

From Industrial Revolution to Electronic Revolution:

The Postmodern Challenge to Catholic Social Thought in the Catholic University

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In this paper, I will explore three themes: 1) the impact of the shift from the modern industrial revolution to the postmodern electronic revolution, in relation to human society, its ecological matrix, and its spiritual depth; 2) the legacy of Catholic social thought from the modern bourgeois era, climaxing in the industrial revolution, and the fresh challenge to that legacy from the postmodern ecological era; and 3) the implications of this challenge for the Catholic university in general and for management education in particular.

These explorations will draw on a 2-volume study of Catholic social teaching which I am presently completing. That study traces the development of Catholic social teaching as strategic ecclesial responses to the three-stage evolution of industrial capitalism, from its beginning in the eighteenth century through to the new electronic-ecological age dawning at the close of the twentieth century.

Part 1. The Electronic Revolution:

From Modern Industrial to Postmodern Ecological Culture

Let us begin by examining our contemporary social context, that is, the decline of the modern industrial age and the emergence of the postmodern ecological age, including their respectively dominant means of communications, print and electronics.

The Modern Bourgeois Revolution

During the past two-hundred years our ecological, social, and spiritual experience was increasingly shaped by the modern bourgeois revolution, a hyper-masculine mechanistic paradigm climaxing in the industrial revolution.

The driving social force behind the modern industrial revolution was the hyper-masculine modern Western bourgeois class, to whose life-style all modern cultures have become progressively assimilated. Enriched by the Crusades and the opening of trade to the East, modern Western bourgeois males began their rise to dominance within the European commercial cities of the late Middle Ages. Business and commerce were the specialties of this class, and their legitimizing institution was the university – the place where the modern hyper-masculine bourgeois paradigm was developed and expanded. The bourgeois philosophical orientation was toward nominalism, known as the *via moderna*, just as its spiritual preference was for interiority, again known as the *devotio moderna*.

With the modern print revolution, the foundational communications technology of the modern era, the urban bourgeoisie gained a knowledge tool which would eventually enable it to overthrow the landed aristocracy. By contrast, the aristocracy had developed its classical institutions around the more limited communications technology of handwriting, and reproduced its information system through the more limited knowledge tool of household tutoring.

Following the print revolution a series of social revolutions erupted, which would prepare for the triumph of the bourgeois way of life in the industrial revolution. First came the Protestant Reformation, urban in character and closely tied to the free university, led initially by Martin Luther, a Catholic monk and university professor who had been trained in nominalism and interiority. Then came the modern European scientific revolution, the modern European Enlightenment, and the modern European philosophy of Liberalism.

Throughout this whole process, the bourgeoisie's rise to global power forced massive economic and cultural subsidies from mercantile and industrial colonialism. These included: the devastation of the lands, cities, cultures, and labor of the native peoples of the Americas; the early modern holocaust of the capture or killing of perhaps forty million Africans for the Atlantic slave-trade (with Antwerp as its initial financial center); the highly "efficient" colonial plantation systems of the Americas (the forerunner of the modern factory system); and the plunder of Africa and Asia during the second stage of the industrial capitalism (made possible by the new inventions of steamship, railroad, telegraph, and machine-gun).

These revolutions in turn fed the modern anti-aristocratic liberal democratic revolutions of the European and European American cultures. These democratic revolutions, most notably first in what became the United States and later in France, cleared free-market space for the industrial revolution. The industrial revolution in turn represented the climax of the modern hyper-masculine bourgeois rise to power. Most recently this industrial rise to power has reached its own inner climax with its third stage of globalization.

The positive side of the bourgeois revolution was an explosion for humanity of knowledge, of technological creativity, of material productivity, and of social organization (now up to the scale of "globalization.") Thanks to the bourgeois

contribution in science, we humans have become the preeminent biological species on the planet, well advanced in colonizing vast geological and biological systems in service of our needs and desires. Thanks to the bourgeois contribution in economics, the middle and upper classes of the human family, and even sectors of the working class, have achieved a life-style of material comfort which in premodern times was not available even to the aristocracy. Thanks to the complementary bourgeois cultivation of inner psychological depth, modern peoples today are heirs to a rich spirituality of interiority, known in late medieval times as the *devotio moderna*.

Yet there has also been a negative side to the modern bourgeois revolution. We saw already its horrendous colonialism. Also as its hold deepened on the center countries, these societies became increasingly urban and fabricated, and so radically cut-off from the natural world. At the same time, human relationships in the bourgeois paradigm became less organic and communal, and more contractual and individualistic, with family ties weakening and work being organized around efficient causes often to the exclusion of final causes. Lastly modern spirituality in the bourgeois paradigm became ever more privatized, deaf to God's rich and creative word spoken in the unfolding of natural and social history, and blind to God's awesome and sacramental presence in the vast expanse of creation which lay beyond the inner psyche.

The Industrial Revolution

As the climax of the bourgeois revolution, the Industrial revolution has had its own internal dynamics, which encompass three stages of unfolding. These may be described briefly as follows:

Stage I - Early Industrial Capitalism (1760-1880). This was the first wave of the industrial revolution, beginning in the second half of the eighteenth century and marked by the fragmentation of work, that is, the factory revolution's break-up of workers' holistic skills from the preindustrial craft workshop into the specialized and linear steps of the factory system. The organization of industrial production in this stage occurred largely on a local scale, in limited industrial regions, and under the ownership of small entrepreneurial family firms.

The economic process of Stage I was supported ideologically by the development of classical or laissez-faire liberalism, in turn taking political expression in the non-interventionist or laissez-faire state. It was the function of the laissez-faire state to clear markets of mercantile and feudal obstacles so that small entrepreneurs could flourish.

It was in this stage that the industrial working class was born, and also in this stage that the alternative ideology of industrial socialism emerged to guide early socialism, which at this point functioned as a young protest movement.

Stage II - Middle Industrial Capitalism (1880-1960). This was the second wave of the industrial revolution, beginning in the second half of the nineteenth century and marked by the mechanization of work, that is, the replacement of workers' muscles by powerful

motor-driven machines controlled by "industrial" workers. The factory itself developed into a giant machine through the mechanized assembly line. For the first time, coherent "national economies" emerged through the national integration of work under giant structures of capital known as corporations. Generally too massive in scale both financially and technologically for the typical family firm, these corporate enterprises required new bureaucratic structures of "scientific management" positioned midway between capitalist owners and industrial workers.

The vast social transformation brought about by the corporate revolution also occasioned a profound reconstruction of the liberal ideology, leading to a more organic formulation often described as revisionist or social liberalism, in turn taking political expression with the regulatory, interventionist, or social-welfare state. It was the function of the social-welfare state to balance the large national interests of capital and labor in the framework of an expansive national production system.

At the same time, the industrial working class of the center countries grew in social power and, at least at the climax of this stage, became junior partners in a new triumvirate of "big business, big labor, and big government." Also in this period, the industrial socialist movement matured, in some cases gaining state power (most notably in the Soviet Union), and in turn polarizing into democratic socialist and totalitarian communist wings.

Stage III - Late Industrial Capitalism (1960 . . .). This is the third wave of the industrial revolution (although following Daniel Bell sometimes called "post-industrial"), beginning in the second half of the twentieth century and marked by the cybernation of work, that is, the replacement of industrial and bureaucratic workers' brains by computers. In this innovation, the computer is tied to factory machines for robotics to create automated production processes, as well as to office machines to create automated clerical processes.

