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**JESUS, COMMUNITY, AND DEVELOPMENT  
MODELS OF LEADERSHIP FROM "THIRD QUEST"  
IMAGES OF THE HISTORICAL JESUS**

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## Introduction

A current interest in New Testament scholarship is the use of models and information from sociological and anthropological studies in order to better understand the world of the Jesus movement and the early Christian church. This research is commonly referred to as the "Third Quest for the Historical Jesus." According to this classification, the First Quest was reviewed and analyzed by Albert Schweitzer (1961); the second, or "new" Quest beginning in the mid-twentieth century was introduced as such by James Robinson (1979). There is some overlap between the New Quest and the Third Quest, the latter being nonetheless clearly identifiable by the use of manuscripts discovered since the middle of this century, and the predominance of social science theory and methodology.

The present thesis will examine some of the Third Quest material in an attempt to identify the relevance of the images of Jesus, as presented, for modern church and community leadership. The work is therefore not an effort toward a new image of the historical Jesus, but a challenge to images already created as to whether or not they provide a viable role model of leadership. I will argue that such a model of leadership in the person of Jesus would, of necessity, have to have been empowering of the community, and therefore relevant to the community of Galilean peasantry where Jesus lived and worked. If the Third Quest images of the Jesus of history should present us with a model of leadership that meets these standards, the implications for Church leadership and for Christian praxis would be profound. The implications for community leadership in general, and community development practitioners in particular, are likewise potentially transformative.

It was precisely the need for a Christian role model of community leadership for my students in the Development Diploma program, some of whom are local church pastors and others community workers, that provided the necessary impetus for the present study. I have always believed, though without critical analysis, that any study of Jesus' life on earth should reflect such a role model. As a result, I tried using the "Jesus" video in development training classes, as well as in Church and Development workshops with church leadership in both Southern and Eastern Africa, during the years 1991-1994.

I would introduce the video to the class or workshop, and instruct the participants to specifically identify the manner in which Jesus exercised his leadership skills, both with the disciples and with communities or groups. Without exception, this exercise failed to produce any identifiable, significant characteristics of Jesus' activities that were not thoroughly spiritualized and other-worldly. The exercise was actually counter-productive; it seemed

impossible for the participants to look behind the "Post-Easter Christ" (Borg, 1994a:182-200) and his fully divine identity, to perceive the full humanity of the person Jesus. Therefore, any suggested leadership skills and practice proved irrelevant to the participants.

I was not prepared to give up my quest for a leadership model, however, and I subsequently tried introducing scripture texts (rather than the video) as potential sources for leadership material. Interestingly, if the biblical material was about Moses, Joshua, Nehemia, David or Paul, participants were almost always able to draw some conclusions about leadership methodology from the text, depending upon their own church background and the degree to which all biblical texts may have been previously presented to them in a spiritualized manner. If the text was about Jesus, however, and the only method of interpretation used was a critical examination of the text itself, the results were only marginally improved from those obtained when the video was used, if at all. Participants were generally unable to draw significant conclusions about the relationship between their faith and work from their understanding of Jesus' life, as his activities were reflected in the text alone.

By this time the problem had taken on more definition for me, and I began to study New Testament background material in order to assist participants to engage in a "behind the text"<sup>1</sup> reading of the Jesus material. It is interesting that this method proved more fruitful than any I had used so far. It seemed that engaging the participant's imaginations with a verbal description of the environment where Jesus lived and worked was a far more effective means for unleashing their creative ability to visualize Jesus as a real person, in a concrete social and physical time and place, than was the use of a video which presented everything to them at once and failed to engage the imagination (or right brain)<sup>2</sup> in the learning process. With the contextual study method, they were effectively moved out of the passive "rote learning" educational mode<sup>3</sup> which served to reinforce previous perceptions, to begin actively interacting with the material under discussion.

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<sup>1</sup> Contextualization of theology has produced some interesting and effective methods of reading the bible *with* communities, rather than *for*, or *to* them. This method has been described as one which examines the text itself, reading behind the text (sociohistorical material), and reading in front of the text (application and relevance to the present situation). See West 1993, 1991. For more general studies in community theology, see Schreiter 1985, and Philpott 1993.

<sup>2</sup> There are many resources available which describe the different functions of the right and left hemispheres of the brain. The right hemisphere, often described in its relationship to the feminine (anima) aspect of the psyche, is a powerfully effective tool for creative thinking and problem solving. See, for example, Tony Buzan 1991 (1974).

