] plants man down within his own roots; it bids reflection go on from there and discover the rationality of those roots."¹ *The Second Cup Theme* dream image/symbol did bid and invite a great deal of further conscious reflection as time went on. The information listed below is simply taken from my dream journal, as it was noted on the morning of the dream. I had no idea of the prefiguring elements which took me far beyond my own personal issues and into a transpersonal realm of meaning and reference. Close attention to its themes and the actual words themselves, as found and amplified in the text of this thesis, will show their inviting, guiding, directing, and connecting value with other issues distant from this original source. Their prime value is to provide a concrete, unifying reference

1. Ricoeur, "The Symbol: Food for Thought," p.207. In spite of the sexist language, his meaning is clear.

point which nourishes and stimulates conscious thought and feeling. Such centring value has helped me not to get lost in the wealth and maze of interconnecting details associating the *Second Cup* with many issues of mission concern.

Overall Background: The *Second Cup Theme* dream occurred just a few days before I became a full time student at St. Paul University, in September 1988. At that time, I had no idea that the Institute of Mission Studies even existed! But on the second day of classes, I found myself increasingly attracted to the choice of courses the Institute was offering. This was due in large measure to two areas of interest and experience. Awareness of and attention to cultural and religious mythology, and its symbolic importance came to me through dreamwork. Secondly, offering hospitality to many international students and other strangers over the years, proved to be the basis for sensitivity to the dynamics and blessings of cross-cultural situations.

Becoming a student in Mission Studies involved an immediate and literal turnaround in various triaxial ways. The driving-drawing need for further formal education had marked the end of a long process of cross over, from an old to a new order. This new beginning was signaled in crossing over into a type of 'promised land', symbolized by my fortieth birthday and a wonderful surprise party in the middle of the summer. Because of a kind of implicit 'curse' in my own generational family history, this crossover from a certain vicarious wilderness wandering was earmarked as a very important turning point. The dream occurred a week after my family and I had moved from the suburbs to a house closer to the city centre, and to the university. Thus we all faced many demanding, disorienting but satisfying transitions at that

time, and in the succeeding months. This was especially applicable to an identity and vocational transition, from choosing to be a full time wife-mother-housewife to being a full time student and missionary. These categories are not mutually exclusive. They did, however, involve a great deal of conscious growth and transformation in order to integrate existing and expanded horizons of contemporary mission concerns and re-orientations into ordinary life.

Though laid out in serial fashion here, the elemental waking components of which the *Second Cup* dream-awake associations are composed, are actually circular and cellular clusters. They group combined cognitive-affective aspects around the *Second Cup* as the central and unifying focus to many diverse strands of material. They form intricate networks of interconnecting and cross referencing meanings which analogically (and perhaps literally) replicate the neural networking function of the brain. They keep firing creative and revealing impulses, ideas, and inspiration meant to stimulate deeper and more imaginative thinking and feeling. Those firings appear with the later periodic oscillations of the *Second Cup Theme* material in historical timespace during my studies. This occurred in parallel with my Hospice visiting. Together, this convergence of events alerted and drew attention to new possibilities and their redescriptive perspectives applicable to a fresh approach to Christian mission. The clustering and networking materials circling around the central image of the *Second Cup Theme* provide the visual dynamics of a metaphorical orientation map.

Immediate Background: The day before this dream, my husband and I had bought a second hand stove and fridge, much to our delight, for we were feeling very disheartened and discouraged by many housemoving

factors involving finances and the uprooting and rerooting process. We had celebrated our purchases and the Lord's provision for us by having coffee at a refreshment shop called "The Second Cup."

The meaning of a dream starts with the associations linking waking and sleeping reality. The dream image components provide an open boundary, yet boundary nevertheless, for circumscribing, defining and delimiting its meaning. Association is not the free association that takes one further and further away from the central image. Rather, meaning stays with the referential significance and interpretive meaning which continually circle around the image/symbol. This kind of concentrating and repeating attention over time permits the image's and symbol's meaning and reference to disclose and make transparent the greater dimensions of its interpretive significance and relational application to waking life. The *Second Cup Theme* is a reservoir of constructive potentials and prefiguring possibilities which was waiting to be tapped and channelled into waking life applications, as this thesis will demonstrate.

Second Cup = small, local chain of refreshment stores, sells wide selection of teas, coffees, brewing equipment, healthy snack foods, - motto is "second to none"; Jesus is second to none and no one, i.e. he's the best; 2 exotically flavoured, celebration cups of coffee following hot-cold, second hand purchases; restored 'we'-feeling after moving house; trust, be not afraid; cosmic humour.