Because of the underlying electronic revolution, new advances in communications and transportation make possible for the first time in all human history a truly global production system, as well as a truly global culture. With this expansion in scale, the national managerial corporation begins to be replaced by the global strategic conglomerate, alternately known as the multinational corporation or transnational enterprise.

This new global development precipitates an ideological debate within nation-states between the right and left wings of liberalism over its philosophical reconstruction in the new stage. The right wing is often described in the United States as "neoconservative" (and elsewhere often as "neoliberal") and the left wing is perhaps best described as "neoprogressive" (though the term is not generally used).

In the midst of this new debate, a third political form of the liberal state has emerged, which might be called the national-security state. The basic function of this new form of the state is to reorganize national societies for competition in the maturing world-market.

Right-wing liberalism proposes a hard version of the national-security state which stresses austerity and discipline, while left-wing liberalism proposes a soft version which stresses education and participation.

During this period, the industrial working class of the center countries goes into deep crisis -- caught between the new global competition and the advent of cybernated electronic technologies. Similarly, the industrial socialist movement experiences its own crisis, most notably in the collapse of Soviet communism across the old Russian Empire and Eastern Europe.

In a broader sense, one might define all three stages as deepening processes of industrial mechanization: the first *social*, that is, the breakup of craft work into the factory's division of labor; the second *physical*, that is, replacement of much human muscle by machines; and the third *cybernetic*, that is, displacement of industrial and clerical workers by computers.

For this analysis, the Stage III electronic revolution precipitates not simply a new stage in industrial capitalism and in the related liberal ideology, but simultaneously a deeper cultural transformation reaching beyond the five-hundred year old paradigm of modernity, and perhaps even beyond the five-to ten-thousand year old paradigm of patriarchal civilization. A full analysis of this wider historical horizon belongs, however, to another study.

In light of this wider horizon, the three stages examined in this study may be described chronologically as the *early, middle, and late* stages of industrial capitalism. The qualifier "late" is used for Stage III because of the assumption that the electronic revolution is moving contemporary society beyond the grounding logic of modernity's final project of industrial capitalism, though not to the modern variant of industrial socialism.

Now, with the new phenomenon of globalization, which signals the full climax and therefore proximate end of the hyper-masculine bourgeois era, we need to discern carefully what in the modern legacy needs to be cherished as an abiding contribution to all future human generations and to the whole planetary community of life, what needs to be rejected as pathologically destructive, and what fresh synthesis we are called to create. To do that, however, we need also to understand the depth of the changes now coming upon us from the postmodern electronic revolution.

The Postmodern Electronic-Ecological Challenge

As we move toward the close of the twentieth century, key social analysts have made powerful claims that contemporary technological and economic systems are undergoing radical shifts, all based on the foundational fact of the electronic revolution. In 1973 Daniel Bell, the eminent Harvard sociologist, published his now classic study, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society*. Later in 1980 the popular futurist Alvin Toffler published *The Third Wave*, a wide-ranging projection portraying the electronic revolution as a new sequel to the two-century old industrial revolution and the ten-millennia old

agricultural revolution. Then in 1993 the leading management theorist Peter Drucker published his provocative work, *Post-Capitalist Society*, proposing that the electronic revolution was creating a new management revolution at once global in character and based on knowledge.

Other analysts have proposed that in this same period we are experiencing profound shifts in our ecological interaction with the rest of nature, such that a new ecological form of society is being born. Some like the *State of the World* reports, issued each year since 1984 by the Worldwatch Institute directed by Lester Brown, initially devoted themselves to chronicling the planet's growing ecological crisis inflicted especially by industrial models based on fossil fuels and petro-chemicals. (Recently the Institute has stressed more positive developments, for example, the growth of solar energy.) Others, like the theologian Thomas Berry and the physicist Brian Swimme in their rich study, *The Universe Story*, have synthesized multiple explorations of a new scientific-spiritual paradigm of the creative communion of ecological, societal, and Divine life. In an earlier work, the astro-physicist Fritjof Capra in his *The Turning Point* has insightfully chronicled the shift from a mechanistic-manipulative modern paradigm of natural science to a postmodern holistic-creative paradigm.

On the spiritual side, many have already begun the exploration of an ecologically oriented postmodern spirituality integrating ecology with justice and peace. Charlene Spretnak, in her earlier work *The Spiritual Dimension of Green Politics* as well as in her later and fuller text *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age*, has developed an eco-feminist spirituality with some roots in the Catholic tradition of sacramentalism and social teaching. Jay B. McDaniel in *Earth, Sky, Gods, & Mortals* develops an ecological spirituality rooted in process theology. Rosemary Reuther in *Gaia & God* links ecological spirituality with a critique of ancient patriarchy. Carolyn Merchant in her magisterial *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution* shows how the modern paradigm redefined the mystery of nature as a dead body available for rape-like plunder, while Rupert Sheldrake in *The Rebirth of Nature* develops the rediscovery of nature's spirit-filled organic creativity by a postmodern paradigm of natural science. Finally Sean McDonagh in *Passion for the Earth* integrates postmodern ecological spirituality with the call to justice and peace.

Still others have sketched new ecological models of business for the postmodern era. Paul Hawken in *The Ecology of Commerce* explains a circular production series in which the waste of one production process becomes the food for another; businesses within this circle prove to be more efficient competitors as well as better ecological stewards. David Korten in *When Corporations Rule the World* explores the local side of the new global-local dynamic; where many gigantic global conglomerates prove destructive of natural and social ecology, new micro-enterprises rooted in local human communities and local bioregions are planting seeds for a sustainable holistic economy. Similarly María Otero and Elisabeth Rhyne's in *The New World of Microenterprise Finance: Building Healthy Financial Institutions for the Poor* have shown had small amounts of credit, particularly when given to poor women, can help regenerate poor communities.

Both on the scientific side and on the spiritual side, the postmodern ecological paradigm (drawn from new developments in the natural sciences) is quite different from what is often referred to as deconstructive postmodernism (arising within the humanities and social sciences). While deconstructionism has made important contributions to undercutting the pretension of the modern Enlightenment paradigm to universality, it nonetheless has been described by some ecological postmodernists as a late-modern construct, not truly postmodern, and not capable of guiding postmodern culture into what Thomas Berry calls the post-Cenozoic or Ecozoic Age. The perspective throughout this paper remains that of ecological postmodernism, which proposes that the natural sciences are laying the groundwork for a fresh cosmological meta-narrative, which Thomas Berry has called "the Universe story."

The Electronic Revolution and Post-Capitalist Society

Our new knowledge of the crisis of ecology in the natural world, and of the new possibilities for economic models based on natural and social ecology are due in large part to the electronic revolution. For this technological breakthrough has made possible vastly more powerful instruments of scientific analysis (e.g., electronic microscopes and electronic telescopes), as well as new low-energy and relatively non-polluting tools (e.g., photo-voltaic solar cells).

The electronic revolution grows out of, yet reaches beyond the industrial revolution of modern capitalism, and even, as Drucker has proposed, beyond modern capitalism itself. This post-capitalist society is not the industrial socialist or industrial communist model which Marx proposed. Further it is not anti-business or anti-market, since these institutions are far older than capitalism. Indeed, while modern industrial capitalism is only approximately two-hundred years old, and modern capitalism only approximately five-hundred years old, business and the market are perhaps ten-thousand years old.