<sup>3</sup> This educational method is described by Paolo Freire as the "banking" system of teaching, against which his entire educational philosophy is proposed (1989). The rote learning, or "banking" method has been a prominent feature of the South African Bantu education system.

## **Methodology of Research**

In order to arrive at a model of leadership through the study of Third Quest images, it has been necessary to challenge what I perceived as a tendency to broad and somewhat indiscriminate use of secular, modernist analyses from the social sciences as a means of interpreting traditional Jewish culture and behavior: "One has to consider religious phenomena in terms of religious ideas and doctrines, not only, or principally, in terms of disciplines that have arisen in connection with the study of secular institutions and processes...religious symbolism...gives us actual clues to the nature of realities we cannot perceive by means of the senses alone. It is not a question of setting the intellect to work at reducing the religious symbol to sensory terms" (Turner, 1975:195).

The primary mode of research for this thesis has therefore been an anthropological review of relevant Third Quest material on the historical Jesus. As this material is rich in sociological and anthropological studies, my own input will be compared with specific areas and/or models presented by proponents of the various images of Jesus to support their own claims. Where it is found that a deeper analysis which includes cross-cultural religious phenomena fails to justify the "Image" author's claims, additional literature or models are introduced in the thesis to either challenge or support the "Jesus" literature.

In Part One, chapter one, the development model outlined is consistent with the current trends toward participatory, people-centered development at the microlevel; e.g. at the level of community action and transformation. In addition to appropriate development literature on leadership and community that is cited, relevant anecdotal material from my experience with field workers and Church leaders in development work and study in South Africa, and in East African countries, is included here and elsewhere in order to support or challenge specific claims made by myself or others.

In chapter two, the principles of people-centered development are expanded to a deeper look at the concepts of participation, motivation, and facilitation. The question of spirituality in development is introduced here, with evidence that the people of the so-called Third World have begun to request a development theory and practice that is more spiritual. The nature of this spirituality is explored in terms of "sacred" psychology, development psychology, and religious practice. A concluding section outlines a potential model for leadership in development and/or in the church, based upon the principles of development and spirituality presented.

In Part Two, chapter three, I will be drawing on several historical and cultural studies in general, and of first century Palestine in particular. The anthropological model outlined by Mary Douglas (1993) in her study of Israel from the book of Numbers will help some of these issues to fall into place more readily, as it is not unrelated to Israel at the time of Jesus. The social context of Israel in the first century included a "very complex and variable set of

institutions, rituals, beliefs, stories, and rules" (Meeks, 1987:65). This complexity was only partially the result of a historical tradition that highlighted figures such as Abraham, Moses and the Exodus, Joshua and the conquest of the Promised Land, Samuel and the Judges, David the Warrior King, and the prophets Elijah and Elisha. As a traditional culture, Israel experienced no separation of religion from any other activity of life; the God of Israel was a God who acted in history and in the everyday life of the present in a concrete, identifiable manner.

A probable reflection of the lifestyle of the historical Jesus, to a great extent as outlined by John Meier (1991), will follow this introduction of first century Galilee as the foundation upon which the various images of Jesus will be tried in chapter six for their potential to fit the development model of leadership in a specific cultural and historical setting.

Chapter four introduces yet another anthropological model, from the writings of Victor Turner (1987, 1978, 1975, 1969). I will be drawing extensively from this work for clarification of the importance of Jesus' baptism as the transforming event of his life. It will be my argument that Turner's definitions of liminality and *communitas* are central to understanding the baptism of Jesus, as well as his transformed role as a result of that baptism.

The baptism experience will be reviewed not only for its relevance as ritual, but also in its most probable sociohistorical context. The life of Jesus is framed by "the revolt of 66-70...The aspects of the 'colonial situation' of Roman imperial rule in Jewish Palestine that most concerned the people were the fact and rate of taxation and their relative freedom from outside interference in pursuing their traditional social movements of protest within the peasantry typical to states of social unrest, such as banditry, millenarianism, messianic movements (popular kingship in the case of Israel), and the rise of charismatic prophets." John the Baptizer was one such prophet, whose eschatological message clearly influenced Jesus to take a definitive decision for his own life work.

In Part Three, chapter five, several popular Third Quest images will be presented, focusing on the Wandering Charismatic theme as proposed by Gerd Theissen, and the "Jewish Cynic Philosopher" image created by John Dominic Crossan. Crossan adds the image of Jesus as one who brings about the "brokerless kingdom of God," necessitating a brief excursion into the theme of Mediterranean patron-client systems as supported by Bruce Malina and Ernest van Eck. These models are not suitable for our Model of Leadership, and relevant scholars are called upon to provide the supporting information for our critique.