- second cup of blessings, sweet, joy, pleasure, freely given, frankincense; - contrast to first cup of curses, Is.51:17, 22, bitter, sorrow, pain, costs everything, myrrh, bittersweet partners; - curses to

snake and ground in Gen.3:14, 17, - associated with snake/woman as temptress, snake sign linked with healing; menstruation foolishly called 'the curse'; cup as horn of plenty (abundance), cup of salvation, cup of forgiveness Mt.26: 27,28;

- bra cups, full and long length slip, sheer, strapless bodice i.e. self-supporting, foundational, womanly but without bootstrap idolatry of unaided efforts at self-betterment (Tillich's idolatrous faith); interdependent, feminine under cover; (garments of praise) - foundation garments, transparent, cups associated with many searching references to feminine undergarments, rags to riches, black and white cocktail dresses, sweetheart necklines; asymmetrical symmetrical earrings; a child's book called *The Hundred Dresses*, which mentions Lincoln's Gettysburg address about freedom and hoping that dead haven't died in vain; contrast to mastectomy disfigurement (one cup or no cup), disinherited, cut-off body parts; undercover and unknown secret service assignments in the military arm/wing, expensive gift costs an arm and a leg, Jesus' wing like Jerusalem chicks and hen, 5 stones of anthropos wedding ring setting and coupling energy; deep wells of silence, cool refreshment accessed via descending-ascending steps of a fire escape with scrolly wrought-iron handrail;

- slip as fall from grace, a fallen woman; knitting term, slip, slide, free pass; slip as final glaze on bone china teacups, fired at high temperatures, delicate, fragile, breakable but also strong and able to hold 'hot water', i.e. trouble, steeping and mashing processes; small slips of paper, slips of the tongue, slipway for launching ships, slipping into something more comfortable

- Emmanuel (the British couple, David and Elizabeth Emmanuel) dress designers; the design of the strapless, black watered silk, evening dress worn on the first public celebration of a famous engagement; also their famous creamy silk wedding dress, both designed for and worn by Dianna, the Princess of Wales; Emmanuel, God with us

- all-night dream - an old song called "Open Arms" (?) about a fisherman and fishing boats, had been half consciously humming it for the week during the house move

All night I hold him tight, he's mine until the dawn,
Then when the fishing boats go out again, he's gone...
I pray all through the day...
and when the boats come in,
I run to him with open arms.

- second hand purchases celebrated; affordable domestic hot and cold appliances from recycle shop employing disabled and handicapped people, a matching set, bought at Lincoln Fields mall/shopping centre; song from musical *Dolly*, about a marriage broker (matchmaker) who finally meets her match, second hand Rose wearing second hand clothes, hand-me-downs, reused and recycled material, bargain basement shopping; being second best and not usurping the centre, i.e. not playing God

- second time for seeing video film *Cotton Patch Gospel*, intriguing gospel musical and drama of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection set in Georgia, U.S.A., and using the vernacular language and social settings of the southern states; song references are particularly moving

Song: Turn it around (metanoia), trickster-type song about pivotal seeing in new ways, forgiveness, curious backside reversals, based on Sermon on the Mount and other parable scenes

Turn it around, turn it around,
surprise them a little, start shifting the ground,
To make it right side up, turn upside down"
Now is the time to turn it around.

Song: *When I Look Up*

When I look up, what should I see?
There should be a rainbow on the far horizon,
Stretching toward eternity...

O, surround me like your seasons,
Why don't you rock, rock me in your stream?
O, and won't you promise me tomorrow?
Won't you give us back our dreams?

When I look up, what do I see?
A road leading to the rainbow, that reaches right back/
When I look out, what should there be? to me.
Spirit on a mountain top, bringing everybody peace.

Song: Jubilation (= year of the Lord's favour, restoration, reclamation) - introduction speaks of the assignment of joy, involves a dream, and concludes with Shema (Dt.6:4-5) and 2 great commandments, "love the Lord your God, with all your heart, soul and mind, love your neighbour as you love yourself"; these words interwoven with word Jubilation and overall tune

This is a song I hoped that time would bring (Jubilation)
This is a song I call my jubilation (Jubilation)
And it feels so good, all I've got to do is sing.

Everybody wants to touch his dream just one time,
I know I'll never ever get this close again.
Everybody wants to feel this feeling sometime,
That's why I don't want this day to come to an end.

Related remarks to jubilation: a mix up in notes and following of A & B insertions; the second coming of Jesus, mutual incarnational relationship of human and divine brings mark of everlasting joy (enjoying God forever, being fruitful) and restoration (to original state) for redeemed people; intertwining, interweaving, interleaving

APPENDIX 3

THE METAPHOR OF COVENANT RELATIONALITY

Covenant relationality, as used by Walter Brueggemann, is a creative alternative and radically subversive metaphor for understanding and articulating human personality. The covenantal paradigm of relationality is based on the premise that "human persons are grounded in Another who initiates personhood and who stays bound to persons in loyal ways for their well-being.... Covenant is the deep and pervasive affirmation that our lives in all aspects depend upon our relatedness to this other One who retains initiative in our lives (sovereignty) and who wills more good for us than we do for ourselves (graciousness)."¹ The following is a brief summary of the most salient features of the metaphor of covenantal initiative-response. It shows the dynamics of mutual human and divine relationship and can be understood externally, as a way of accounting for the experience of the presence and purpose of a transcendent and mysterious Other who comes from beyond the human realm. Covenant is also used as a way of accounting for the inner dynamics of relationship with the Holy Spirit of Christ that lives within the human person and testifies to the ways of Christ and empowers humans to live with trust and confidence with this Other One who stands at the door of human life and knocks. A willing human opening to this stranger gives entry to life-giving and space-making gifts of salvation and salvific activity on human behalf.