As Immanuel Wallerstein has pointed out, there have been three main interpretations of the phenomenon of modern capitalism. First there was the early perspective of Adam Smith, who held that capitalism is the normative paradigm of human economic life, though it's discovery took some time. Second, there was the later perspective of Karl Marx that capitalism was an historical phenomenon, preceded by earlier forms of economic life and to be succeeded by yet another, which for Marx was to be first socialism and then communism. Third, there was the still later perspective of Max Weber, who held that capitalism was an aberration, in effect a super-human achievement. The analysis offered here represents an historical analysis of capitalism, though not a Marxian analysis.

Late Modern Cultural Breakdown

The new postmodern electronic era, initially emerging within the mechanistic logic of industrial capitalism, is presently being controlled by a new global knowledge elite linked to transnational conglomerates and promoting the globalization and automation of industrial production. This new globalized capitalist society, which for the moment might

be described as late modern rather than truly postmodern, is increasing generating ecological, societal, and spiritual breakdown, and a bitter and unfruitful polarization of politics.

Let us briefly review this breakdown in terms of ecology, in terms of the social categories of class, race, gender, and also community and family, and in terms of spirituality, and then examine the political polarization to which this breakdown leads.

- **Ecology.** Late modernity is generating a deepening crisis of the biosphere across the whole planetary community of life, particularly by global warming from the use of fossil fuels.
- **Class.** It is dismantling large sectors of the blue-collar industrial working class and now even of the bureaucratic middle class, and fostering across the planet a radical polarization between on one side an affluent knowledge elite and on the other side a poor aggregate made up of a small and disposable working class, a large personal service class, and still larger unemployed or under-employed underclass.
- **Race.** The marginalization of the underclass is found across the planet especially and increasingly among poor people of color.
- **Gender.** While promoting the equality of women in civil society (a major breakthrough), it is nonetheless more radically undermining women's ancient role of preserving the webs and cycles of nature and society and leaving growing numbers of children in wretched poverty.
- **Human Community and Family.** And finally, in terms of human community and its base in family, it is promoting a profound erosion marked by a weakening of marriage, public propaganda in favor of sexual promiscuity (from TV, cinema, advertising, etc.), and attack on the human life cycle both in the womb (promotion of mass abortion) and in the final years (promotion of mass euthanasia) and especially for the poor and so-called "useless" ones.
- **Spiritual Breakdown.** Overall we may describe the late modern ecological and social breakdown as a long term process of undermining the webs and cycles of both natural and human community, that is, of natural ecology and the human family at every level from the local to the global. Those who pay the spiritual cost of this devastation are especially young people, many of whom increasingly do not see a viable future. Thus, in parallel with the late modern global extension and personal deepening of the modern bourgeois way of life, we have experienced an explosion of youthful rage and depression, manifest in very high rates of crime, suicide, murder, and abuse of alcohol, drugs, and sex.

Political Polarization

Thus far in this new period, the main function of the late modern state has been to clear away international barriers to global free trade, and correlatively to streamline and discipline internal populations for global competition with relatively little social or ecological restraint, no matter what the cost to nature and human community. This societal restructuring in service of elite globalization has not yet found a stable political

center. Rather it has been polarized between two groups striving in mirror opposite ways to reconstruct the modern liberal ideology:

- ***center-right "neoconservatives"*** who wish to restrain the expressive freedom of cultural liberalism while expanding the instrumental freedom of economic liberalism (so on the economic terrain they are also called "neoliberals"), and thus favor a society marked by cultural control with economic freedom; and
- ***center-left societal "neoproggressives"*** who wish to restrain the instrumental freedom of economic liberalism while expanding the expressive freedom of cultural liberalism, and thus favor society marked by economic control ("strategy") with cultural freedom.

Neither of these two poles has holistically addressed the foundational crisis of modern culture, nor the inadequacy of its guiding philosophy of liberalism.

The Postmodern Ecological Alternative

There will be, I propose, a number of fundamental differences between modern industrial capitalist society and truly postmodern ecological society. It may be helpful to sketch just a few of these differences, with emphasis on the first. These are of course only proposals, subject to revision from wiser voices and from future experience.

The Priority of Local Bioregional Communities. First, thanks to the electronic revolution, economic life will over time become culturally re-rooted in local communities and local bioregions, with a distinct artistic style characterizing production in diverse bioregional communities. With the global diffusion of knowledge and relatively inexpensive electronic technologies, it will eventually become more efficient to produce the bulk of goods and services locally.

The great struggle here will be not the modern mass battle between the impersonal forces of capital and labor, but rather a polymorphous conflict between global corporate-bureaucratic centralization of control over capital and technology on one side and on the other side the decentralized rerooting of capital and technology in local human communities and bioregions.

Thus for ten thousand years before the industrial revolution, most humans lived in pre-industrial Neolithic villages. For the past two hundred years, there has been a massive attempt at the global level to concentrate the human family into industrial cities. Now vast numbers of humans will begin return to rural areas in networked webs of post-industrial Ecozoic villages, while those who still live in Neolithic villages will leapfrog over the modern industrial age and upgrade their villages to the postmodern electronic age. In this process, we could see a plague of local ethnic-regional wars, and of violent uprising seeking land reform.

Supportive Global Networks. Second, while priority will be given to the local, the global dimension will also flourish as a facilitator of networks of local communities. Both

governmental and corporate global institutions will be very important here, particularly in information, finance, transportation, and communications. Of special importance will be public global security institutions, to minimize the risk of and damage from local ethnic-regional wars.

Return to Family Production. Third, the family, traditionally the primary cell and source of all human institutions but marginalized and privatized by modern industrialism, will over the long run return as a producer unit. Work and home will in most cases be again integrated, and in the process women will regain the economic

The Creativity of Marginalized Peoples. Fourth, the once marginalized peoples of Earth, that is those non-modern people who kept their tribal roots, may prove to be the most artistically and spiritually creative groups in the postmodern ecological-electronic era. This in turn, over time, may also lead to flourishing economic and political creativity. Already, for example, we see that postmodern Catholicism is becoming centered in the Third World, and perhaps especially in Africa.

Having explored the breakdown of modern industrial society and the breakthrough of a postmodern ecological society, let us now turn to review the modern legacy of Catholic social thought and the early postmodern ecological challenge to the Catholic tradition.

Part 2. Catholic Social Thought:

Modern Legacy and Postmodern Challenge

During the past five centuries, as rising modern bourgeois elites mounted deadly assaults on the classical Catholic aristocratic paradigm of church and society, the strategic response of Catholic social teaching to the rise of modern hyper-masculine bourgeois culture was reactive and defensive.

Three Modern Bourgeois Assaults

We may identify three main assaults on the Catholicism of Europe's Old Regime. The first was cultural-religious, the second philosophical-scientific, and the third political-economic.

First Assault: The Reformation. The initial assault on the classical Catholic aristocratic paradigm was cultural-religious, namely the Protestant Reformation, the first modern bourgeois revolution. As mentioned, the Reformation was rooted in the free universities of the German towns, and used the new technology of mechanical printing to establish a distinctly modern bourgeois paradigm of evangelization.

This new paradigm was based on the vernacular Bible made directly available to individual literate lay people, largely in the middle class. The vernacular Bible was then linked with the Protestant doctrine of *sola Scriptura*, which denied the need for the church's mediation across time (tradition) and space (authority). With its additional

doctrines of total human depravity under the power of sin and the purely extrinsic character of grace, the Reformation also took a negative approach to human nature and natural creation, and thus in the long run tended to weaken the cultural foundations for acceptance of natural reason, natural theology, and natural or ecological spirituality.