In chapter six we finally come to the image of Jesus that is most likely to become a role model for community development and/or church leadership, according to the Model developed in chapter two. The image is based on the work of Jonathan Draper, who draws heavily on Richard Horsley's "Jesus" as a social reformer working to renew communities. Marcus Borg's "Spirit Man" is

included in this chapter, though Draper only hints at such an aspect of Jesus, and Horsley does not consider this aspect at all. Nevertheless, it is my belief that this aspect is consistent with Draper's image, and does no violence to that presented by Horsley. I will argue that the image of Jesus as presented by Draper, with Horsley and Borg, is most consistent with the stated leadership requirement of empowering people and being relevant to the community.

The post-baptism, post-wilderness Jesus was a man whose status had radically changed from that of peasant carpenter, to that of a "spirit-man" (to borrow from Borg), with a prophetic, redemptive and salvific mission to accomplish within his own culture, the people of Israel. He had been "appointed" or called through his vision to a life that may have been beyond even that which he may have intended at the time of his decision to be baptized by John.

By the end of his wilderness period of trial he no doubt not only identified his specific role in the redemption of Israel, but believed that he had been called to that role as God's response to the repentance evidenced by the results of John's work. Jesus, as the appointed "spirit man," is the limen, or threshold, for the interaction between "this world" and the coexisting spirit world. He is the Door to the Kingdom of God. Therefore, Jesus does not see himself as an eschatological prophet (Borg, 1994a), nor does his message need to be eschatological like that of John. The Kingdom of God as promised would be God's redemptive action in the present situation of Israel, bringing about the restored egalitarian and just society of Israel's history.

Finally, in the concluding chapter, the implications of this analysis will be explored as to their specific relevance to the Church and to Development, particularly in the Southern African context. The characteristics of Jesus' message, and the Jesus movement, are very consistent with those of both millenarian and/or messianic movements as described by Horsley and Hanson (1985), Berger (1977), B.R. Wilson (1973), and Turner (1969:111-113). In fact, the evidence for Jesus as a restored Jewish leader-prophetic messenger of redemption, who acted purposefully and decisively, is very strong (Horsley 1989, 1987; Horsley & Hanson 1985; Draper 1995, 1993). Further, this definition would be consistent with the culture, and with the fear that Jesus inspired in the hierarchical elite which ultimately led to his assassination.

If this is the image that can be used as a model of leadership for the church and for community development practitioners, there are enormous implications for the former, and potential for a profound spirituality in the latter. Should any marriage of the fulfilled implications and potential take place in South Africa, that country could indeed present the world with a viable model of redemptive community.

As I review the experiences of my seven years in South Africa, it seems that there are far too many people to whom I owe so much in terms of the enrichment of my life and the production of this thesis, to be able to thank them all. There are also some who cannot remain unnamed or unrecognized: To Jonathan Draper and to Graeme Taute, my most profound thanks for inspiring and challenging discussions about Jesus, about spirituality, and about development, as well as for much-needed moral support during this past year.

Special thanks is also due to Bill and Annette Massey, who provided me with room and board, as well as a computer, so that I could complete this thesis.

Thanks also to all of my students from South Africa, Lesotho, Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Zambia, Kenya, and Mozambique for their eagerness to learn, their willingness to trust me to teach them, and the thousands of ways in which they in turn taught me, and filled my life with joy.

Finally, grateful thanks to all of the church leaders and development practitioners who participated in workshops in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Uganda, whose concern for their communities in and around the church prodded me relentlessly to continue my own search for the historical Jesus. Of course, none of the above people should be blamed for my use and interpretation of their wisdom and experience, to draw the conclusions stated herein.

part one:

development in the twentieth century

1

**DEFINING DEVELOPMENT**

In this chapter, we will introduce a very broad overview of the history of development theory and practice. The topics covered are intended to pave the way for establishing connections between concepts of community and development, and the Model of Leadership that we will establish in Chapter Two. What follows is not intended to be an abbreviated course in development theory. Many very important concepts and theories are only mentioned in passing; others may be omitted altogether.

Development theory continues to be in a crisis of credibility (Long & Long, 1992; Schuurman, 1993); ideas that prove wonderfully satisfying intellectually fail to produce sustainable development, and the peoples of the Third World are clamoring for humane and inclusive economic and political systems which seriously challenge the principles of the present established global economy. The whole idea of development is therefore also seriously challenged, including its more recently popular term "empowerment," as being both paternalistic and potentially counterproductive because it places the entire burden of responsibility for poverty on the poor themselves, while ignoring the oppressive and wasteful lifestyles of the wealthy.