1. Brueggemann, "Covenanting as Human Vocation" in *Interpretation* 33 (1979): 115-129, p.116.

In a nonreligious understanding, this model of initiative-response works well when its thematic or discursive content is translated into secular terms. Many people have experiences of awe, wonder, help, correction, and presence (wonder and/or frightening) which they sense and recognize. However, in a materialistically oriented culture, the reality-value of this spiritual domain is officially denied and ignored, but still capable of being sensed. In being cut off or exiled from any overall sense of sacredness, religious and environmental, one problem facing people is the lack of any language or a conceptual model to adequately articulate the spiritual dynamics of certain inexplicable yet experienced events. Attention to the themes and structural elements in the covenantal metaphor, can help Christians to be aware of its purposeful and interpretive dynamics.

Four claims about God's initiatives and actions vis-a-vis covenant are paralleled by faithful human actions of response. These are summarized in the following chart.²

God's Initiative	Human's Response
1. Power for newness	1. Hope
2. Fresh, evocative speech	2. Serious listening
3. Claim of belonging	3. Obedient answering
4. Human life redefined	4. Freedom to rage, grieve, praise

2. Ibid, pp.118-125.

1. Power for newness: God's willingness and power to make and create complete newness is uniquely characteristic of deity, and is given as a gift. It counters any limiting views that believe "everything is already given that will be given."³ Thus situational and character change and transformation are genuinely possible.

Hope: Hope accepts and lives daily by God's promises of purposeful existence, thus breaking the despair and depression of the ego's inflationary isolation and limited resourcefulness. Hope combats the disorderliness of personality.

2. Fresh, evocative speech: God's creative means of gift-giving newness is delivered by fresh and evocative speech, and is meant as an authoritative and silencing rebuke to the voiceless impotence of idols. Idols are understood as the literalization and reification of God's life-giving energy which becomes closed. Any idol is not open to the transparency which sees through the object, event, person, to the experience, presence, and mystery of God. By the self-announcement of the deity's purposes and a two-pronged address - promise of fidelity and a claim on humans to be people-child-servant-friend-heir, God brings change. Powerful speaking matters for "we are speech-creatures...our existence is in large measure an event of speech."⁴

Serious listening: Attentiveness to the voice of one subject speaking to another requires a grace-filled yielding to a name (identity) and surrender to a purpose (vocation) which is given to us and transcends

3. Ibid, p.118.

4. Ibid, p.119.

our limited range and scope. It involves a willingness to be impacted, shaped and defined by the voice and its contents. Active, trustful listening counters indictments about deafness and the terror of the echoing cosmic silence of our own voice.

3. Claim of belonging: God's claiming of a person confers life and identity, which brings a sense of filial belonging. Through the dialectic process of mature binding and freedom, covenant gives a framework for personhood. Paradoxically, there is no genuine human freedom without true bonding. This both overcomes notions of human autonomy and oppressive heteronomy.

Obedient answering: Because God holds us accountable and responsible, humans answer with their lives in the form of the active doing of justice, righteousness, loyalty and graciousness. Maturity brings that unique filial bonding of an 'Abba' experience which evokes mature interdependent freedom, not subservience.

4. Human life redefined: God's saving actions completely redefine human life, by giving it a new context and perspective. This brings order from chaos, speech from silence, belonging from abandonment, and surprising and amazing newness from the unending tedium of outworn patterns of oldness.

Freedom to rage, grieve, praise: Trusting, faithful responses to God involve rage, grief, and praise. Rage is a gate to hope through a rightful protest and a proper unwillingness to take all the blame. Grief is a unrepressed primal scream addressed to the God who says that loss is not the ultimate reality. Lament is a particular language form

of protest-praise. It pivots from self to Other, from complaint to confidence and hope in, and praise for, the One who faithfully accompanies one through every situation. Lament-praise is equally the practice of "the buoyant (self-sufficient)....and the immobilized (not self-sufficient)."⁵

The dynamics of initiative-response found in the metaphor of covenantal relationality invites a conceptual model and tool for bridging psychology and spirituality. Their mutual concerns mirror the need for healing and the healthy growth and development of multifaceted human potential.

5. Ibid, p.125.

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