From a modern viewpoint, the negative side of the classical Catholic paradigm had been its aristocratic character, which over time had become subject to deep corruption and resistant to modern freedom and progress. Again, this paradigm had been based on the aristocratic control of information through elite handwriting, particularly by the monasteries, and a limiting of the Bible to elite Latin translation for the aristocratic class. In the same aristocratic manner, religious and clergy were seen as spiritually higher in their state of life than the "lowly" and "worldly" laity who could not be trusted with the Bible.

But classical Catholicism also had a positive side, especially its cultivation of a sacramental sense of nature, and its organic sense of human community, both of which retained important values from the pre-Christian European tribal-peasant culture.

In the Counter-Reformation of the Council of Trent, Catholic elites eventually responded to the Protestant attack by defending the classical organic vision (e.g., in the complementarity of nature and grace), but also by intensifying the spiritually hierarchical or aristocratic understanding of the role of religious and clergy. Also in the wake of Trent, the modern Catholic church was reconstructed in more bourgeois mode as a self-contained legal institution (a "perfect society"), guided by a centralized bureaucracy in the Vatican, and increasingly staffed at the local level by specialized modern professionals trained through the print media in seminaries (ecclesially insulated from the free university). At the same time the role of the *devotio moderna* (again, the modern bourgeois piety of psychological interiority) was continually expanded through the support of modern emotional devotions (promoted by the apostolic religious orders which played down the older Catholic tradition's strong sacramentalism of nature).

Second Assault: Enlightenment Liberalism. The second major attack on the classical aristocratic Catholic paradigm was philosophical-scientific, namely the Enlightenment and its philosophy of Liberalism. Now the modern bourgeois drive for freedom easily broke easily beyond the weak limits of Protestant boundaries and proclaimed at first deism and eventually secularism, including some militantly atheistic currents.

The attack also took on political form as the rising bourgeois forces of continental European liberalism attempted to unseat aristocratic Catholic elites, lay and clerical. In part, this entailed seizing the Catholic Church's economic resources (so closing "useless" monasteries which had served the "idle" poor, a process which had begun in the Reformation) and attempting to reduce the local church to a state-controlled enterprise (so Gallicanism, Febronianism, etc.). The rallying cries of this second attack were liberal "freedom and progress," against which Catholic "authority and tradition" were often portrayed as mortal enemies.

The Catholic response to this second attack, particularly following the staggering blow of the French Revolution, was even more defensive. For a while the popes sided with the aristocratic Counter-Revolution, but when the political triumph of bourgeois forces was beyond doubt, the papacy under the leadership of Pius IX (1846-1878) retreated spiritually from the modern European world. The end of the classical strategy came under the same pope who finally lost the papal states. The aristocratic foundation of the classical papacy was permanently ended.

Yet paradoxically Pius IX, in his very retreat, ended the caste-like aristocratic character of the European episcopacy, and created instead a modern model of bishops who were largely children of the middle class or peasantry. In addition, thanks to new technologies of communications and transportation, Pius IX was able to foster a new spiritual cult of the papacy, which in the long run would more than compensate for its loss of the "temporal power."

Also, despite his retreat within Europe, Pius IX supported vigorous missionary outreach to those vast areas of the Third World recently invaded by European industrial colonialism. He did so, however, by overlooking the unjust military invasion of these areas.

Sadly throughout the entire modern period, apart from one encyclical, there were no major papal statements raised prophetically in defense of the devastated native peoples of the Americas, nor of the enslaved African peoples, nor the colonized peoples of Asia and Africa. In this vein, Dussel notes that, whereas early Christianity through its martyrdom had been an innocent victim of European violence, modern Christianity, from the sixteenth century mercantile invasion of the Americas through to the nineteenth century industrial colonialist invasion of the entire Third World, became a legitimizing partner in a much more powerful European violence.

Third Assault: The Industrial Revolution. Unfortunately neither Pius IX nor his predecessors addressed the third assault on the classical aristocratic Catholic paradigm, namely the Industrial Revolution and its penetration into Catholic Europe. The great social sufferings and struggles of the new industrial proletariat went ignored by the papacy until Leo XIII (1878-1903) issued the 1891 social encyclical *Rerum novarum* -- 130 years after the industrial revolution, and approximately 50 years after Karl Marx's early writings.

Because of this long delay, large sectors of European industrial workers were lost to Catholic Christianity. Instead, they turned to socialism and communism (now turned anti-religious), which then constituted new threats to Catholic evangelization.

In response to this new socialist-communist threat, there was born what Michael Schuck has called the Leonine stage of Catholic social teaching (beginning with Leo XIII). Frequently this stage is described as the period of "modern Catholic social teaching," since to some degree the papacy finally accepted the modern bourgeois context as the

societal basis for evangelization. It had no other choice, since the aristocratic world was now gone.

The Leonine Strategy of Anti-Socialist Coalition with Reform Liberalism

Leo XIII's new "grand strategy" offered a brilliant program of a limited Catholic adaptation to the liberal world, an organic social reform of liberalism itself, and a careful guarding of the inner theological-pastoral life of the Catholic Church from liberal contamination. The strategy held for more than half a century, until the death of Pius XI in 1958. The central factor behind the construction of the Leonine strategy was what the pope saw as the now more threatening danger of socialism (and communism), and consequently the need for an anti-socialist alliance with moderate liberals. Leo's strategy did an about-face on key planks of the prior period and came to accept as a dialogue partner and potential basis for evangelization the inescapable realities of liberal democracy, industrial capitalism, and workers' unions.

The Leonine strategy had three outer-oriented programs -- one cultural, one political, and another economic -- all of which contributed significantly to what later came to be called the "social-welfare" (post laissez-faire) stage of industrial capitalist society. It also had three inner-oriented programs -- one adaptive, another offensive, and the last defensive. These six strategic programs may be summarized as follows:

- ***The Cultural Program of Thomism:*** a revival of the organic-hierarchical philosophical thought of Thomas Aquinas, and more broadly of Scholasticism;
- ***The Political Program of Christian Democracy:*** legitimization of modern democracy in Christian form, and eventually the formation of a vast European and even global network of Christian Democratic parties;
- ***The Economic Program of Social Catholicism:*** a defense of workers' economic rights and particularly their right to form unions, as well as the responsibility of the state to protect these rights;
- ***The Adaptive Program of Catholic Parallel Structures:*** the creation and expansion of Catholic-controlled structures which repeated the innovative structures of modern liberalism, especially Catholic schools, Catholic social-welfare institutions (e.g., Catholic hospitals and Catholic charities), Catholic trade unions, and (as above) Catholic political parties.
- ***The Offensive Program of Catholic Action:*** carefully controlled mobilization of the laity largely in defense of institutional church interests, but also to some degree on behalf of Christian Democracy and Social Catholicism;
- ***The Defensive Program of Anti-Modernism:*** a major campaign of ecclesial vigilance and repression, sometimes muted and sometimes heightened, to keep the modern liberal ideology from contaminating the church's internal theological and pastoral life.

The Leonine strategy reached its zenith in the post World War II era, especially with a Vatican-USA anti-communist alliance as central to the Cold War. In the pre-Leonine strategy of the nineteenth century, the main axis of conflict had been rising bourgeois or

liberal freedom versus the collapsing aristocratic order, with the papacy largely defending the latter. For the Leonine strategy, the main axis of conflict became the threat of socialist or communist revolution versus the consolidated liberal order, with the papacy seeking to defend and reform the latter.