Nevertheless, the point of this chapter is to establish a foundation for understanding development, from which we may ask whether any model of leadership can come out of what we have learned in the past four decades. While this does not preclude a macrolevel perspective, given the images of Jesus which are the central focus of this thesis our perspective will tend to rest primarily at the microlevel. Further, it is my contention that transformation at the microlevel (individual and community, wealthy and poor, powerful and powerless) is a necessary though insufficient prerequisite for macrolevel development. Should we discover that macrolevel concepts can be derived from our findings, these will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

## **Why Development?**

My own interest in development began when, as a 42 year old returning adult student, I embarked on my undergraduate course of studies at university. The cognitive dissonance I struggled to resolve as a middle-aged university student seemed, at that time, to be somehow related to the phenomena experienced by traditional societies going through rapid social change in their process of moving into the modern world of technology and economic demands. Though I soon learned that these problems of modernity were far too complex to be analogous to my personal experience, my sense of sharing a problem in common with the Third World has never quite left me. Perhaps this explains my belief that each society brings its own kind of "personality" to the development process.

All of my subsequent studies in anthropology and in international relations only confirmed my appreciation for the uniqueness of each society, as well as my conviction that this uniqueness is founded on cultural factors (as opposed to racial, or genetic, factors). These studies were also very helpful in increasing my understanding of both micro- and macro-level politicoeconomic interactions, but were not particularly edifying in terms of explaining why billions of dollars could be poured into "lesser developed countries" every year, and yet these countries continue to decline economically while multiplying their manifestations of social unrest.

I became increasingly convinced that (1) there is a wide gap between what donors and agencies for development aid (who are not always the same entity) believe that they are accomplishing, and what the recipients perceive to be the purposes and achievements of said agencies/donors; and (2) that the general failure of development programs to accomplish their goals is largely due to this perceptual gap. This seems to be particularly the case in Africa, where the success rate of development agencies is depressingly low; and where large armies of expatriates continue to be imported in order to administer development programs.

This lack of success on the African continent generally, along with the predominant presence of expatriates in development programs, suggests that there continues to be a generalized failure to bring the grassroots element into development plans. Indeed, the research on development and the reports of agencies provide ample evidence that the people who are supposedly being developed are consistently perceived by researchers and development agencies alike as objects to be observed, manipulated, or modified; as opposed to being treated as human beings capable of creating their own development agendas.

Much of this misconception arises from a lack of understanding of how western development actually occurred. We tend to think of traditional and modern as two entirely separate states of being; societies are generally classified as being either one or the other, although some scholars do speak of transitional societies, and others describe a continuum from one to the other. I would contend that none of these approaches accurately mirrors either the

historic or the present process of modernization<sup>4</sup>.

From comparative histories of change in national states, it becomes obvious that modernization does not preclude tradition--in fact, if a state is to remain coherent, it must include some values and behavior in recognition of selected traditional experiences. Therefore, in comparative studies of successful development practice, we see action being uniquely related to the traditional factors of culture and environment within a particular time frame (Japan, and the "Four Tigers" for example).

All this is to say that for at least the last thirty years, serious students of development have provided ample evidence that the western version of modernity cannot simply be superimposed on the rest of the world. In fact, it did not even happen the same way to each of the nations in the West, and it certainly cannot now be reproduced in other nations of a completely changed world.

Nevertheless, the authors of development theory and those who apply it persist in believing that given enough money and enough technology, every nation in the world can and should be just like North America or Europe. Modernization and industrialization are *not* synonymous, however, and each society assimilates new knowledge in its own way and in its own time, becoming what only that society could become, while continuing to maintain its basic identity.

Modernization and tradition, therefore, are equally important factors of development, and are equally slippery in terms of definition. This leads us to the extremely uncomfortable conclusion that development itself may not be something that is necessarily quantifiable or easily describable. Worse, the linkages between macro-and micro-level development are not clearly identifiable, nor have they been properly researched in terms of their importance to the development process. And of course, in the context of this thesis, one must also inquire as to the role of religion--where does it fit into these spheres, and into the linkages between them?

One must then live with a huge question mark surrounding the community development concept, with its attending difficulties. According to many psychological studies, both organization and exclusiveness are an anathema to community. Yet one sees agencies demanding a high level of organization in community development projects, and communities excluding all manner of "undesirable" elements from their activities. Is there any value in the community development concept? And if so, what is the proper placement of

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<sup>4</sup> I use the term "Modernization" here as being descriptive of a global process of movement toward increasing urbanization, technological change, and political-economic integration into the world system. I do not at this point imply any positive or negative value judgment of either that system, or of the traditional societies who have not yet participated in the system.

the grassroots in the macrolevel plan? Does development occur from the top down, from the bottom up, or at some "mezzo"-level in between? Finally, what are the aspects of community and of leadership that are founded in our understanding of what it means to be a Christian?