Late Modern Catholic Polarization

In response to the late modern globalization of industrial capitalism, precipitated by the electronic revolution, post-Leonine Catholic leadership has been searching for a fresh postmodern strategy. This search began with John XXIII and Vatican Council II. By the time of John, it had become clear that this the social question was truly global, and it was beginning to be linked to ecology. In addition, what might now be called the "ecological-social question" was also expanding to include not only class exploitation, but also racism and sexism.

Though the social question had been broadened beyond class to include gender and race, and beyond the social to include ecology, the search for a postmodern Catholic strategy has not yet found a stable center across Catholic leadership. Thus far the Catholic search, repeating the wider societal pattern of political polarization, has alternated between ecclesial neoprogressive and ecclesial neoconservative poles.

At first, many center-left ecclesial neoprogressives somewhat uncritically accepted the expressive freedom of the liberal culture, especially in the area of sexuality, but challenged the instrumental freedom of the liberal political-economy in the name of "justice and peace" -- adding more recently the phrase "integrity of creation" taken from the World Council of Churches. In reaction to the center-left, many center-right ecclesial neoconservatives followed the opposite path of challenging the expressive freedom of the modern liberal culture, again especially in the sexual area, while remaining uncritically silent on the injustices of the liberal economy, which John Paul II has at times called "savage capitalism".

The writings of Pope John Paul II, like those of Paul VI and John XXIII before him, have for the most part tried to span both poles, but unfortunately they have not been able to foster a holistic consensus on a comprehensive and clear strategy, as had been accomplished earlier by Leo XIII's "grand strategy. The postmodern Catholic strategy has not yet matured. The great challenge before the Catholic community, therefore, is bring the postmodern stage of Catholic social teaching, or more broadly of Catholic societal evangelization, to maturity in a stable, broadly accepted, life-giving strategy.

Toward a Postmodern Holistic Strategy of Regeneration

By way of projection, I propose that the postmodern stage of Catholic social teaching needs to come to understand itself as called to proclaim and to serve in the local-global networks of the electronic era a strategy of holistic regeneration, defending and renewing the creative communion of life across its ecological, societal, and spiritual dimensions.

Alternately this strategy might be described as evangelically and sacramentally serving the regeneration of the webs and cycles of natural and social ecology.

Continuing this projection, though without space here to develop it at any length, I will just briefly point to what appear as some strategic themes for this postmodern Catholic strategy of regeneration:

- ***The Ecological Sacredness of Life and all Creation:*** reaching from the womb to the planet, embracing the full range of human-life issues of what the late Cardinal Joseph Bernadin once called "the seamless garment of life" and later spoke of as "the consistent ethic of life," though not simply as a pragmatic collection of issues, but more as an organic whole centered in ecology;
- ***The Social Priority of the Poor and Oppressed:*** particularly the native peoples of the Third World and the Americas and the African Diaspora in the Americas, all for so long the victim of European (including European-American) violence, as the primary cultural-spiritual source for the regeneration of the planetary life-system, with Africa seen as the historical and spiritual root and center of the human family and human civilization;
- ***The Lay Character of the Jesus Movement:*** a recovery of the foundational understanding of the original Jesus movement that the community of disciples is a single lay movement, that is, a single *laos*, and that the clerical state (in contrast to the evangelically grounded sacrament of ordination) and the religious state (in contrast to evangelically grounded intentional communities) are later inventions of ecclesial law;
- ***A Lay Postmodern Strategy:*** the strategic centrality of the whole laity as evangelical carriers of postmodern ecological, societal, and spiritual regeneration, and emphasis on the evangelical understanding of all ecclesial ministries and charisms as servants of the foundational evangelical creativity of the single *laos*;
- ***A Mysticism of Human Work:*** understanding human work as one of the major sources or places of human spirituality, because it is a profound sharing in the co-creativity of ecological, human, and Divine life;
- ***Marriage as Sacrament of Regeneration:*** a postmodern mutuality of women and men in equal and complementary partnership in family, work, politics, etc., with Christian marriage seen as the sacrament of regeneration, witnessing to the masculine and feminine images of God (Genesis 1:27) and evangelically central for the postmodern task of the local/global regeneration of life;
- ***Postmodern Lay Intentional Communities:*** the creation of a local-global network of Christian lay intentional communities (in effect, a postmodern lay "religious order"), rooted especially in families, embodying the mutuality of married and single people, and witnessing publicly in their structure and process to the postmodern mission of ecological, societal, and spiritual regeneration;
- ***Postmodern Community Unions:*** a new postmodern local-global "community unionism," linking both the producer and consumer sides of life (worker organizing merging with community organizing) as the primary social carrier of this local-global regeneration;

- ***Postmodern Sustainable Communities:*** as examples of the healing postmodern path, the creation of rurally rooted small sustainable communities, in effect "prophetic islands of creativity" which will merge the new electronic technologies with ancient communitarian style, and will enable marginalized poor to live and work together in dignity and creatively with other humans and with nature;
 - ***Postmodern Planetary Ethic:*** the articulation of a fundamental planetary ethic of life, at once ecological, societal, and spiritual, developed out of multicultural conversations involving philosophy and all world religions.

Part 3. The Postmodern Catholic University:

Management Education in the Electronic-Ecological Era

In order to ask where is the Catholic university going in the postmodern era, we need first to ask from where has it come. As we prepare to lift our wings, let us be sure of our roots. We may speak of three stages of the history of the Western university, and correlatively of the Catholic university. These are the medieval, modern, and now postmodern stages.

Stage 1 - Catholic Medieval Origins of the Western University.

It is startling yet exciting to recall that the entire Western university system grew out of the Catholic roots. The great names that we know as standing at the foundation of the Western university -- the universities of Paris, Oxford, Cambridge, Salamanca, Bologna, Prague, Krakow -- these were largely the outgrowth of medieval Cathedral and monastic schools, initially often staffed by Franciscans and Dominicans, and usually established under papal charter. They laid the intellectual foundation for the modern era.

The Catholic theological tradition of the medieval university insisted upon the sacramental understanding of all creation, that is the insight that all of creation reveals cognitively the vision of God. In their high period, the medieval Catholic universities, because of their sacramental understanding of culture, were usually not narrowly sectarian places.

For example, at a time when Europeans and Arabs were often at war, Salerno, the first great medieval *studium* (as universities were originally called) welcomed Arabic scholarship. Similarly, at a time when Jews were tragically persecuted across Christian Europe, Salerno counted among its scholars any number of leading Jewish teachers.

The power of the medieval university was limited, however, by its crude technology of communications, namely handwriting. Libraries of hand-written books were of necessity few, as were their holdings, for copying books was time-consuming and expensive. Such libraries were available only to the children of the rich, especially the children of the newly rich bourgeois merchants, whose wealth had been so vastly expanded by the trading routes opened with the Crusades, and who sought social advancement for their children through professional degrees from the medieval university.

The medieval university was centered in three professional graduate faculties, namely theology, medicine, and law. It was these three faculties which would train the leadership of the rising bourgeois class as clergy, lawyers, and physicians. Led by these three professions, the newly rich bourgeoisie would eventually displace from power the old landed aristocracy. It would be these new bourgeois elites who would create the modern world. Central to their triumph would be their growing power over knowledge through the next and modern stage of the university.

Stage 2 - Secularization of the Early Modern University.

With the mechanization of printing in the 15th century, literacy spread across the middle classes and enabled the middle class to expand dramatically in numbers and power. Books could be printed cheaply, and so the number of universities began to expand, to be filled especially by the children of urban merchants and professionals. (University degrees, earned by merit, eventually began to replace the title of noble birth, as the basis for a claim to societal leadership.) Thus printing marked the birth of the modern middle-class world, and the modern university was its midwife.

We saw earlier how, following the print revolution, a series of bourgeois revolutions revealed the power of new modern culture being born. These revolutions came in three waves -- first religious, next intellectual, and finally political-economic. The modern university had a crucial role in each wave.

The Religious Wave. In the 16th century came the first wave of the modern revolution, namely the Protestant Reformation, soon followed by the Catholic Counter-Reformation, with both using printed religious texts in the vernacular language. Protestants used the printed vernacular Bible, while Catholics used the printed vernacular catechism of the Council of Trent, and all used religious and polemical pamphlets.

Out of the new printed religious texts came the modern psychological spirituality of Protestant pietism and Catholic devotionalism, in which one experiences an intimate and rich, although private, relationship with God. On the negative side, however, turning attention to the book in this psychological mode unfortunately meant losing a sense of the divine presence and call in the ecological and societal world. Print, pietism, and the psychological privatization of religion all grew up together in the expanding bourgeois world, thus laying the ground for a later secularized understanding of the world.

It is interesting to recall that the founders of the modern Reformation were largely university professors in originally Catholic universities being impacted by the print revolution. For example, Martin Luther was a Catholic priest and Augustinian monk, who was also a university professor of the Bible. He was able to fight against the pope because of his secure base in what was had become a free university.

The early Protestant leaders supported the model of a free university -- free from papal control, confessionally Protestant, and dependent on the political patronage of the local

prince. Indeed, as Jaraslov Pelikan has noted in his 1992 work, *The Idea of a University: Re-examined*, the real base of the Reformation continued to be the free university.

This free university was the first step toward modern intellectual secularization. In the upheaval of the Reformation, some universities were taken from Catholic ownership and turned over to the state. (The original legal meaning of the term "secularization" in Western culture was the legal seizure of church property by the state.) In response the intellectual leaders of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, the Jesuits, eventually established their own expanded network of Catholic universities, as did other Catholic religious orders.

The Intellectual Wave. In the 17th and 18th centuries, out of the new state-controlled universities, came the intellectual wave of the modern cultural revolution, first in science and then in social philosophy. The modern Enlightenment articulated a deistic-mechanistic cosmology and extended it to social theory. In this process modern intellectuals developed the modern non-ecological theory of nature, the modern political ideology of liberal democracy, and the modern economic ideology of liberal capitalism.

The place where these ideas were articulated was, of course, the new modern university, free of Catholic episcopal and papal control. As these ideas were developed, a great battle arose in Europe between premodern Catholic elites of the episcopacy and religious orders, often still rooted in the feudal landed aristocracy, and the lay bourgeoisie, now creating a modern urban culture. (In the British colonies of North America, however, English-speaking Catholicism found itself more comfortable with the new ideas.)

The Political-Economic Wave. Then in the late 18th and early 19th centuries came the political and economic revolutions which embodied the new liberal ideas, particularly the American and French political revolutions and the industrial capitalist economic revolution. Out of this last revolution, continuing to unfold throughout the 20th century, bourgeois elites would discover their technological power over the ecology of the entire planet and over society itself.

Stage 3 - Modern Industrialization and the Research University

Following the industrial revolution, a new stage of the modern university emerged, namely the giant technically oriented research university. The prototype was established in Germany in the second half of the 19th century, with Johns Hopkins University in Maryland as its first American example.

Soon countless giant state universities were also established on this technical model. The industrial harnessing of petro-chemicals and the creation of giant national corporations now required a vastly expanded technical, professional, and managerial middle class, and the modern technical university was ready to train it.

During this time, Catholic schools of higher education in the United States (the global center of the new stage of corporate capitalism) also experienced dramatic expansion.

Their growth was stimulated by the children of the industrial immigrants who came to work in the mines, mills, and factories of giant corporations. Because of this growth, today there are more than 200 Catholic colleges and universities in the United States. They represent more than half of the Catholic colleges and universities in the world.

Scientific Secularism versus Privatized Religion. The expanding industrial research universities developed the secularist intellectual model which would become normative for contemporary university life, namely a pluralism of critical and comparative historical studies. But, without any clear criteria for value judgments, this model implicitly fostered the modern tendencies toward relativism, agnosticism, skepticism, and even atheism, thus planting the seeds for the late modern crisis of values which we now experience.

Also the industrial research university lost any sense of the sacramental character of all creation, that is it forgot about the sacred meaning of life. This was not simply a rejection of a Catholic dogma, for all religions prior to the modern world had seen both nature and history as full of spiritual energy. Secularization was a turn away from the spiritual path of all prior human cultures, for all of which spiritual meaning had been central to the understanding of all creation.

Eventually in the United States pluralism and secularism began to undermine the evangelical character of even middle class liberal Protestant theology, and of the traditional Protestant colleges like Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. As a result, this theology and these schools lost spiritual depth and seemed to confuse ordinary lay Christians.

In reaction, there appeared the powerful populist religious revolt called "fundamentalism." Forced to choose between an intellectualism without faith and a faith without intellectualism, fundamentalists unflinchingly choose faith. Soon a major battle was underway in American culture between fundamentalist religion and secularist science, leading to a privatized form of religion and a science devoid of spiritual meaning.

The trouble with this choice, however, and with the historical developments which led up to it, was that the traditional Christian connection between faith and reason, or between religion and science, had been broken. All that Augustine and Aquinas had worked so hard to achieve was now dashed on the rocks of the bitter battle between liberal intellectual secularism and conservative religious fundamentalism.

The Catholic Revival of Scholasticism. Meanwhile Catholic theologians in Catholic universities continued to insist that faith and reason, and therefore religion and science, were complementary. To defend that position, these theologians initially (at the end of the 19th century) turned to neo-scholasticism, a revival and revision of the medieval teaching.

But what was rooted in the medieval culture did not find wider roots in modern culture. Gratefully the neo-scholastic model was helpful in defending Catholic students in

Catholic schools against the modern cultural threat to faith. But tragically it was powerless to evangelize the wider culture, for it belonged spiritually to another era.

Also, because the Catholic university still had to prepare students for employment in this same modern culture, it unconsciously created a schizophrenic separation of theology from the natural and human sciences. As a result, theology and the sciences remained in separate boxes without real inter-disciplinary dialogue. Thus, in an indirect way and without really intending to, the modern Catholic university contributed to the divorce between religion and science, that is, to the privatization of religion and the secularization of society.

The outcome of this segregation of theology and science in the modern Catholic university was a ghetto Catholicism which would prove socially powerful but evangelically weak. The children of upwardly mobile Catholics would quickly become part of the elite sector of modern liberal culture, but they would do so in an assimilationist way -- bringing with the little of Catholic social teaching.

There were, however, prophetic figures who saw the danger and struggled to articulate a more creative intellectual foundation for the Catholic university in the face of the secularization of science and the privatization of religion. One thinks especially of John Henry Cardinal Newman, who authored the still classic work, *The Idea of the University* (1859). Newman supported both diversity and unity, as well as a pluralism of cultures in faith, an historical understanding of the development of doctrine, and a pragmatic path to real faith. But Newman's ideas were never really tried, since he was quickly removed from his post as founding president of the Catholic University of Ireland.

Late Modernity's Deepening Split. Meanwhile, the modern cultural split between religion and science deepened. On the one side, the faculties of the natural and human sciences embraced the modern mechanistic cosmology, both at secular and Catholic universities. But this of necessity entailed the loss of the spiritual meaning of science, and emphasized instead only the materialistic manipulation of nature and society. On the other side, theology faculties became more isolated, both at secular and Catholic universities, and were inevitably cut off from interdisciplinary dialogue with the natural and human sciences, at best limiting their dialogue with science to the discipline of psychology. In their relative isolation, Catholic theologians largely focused on their own specialized but disconnected scholarship -- treating their discipline as one more isolated fragment in a mechanistic liberal university.