### ***Defining Development***

What, in fact, is development? This is not an easy question to answer. A definition that would in some final way set the absolute meaning for all times, all places, and all people is simply not possible, yet development has become one of the most compelling concepts of our time. It is a concept that actually raises questions about the meaning of life, as well as about who is to judge what is a good life, and by what standards. When I ask my students to describe development in one word or phrase, they invariably tell me that it is (at least) "change, growth, liberation, or progress." Development, however, is much more complex than any of these terms suggest.

Most people would agree that development involves change. It is the qualification and quantification of that "change" which gives us our problems in both definition and practice. To begin the discussion, then, I would at least consider the question of "Change: For Whom?" It is important to the integrity of this paper that we state that *change, or development, is NOT confined to the poor, the oppressed, or the marginalized peoples of society*. In the first place, this would imply that there are some criteria of development which the wealthy and comfortable people of the world have achieved, and which must be duplicated by those who wish to be "developed." The proofs against this theory are well known. The political and economic world has changed, and it is not possible to replicate the manner in which established industrial societies developed, even if this would be culturally appropriate.

In the second place, that perspective implies that sustainable development for the "have-nots" of the world can be achieved while protecting the lifestyle of the "haves." This theoretical position has also been rendered untenable, both from the evidence of an ever-increasing gap between the rich and the poor (and ever-increasing numbers of the demonstrably poor), and the evidence of unreclaimable environmental destruction.

The poor therefore cannot be the sole target of change, if sustainable and wholistic development is to take place. Those with a sufficiency of resources--as individuals, and as creators and sustainers of the prevailing structures--must also change. In fact, we can say that both the rich and the poor are in need of some form(s) of development, for development is not simply economic. It is wholistic, involving the entire person and the entire environment.

Forty years ago the definition of development was not even an issue. It was not until the end of World War II, when people began to seek effective ways to rebuild the battered and war-torn nations of Europe and to assist those nations just being liberated from colonialist regimes to become politically and

economically viable, that the concepts of "third world" and "development" came to occupy the minds of academics and governments on a global scale. The success of the Marshall Plan in the reconstruction of Europe linked two phenomena firmly in the minds of development theorists: (1) The construction of new nations should take place in the same manner as the reconstruction of Europe, based on economic theories devised from the Industrial Revolution; and (2) The failure of development economics in the Third World focuses the problem of poverty on the Third World itself from the perspective of the First, rather than on faulty development theory, inappropriate goals, or global systems which exclude the full participation of the Third World.

Western, or First World, nations had some very good reasons to concern themselves with the ideas of development. Some were genuinely concerned about the ethical questions being raised by the unequal access to resources and opportunity for people of two-thirds of the world. They were concerned about helping those who have been disadvantaged, because they were reminded of their own wealth and ease, in the midst of hunger and starvation and suffering. Pangs of conscience were not the sole reason for the First World to be concerned about Third World development, however. There was also the very practical economic issue which people in some aspects of development work still recognize, that the Third World provides resources, labor, and markets for the products of the First World industrialized nations, and thereby enables the First World to sustain its own standards of living.

From the perspective of the so-called Third World nations, the issues of development were and are most often described in terms of survival. There is no longer any doubt that per capita food production in these countries, and especially in Africa, has declined to the point that African nations which were able to feed themselves from their own production in 1970 can no longer do so. The people of these nations are not necessarily in the dark about the major external causes of their decreased ability to feed their children, or the inability of their country to compete in a world market that has already cast them in the role of suppliers of cheap labor and resources. These nations see injustice and exploitation as the primary causes of their status. They see the underlying structures which created the foundations for their problems, and they realize that these problems are getting worse. "The world's poor are showing less and less inclination to starve quietly, and therefore third world issues and concerns become the concerns of the entire world" (Ewert, 1987).

To restate the compelling question about development, then: "Why, after more than four decades of development theory and practice, has the situation for Third World nations deteriorated, rather than improved?" Again, there are no easy answers to this question. A loosely-structured review of the history of development theory (See Figure 1) takes us through some of the major changes in perspective brought about through the failures and successes of the past 45 years, but does not explain either state.