These twin processes of the secularization of the sciences and the privatization of religion may seem like unimportant in-house problems confined to academics, but they are so much more significant. Recall, as we have just seen, that the intellectual life of the university actually shapes the form of life in the wider society. Thus, concurrent with the crisis of religion and science inside the university, we discover outside the university a parallel societal and religious crisis, and especially among youth.

As we now know by sad experience, when society becomes secularized, it grows more destructive, both socially and ecologically. And also as we now know by equally sad experience, when Christianity becomes privatized, it experiences a crisis of evangelization. Both these crises, one scientific and the other religious, then become the difficult burden of the new generation of youth who enter the contemporary Catholic university and eventually become the rising generation to govern society.

In the midst of this double crisis of modern society and the modern university, we need to ask ourselves what is the nature and mission of the university, and in particular of the Catholic university, at the birth of a postmodern stage of human experience.

Stage 3 - The Regeneration of Life and the Postmodern University

Now we are entering a fourth third stage of the history of the university in general and of the Catholic university in particular, namely the postmodern period. But before examining this new stage, let us again review the sequence.

- First, there was the premodern *medieval university*, confessionally Catholic yet intellectually humanist, multicultural, and cosmic in its theological perspective. This stage planted the foundation for the explosion of knowledge which would come in the modern period.
- Second, there came the *early modern free university*, beginning first under Protestant control, with the support of anti-papal princes, and laying the foundations for the modern Enlightenment. From the Enlightenment would come modernity's great cultural, political, and economic revolutions.
- Third, still under Enlightenment inspiration but now impelled by the demands of industrial capitalism, there emerged the vast *late modern research university* devoted especially to techno-scientific industrialism. On the positive side, this modern research university liberated the powerful technological creativity embedded in human consciousness, a creativity which in its true meaning reveals ever more profoundly the fact that we creative humans are indeed made in the image of God the Creator. But on the negative side, its presently destructive vision actually guides the late modern devastation of the natural ecology of the biosphere and of the social ecology of family and human community, including the marginalization of the poor.

As we now realize, modern technological creativity has been guided intellectually by the shallow root-metaphor of mechanism, as if the human community and the ecological fabric were all only parts of a vast impersonal and fragmented machine with no communal life or intrinsic spiritual meaning. This mechanistic cultural vision, at the root of modernity's ecological, societal, and spiritual crises, has been propagated and sustained primarily by the modern university -- the primary vehicle of bourgeois ascendancy throughout the modern period. Thus the modern secular university contributed at the deep intellectual level to the late modern societal and ecological crises.

In response to the secularization of the modern university, Catholic universities initially functioned as defensive ghetto-like institutions resisting first the Reformation and then the Enlightenment. Later in many cases they even began to imitate the modern mechanistic and secularizing modern model.

Now we stand on the threshold of a *postmodern university*, including a Catholic variant of this new stage. The strategic cultural mission of this new stage of the university is, again, the regeneration of life -- ecologically, societally, and spiritually. It is called to serve the return of the sacred to all aspects of human experience -- personal, societal, and ecological life.

In this period the vast modern technological range of knowledge will continue to expand, but it will also increasingly discover a sacred ground of meaning, namely the spiritual dimension of all creation, including the self, society, and ecology. This in turn will lead to a profound postmodern dialogue between the natural and human sciences on one side, and on the other side the many rich and wise religious traditions of the whole human family, and in our case the Catholic tradition.

Helpful here is the recent book by Charlene Spretnak, *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age*. In that book, the author asks us to open our public culture to humanity's multiple spiritual traditions -- for example, the Buddhist wisdom about mind and Dhamma, the Native American wisdom about our intimate relationship with nature, the ancient goddess tradition's embrace of the body, and the prophetic traditions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam with their important social teachings about justice and community.

Thus the return of the sacred to society and science means the return of the sacred to the university, and not just to its religion or theology department but to every aspect of university life.

The postmodern shift is not only about the sacred character of knowledge; it is also about the sacred character of people. In the postmodern period, when (thanks to the electronic revolution) human culture is becoming planetary and the ancient patriarchal division of labor between the women and men is being replaced by a new partnership model, we can expect that the postmodern university, in addition to being a lay-centered place of a sacramental cosmic spirituality, will also become a richly diverse community of all races and cultures and a place of creative mutuality between women and men.

It is also about the sacred character of nature. Here the postmodern university needs to learn from the ecological wisdom of Earth's most ancient peoples, even while it reaches out to the new postmodern communications technologies. Indeed the new electronic technologies enable us to see Earth as a single living system, a perspective which they ancient peoples knew intuitively and mystically.

The universities which understand the creativity possibilities of all these postmodern shifts, and do their strategic planning in accordance with this understanding, will lead the

way into the new culture and into a life-giving future. But what is the special spiritual challenge for youth in this new context?

The Postmodern Spiritual Challenge for Youth

The emergence of the postmodern university needs to be contextualized in the much larger story of the history of humanity. Then we may be able to understand how so many contemporary young people stand confused between despair and hope.

Four Eras of Human Communications. The history of humanity may be seen as an unfolding and complex journey through ever new modes of communication and organization. Long ago, because of the invention of speech, small familial groups were able to band into larger structures called tribes. Next, equipped with new writing technologies, humans developed the larger social structures of city-states and even empires, and thus there emerged across the planet what we now call the classical age. Approximately 500 years ago, with the development of mechanical printing, and still later with its industrialization, the modern age of nation-states unfolded. Now we are entering a fourth stage in the development of human communications and human society, *the postmodern global-local electronic era.*

In this new postmodern stage, the whole human family is increasingly networked into a planetary and ecological society, yet one which is rooted in countless local and diverse bioregions. Thanks to miniaturized electronic technologies, local communities gain sophisticated power for both bioregional and global interaction. For the first time ever we humans understand ourselves as a single planetary family, and in turn as part of the wider fabric of the planet's vibrant community of ecological life. Yet that global experience is paralleled by a new return to family and local community.

Understanding the full meaning of this historic transformation, both technologically and spiritually, is indispensable to the Catholic university which seeks to chart a life-giving path into postmodern culture. But to do that, university planners need to understand the combination of fear and despair in the soul of contemporary youth, as they experience the breakdown of modern culture and the breakthrough of a postmodern culture.

Death-Dealing Temptation to Despair. The transition from one form of society to another is never easy. As an old culture goes into crisis and as a new culture emerges only in immature form, confusion is paramount, and often violence as well. And the ones who especially feel the pain and danger of the transition are the young.

Across the planet so many of youth today feel the pain of the death of modern culture, and as a result so many of them seem to lose hope in the future. Thus so many of young people face now epidemic levels of social problems. These include dramatically heightened rates of crime, suicide, murder, family-breakdown, unemployment, racial-ethnic violence, civil war, violence against women, scapegoating of minorities, abortion, consumerism, poverty, unemployment, and the addictive abuse of alcohol, drugs, and sex.

So many youth also feel a loss of hope regarding our natural ecology. For example, in South Florida where I teach, young people experience first-hand the poisoning of the bay waters, the dying of the coral reefs, the decline of the schools of fish, the depletion of the ozone layer, the pollution of the rivers, and the contamination of the great aquifer beneath the Florida peninsula.

To see this continual and lethal wounding of humanity and nature, to feel this steady stream of social and ecological violence, inexorably brings great psychic fear. This fear is heightened as the information age powerfully presents on television the harsh reality of the societal and ecological crises. As a result, so many young people secretly fear for their future, for the future of their children, and for the future of Earth itself.

A Life-Giving Spirituality of Hope. But youth also brings hope -- the hope that a fresh culture is being born, the hope that life, both societal and ecological, can be reborn. The appearance of this hope is called *spirituality*. This hope-bearing spiritual energy breaks through the despair, softens the pain, heals the wounds, and opens doors to the rebirth of societal and ecological life. Authentic spiritual energy is the most powerful testimony to God's healing and life-giving presence among us.

So many youth already feel spiritually the creative birth of a postmodern world. Deep down inside they carry a spiritual dream that there can indeed be a future for life. They dream that that women and men can live in mutuality, that races and nations can live in cooperation, and that all humans can live in harmony with the earth's ecology. They dream that the rivers will be cleaned, the aquifers protected, the bays rejuvenated, the coral reefs preserved, and the wildlife protected. They dream that crime and unemployment can be curtailed and that family breakdown and addictions can find healing. They dream that they, and their future families and their future children, and even the earth itself, can all have a future of life.

Like Moses and the children of Israel when they stood for the first time on the banks of the Jordan River, many youth today hear the message from God, "Choose life." They hear Jesus telling us that he came so that we may have life, and have it abundantly. This dream of a living future for all humans and for the earth is the root of a postmodern spirituality.

A Catholic Sacramental Approach. This postmodern spirituality of life is not at first a specifically Christian spirituality, but rather one arising spontaneously from the wellsprings of the new culture. It is important to remember that Catholic Christianity has always emphasized that Christian spirituality needs to be grounded in a natural spirituality of the cultural era in which it lives. We call this Catholic style a sacramental approach to life. Such a natural spirituality is rooted in the sacred character of the historical human experience and of nature itself.

Thus in times past Catholic Christians have often drawn on pagan spiritual practices from their cultures, and woven them into their own evangelical practice. Recall, for example, the Christmas tree, originally part of Germanic paganism, or the season of Lent,

originally a practice of Greek paganism. This Catholic sacramental sense tells us that, despite the wounding presence of sin, God's creation and within it human culture are still good, holy, and that the redemption from sin means not their rejection by fear, but their healing by love.

This Catholic sacramental sense lives also at the intellectual level. The great modern Christian philosopher, Jacques Maritain, wrote eloquently of a Christian humanism. So too the great Medieval Catholic Christian theologian, Thomas Aquinas, learned from Muslim and Jewish scholars about the rich pagan philosophy of Aristotle, and he drew from that treasure a fresh Aristotelian Christian spirituality. And still earlier the great African Catholic Christian intellectual of the late Roman imperial period, Augustine, embraced the pagan mystical philosophy of neo-Platonism, and thereby fostered a powerful neo-Platonic Christian spirituality.

Thus in times past these great Catholic figures dared to find, for their respective classical, medieval, and modern eras, historically distinct natural spiritualities on which to ground the identity and mission of their Christian spirituality for a fresh era in human history. Now we too, amidst the transition from modern to postmodern culture, explore the postmodern natural spirituality which can assist Christianity in the postmodern era. We do so out of the hope and confidence that the vibrant community of life can be regenerated in ourselves, in our religious communities, in our wider society, and in our whole planetary ecology.

Religion and Science are Complementary. With this sacramental insight, we also discover that faith and reason, as well as religion and science, are both necessary for a full and mature faith and for a rich spirituality. In the words of the great Medieval scholastics, grace and nature are complementary.

Another way that ancient theologians stated this same truth was by saying that God gave us two books, *God's holy book of the Bible and God's holy book of nature*, and that both are spiritual books. The Bible (studied by theological sciences) cannot really be understood without simultaneously reading creation (studied by the natural and human sciences). For the redeeming God of the Bible is also the creating God of nature and society. For this reason Catholic Christianity has opposed the modern privatization of religion and the modern secularization of society. How can one privatize the evangelical power of Jesus message of love? How can one secularize the sacred beauty of all creation?

So now, at the birth of postmodern culture, we acknowledge "the return of the sacred," and we seek to orient that return to a life-giving path of personal, ecclesial, societal, and ecological healing. By so doing, we embrace and celebrate the spiritual dream of youth for a postmodern culture of personal, societal, and ecological regeneration.

A spirituality of regeneration, at once ecological, societal, and religious, that is the deep cultural ground of the postmodern project, and the central dialogue partner the Catholic university at the birth of its postmodern stage.

In Conclusion

To conclude this long reflection, I will simply offer the suggestion that at the birth of the postmodern era (entailing the dawn of postmodern business and a postmodern university), it appears that the business or management school (rather than the seminary or theology department) may become the strategic center for the postmodern stage of Catholic social thought (though now it would be better described as Catholic eco-social thought).

I will also offer the further suggestion that some strategic themes for this new stage may be the following:

- ecological technologies;
- micro-enterprises and micro-finance;
- bioregional economics; and
- faith-based community economic development.

But these themes require yet another long paper so I will leave them only as thematic topics.

Appendix

Chart 1.

Three Waves of Technological Innovation

in Industrial Capitalism

Stage I Stage II Stage III

Fragmentation Mechanization Cybernation

of Work of Work of Work

Innovation: Factory System Machine Replaces Computer Replaces

Breaks up Crafts Muscle Brain

Scale: Local Production National Production Global Production

Fuel: Coal Petroleum Nuclear (Solar?)

Power: Steam Combustion/Electricity Electricity

Material: Iron Steel Synthetics

Communication: Printing/Telegraph Radio/Telephone TV/Satellite/Fax, etc.

Transportation: Railroad/Steamship Mtr Vehicle/Prop Aircraft Jet Aircraft/Rocket

Chart 2.

Three Historical-Structural Stages

of Industrial Capitalism

STAGE I STAGE II STAGE III

Early Industrial Middle Industrial Late Industrial

Capitalism Capitalism Capitalism

1760 - 1880 1880 - 1970 1970 . . .

DEEP STRUCTURES

Innovation: Factory Revolution Machine Revolution Electronic Revolution

Function: Fragmentation Mechanization Cybernation

Factory Replaces Craft Machine Replaces Muscle Computer Replaces Brain

Scale: Local National Global

Small Family Firm National Corporation Transnational Conglomerate

Entrepreneurship Management Strategy

SURFACE STRUCTURES

Economics: Poverty Prosperity Marginalization

Birth of Working Class Upward Class Mobility Downward Class Mobility

Preconsumer Society Consumer Society New Austerity

Politics: Laissez-Faire State Social-Welfare State National-Security State

Negative Function Regulatory Function Strategic Function

Limited Social Role Expanding Social Role Crisis of Social Role

Limited Military Role Expanding Military Role Expanding Military Role

Culture: Classical Liberalism Social Liberalism Crisis of Liberalism

Freedom Balance Control

Entrepreneurial Ideology Corporate Ideology Ideological Crisis

MEDIATING STRUCTURES

Family: Extended Family Nuclear Family Crisis Of Family

Uprooted From Work Center of Consumerism Deeply Fragmented

Labor: Craft Unions Industrial Unions Community Unions

Local Structure National Structure Global/Local Structure

Repression Of Labor Social Contract New Attack on Unions

Socialism: Utopian Vision State Power Ideological Crisis

Birth of Movement Split over Democracy From Red to Green?