One thing that does seem to be consistent is the increasing emphasis on development as a social, or people-centered, phenomenon and not simply an

economic one. We see the change in focus move from allocation of resources to governments in the early years, to allocation of resources to NGOs (non-government organizations) and to communities (people) in the last decades.

HISTORY OF DEVELOPMENT THEORY			
Pre-Development Theory Era:		COLONIAL ERA WORLD WAR II	
FIFTIES	G O V · T A I D  P E O P L E  F O C U S	Linear Growth Theories (Rostow) Marshall Plan	
SIXTIES		"Third World" and "Development" terminology "Trickle Down" Theories Green Revolution Technology and money transfer theories	
SEVENTIES		Focus: Job Creation Self Help Participation	ERA OF JUSTICE Rise of NGOs Dependency Theories Systems Theories NeoMarxist Theories
EIGHTIES		Alternative Technology Basic Human Needs (Maslow) Human Resource Development	Structuralist Theories Centre-Periphery Theory
NINETIES		People-centred development Sustainable development Rapid Rural Appraisal Participatory Rural Appraisal Participatory Learning for Development	

**FIGURE 1**  
*Outline of history of development theory and practice*

## **Korten's Generations of NGO Responses to Poverty**

Development theorist David Korten has studied development NGOs during his thirty years' experience in the Third World, and in his book *Getting to the 21st Century* he outlines four generations of NGO responses to poverty (1990):

### **The First Generation: Relief and Welfare**

There is a long history of local and international activity to provide relief and assistance to victims of natural disasters and wars. Many agencies (including churches) continue to describe their aid and relief activities as development, but while we acknowledge that charity is definitely a humanitarian response, it is not development (*Ibid.*, 115-18). The operative phrase for this generation is "the people are needy, so we must give them what they lack."

There are situations in which the only appropriate response is charity, yet it is often possible even in these situations to allow the recipients to retain their dignity, and even to achieve their own goals. Development Diploma students at African Enterprise have determined that "Development responses empower the recipient, but charity responses empower the giver." While this statement is certainly subject to falsification, it is nonetheless a good measure to bear in mind when evaluating the difference between an appropriate humanitarian response, and an inappropriate one.

### **The Second Generation: Community Development/Self Help**

This response is based on the idea that local inertia keeps people from making effective use of local resources (*Ibid.*, 118-120). The solution is to provide a stimulus from outside the local community to activate their capacity for effectiveness. This presupposition has predominated in the development sector of South Africa, and can easily be identified when the NGO shows its concern for a probable collapse when they pull out of the project. Most agencies in Southern Africa are firmly settled into an NGO-motivated and managed program of self help and/or Community Development projects involving community participation. This community participation, however, is in practice more consultative than managerial. (Participation will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Two.)

At the same time, some agencies can be identified as moving out of Generation Two and into Generation Three. The Church, however, at its very best, continues to struggle to move out of Generation One into Generation Two, and by far the greatest efforts of the Church are confined to Generation One. Indeed, most South African churches that define their activities as "development" are involved in some form of education or skills training, the need for which having been defined by someone other than the target community (James, 1990).

This is not to say that Generation Two efforts should be abandoned, any more than those of Generation One. In First World nations, and even some former Second World countries, the education, training, and health services are frequently considered part of the welfare system, or in other words, the rights due to all citizens. In the "lesser developed countries" whose governments can ill afford (or perhaps do not wish to subsidize) such a welfarist position, churches and NGOs move in with Generation Two interventions. Once again, however, the manner in which such programs are implemented may assist development, or be counterproductive.

### **Generation Three: Sustainable Systems Development**

The presupposition here is that inappropriate development policies and structures force communities into conditions of dependency. If the structures and policies are changed appropriately, the poor will have the opportunity to overcome their poverty. "Third generation strategies focus on creating a policy and institutional setting that facilitates just, sustainable and inclusive local development action" (Korten, 1990:121). Agencies for development generally move into this response as they begin to recognize that small community projects can only become sustainable if they are linked into a supportive, networked, development system.

"Third generation strategies may involve the NGO in working with major national agencies to help them reorient their policies and work modes in ways that strengthen broadly-based local control over resources" (*Ibid*, 120). The existing systems in developing nations, and particularly in South Africa, have frequently been very hostile to community initiative and any programs that would decentralize the control of government. NGOs, particularly when supported internationally, have often been the only consistent advocates of this necessary change and have needed to accept strong leadership roles campaigning for justice and equity within existing social structures.

At the community level, the Third Generation response finds the people of the community initiating and managing their own development activities with perhaps one or more NGOs responding to identified needs with funds and/or expertise. Because of the need to fit into a structural system conducive to sustainability, the communities may find it necessary to move into Fourth Generation responses.

### **The Fourth Generation: People's Movements**

Fourth Generation strategies go beyond Third Generation efforts to adapt specific institutional or structural policies to facilitate the inclusion of local projects and goals (a response which has been identified by other authors, such as Hope and Timmel 1984, as "liberal reformation"). People's movements seek to eliminate or completely restructure national and international institutions which are demonstrably the root causes of poverty and injustice.

Unlike the first three generations, Fourth Generation responses do not have economic goals but are focused on the communication of ideas and information through every available channel in order to mobilize voluntary action by people in support of social transformation. People's movements have reshaped our understanding of the environment and of human rights; they have brought about changes for women and peace initiatives, and have begun the dismantling of apartheid, to name just a few accomplishments.

People's movements cannot be initiated by development agencies, but Voluntary Organizations (VOs) and People's Organizations (POs) may serve a people's movement whose vision they share. They may then work to integrate and mobilize self-managing networks, over which they have absolutely no control.

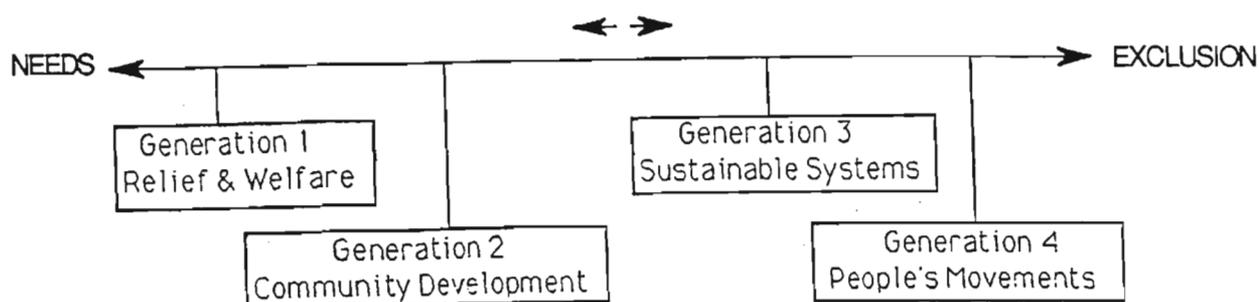
The NGO in this generation must develop a high tolerance for partial data, particularly in countries where the people's movements are restrained by a hostile government. The ability to gather feedback and distribute the information appropriately becomes even more vital at such times.

It must be stressed here that only POs and VOs are appropriate NGO service agents to people's movements. Should the movement partner itself with a donor-driven NGO, we can expect that it has spent its force and become a supporter of the status quo. Additionally, we must reiterate the point that people's movements are social in focus rather than economic; the surest way to kill a people's movement is to smother it in money.

This tension between social and economic foci returns us to the history of development theory in Figure 1., and to the process along a continuum between development as something that is done either to or for people, to development defined as creation of structures where people have the freedom to participate in the solution to their own problems. On the left side of the continuum, we have Generations One and Two, where the needs of the poor define the actions of resource agents. Moving toward the right (obviously not in political terms!) we find that development initiatives are more and more defined by the fact that people are excluded from access to the resources necessary for them to improve their quality of life (See Figure 2), and must take action to correct the situation.

### ***Need and Exclusion***

It might be helpful at this point to take a longer look at the practice of separating development theories into categories defined by the concepts of need and exclusion. These categories are defined by people's presuppositions as to how the problem of development itself is defined (Rogers, 1992:98-109), and the unpleasant truth remains that most of us define development in terms of our own vested interests.



**FIGURE 2**

*Korten's Generations on a Continuum from Needs Theory to Exclusion Theory*

By vested interests, I mean first of all that we tend to see problems in terms of our ability to resolve them. If I am an agriculturist, then, I am likely to define the problem of development in terms of capacity for food production; if a member of the medical profession, I will see the problem in terms of standards of health; if an academic, in terms of education; and so on. Beyond this, the tendency in the first four decades of development theory and practice was to take a stance in terms of resolution of the problems of poverty based on whether one defined the situation as being one where people lack needed resources and opportunity, or where they are excluded from access to power and resources. Although there are exceptions, vested interests reveal themselves here as the powerful will tend to protect their position by defining development in terms of need, and the powerless in terms of exclusion.

### **Needs Theories**

If we look again at Figure 1, we see that between the period of the fifties and the beginning of the nineties, there are two columns of development responses. The first outlines what we refer to as "modernization" theories, which essentially are the responses based on capitalistic political and economic approaches to development. The second column contains some of the "Structuralist" and radical theories, which historically have been primarily reactions to the problems of capitalistic politics and economic practices. Generally, Modernization theories correspond to Korten's First and Second Generations, while Structuralist and radical theories correspond to Generations Three and Four. Figures 3 and 4 list some of these theories in the categories where they are usually located (it should be noted that these lists do not include all development theories).

Aside from the problems of injustice and environmental devastation that seem to be endemic to Modernization theories based on capitalist political and economic systems, some analysts believe that the overpowering number of development interventions based on presupposition of the needs of the poor

have had, and continue to have, a psychological effect which can be counterproductive to empowerment. Ivan Illich expresses his concern about the creation of a culture of "need:"

For the new generation, the needs that are common to men and women, yellow and white - rather than common dignity or common redemption in Christ or some other god - are the hallmark and manifestation of common humanity. With unscrupulous benevolence, needs are imputed to others. The new morality based on the imputation of basic needs has been far more successful in winning universal allegiance than its historical predecessor, the imputation of a catholic need for eternal salvation. As a result, needs have become the worldwide foundation of common social certainties that relegate inherited cultural and religious assumptions about human limitation to the realm of so-called personal values that, at best, deserve tolerant respect. The spread of needs that modern development has wrought will not be stemmed by the end of the development discourse (Illich, in Sachs 1992:89).

### Exclusion Theories

Exclusion theories involve a major change in perception on the part of development theorists and practitioners. "Those who are the subjects of Development are no longer viewed as 'deprived,' in need of some form of outside assistance, but as oppressed, excluded from the sources of power. The problem has been totally redefined" (Rogers, 1992:100-101). Development initiatives are no longer the tool of power elites and governments, used to maintain a status quo, but become the liberative, revolutionary actions and goals of the oppressed.

#### MODERNIZATION THEORIES

Marshall Plan  
Rostow's Linear Growth Theory  
"Trickle-Down" Theory  
Green Revolution  
Technology Transfer  
Job Creation  
Self-Help  
Alternate Technology  
Basic Human Needs  
Human Resource Development

**FIGURE 3**

*Modernization theories, based on the assumption of people's deprivation and NEEDS*

#### STRUCTURALIST/RADICAL THEORIES

Dependency Theories  
World Systems Theories  
Socialist Theories  
Center-Periphery Theory  
Participation Theories

**FIGURE 4**

*Structuralist/Radical Theories based on the assumption of people's EXCLUSION from resources and opportunities*

In an interview conducted during my research on the Church and Development in South Africa in 1989, Sister Bernard of the Institute for Contextual Theology described this perspectival change, adding her belief that development is not simply an activity for the poor:

Let me quote you a very simple thing. It's true when a man is hungry and he asks you for a fish, you help him to catch the fish for himself, he'll be better and sufficient for himself. But in this country, we can further that little slogan or quotation to saying 'What if the pool is controlled?'... The right start for our people, if it means any development, means start by undoing the chains of the poor...and then, from them, development comes to you (James 1990:137).

My own experience with community workers in South Africa over the past seven years only confirms Sister Bernard's observations. It is simply not enough to provide skills training for people who are excluded from utilizing those skills (whether by an apartheid system or by powerful leadership who become threatened by new ideas); nor is it enough to facilitate the development initiatives of a community whose security is threatened by government sanctions and/or political violence. Where people are excluded from opportunity and resources, however this is accomplished, development becomes impossible.

### ***"The Chicken and the Egg:" Liberation and Development***

I have always liked Julius Nyerere's metaphor for the relationship between freedom and development, and the following paragraph is as good a definition of development as we will see:

Freedom and development are as completely linked together as are chickens and eggs! Without chickens you get no eggs; and without eggs you soon have no chickens. Similarly, without freedom you get no development, and without development you very soon lose your freedom...Development brings freedom, provided it is development of people. But people cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves. For while it is possible for an outsider to build a person's house, an outsider cannot give the person pride and self-confidence in themselves as human beings. Those things people have to create in themselves by their own actions. They develop themselves by increasing their own knowledge and ability and by their own full participation--as equals-- in the life of the community they live in...they are not being developed if they are herded like animals into the new ventures...Development of people can, in fact, only be effected by the people (Nyerere, 1973:58-60).

Perhaps we can push the chicken and egg metaphor just a little further before it breaks down, in order to bring out a little more of the relationship between liberation and development. We could, for example, label the egg "liberation" and the chicken "development." We can now illustrate the interdependency of liberation and development: If we take away the chicken, the total focus falls upon the egg. If it is only an egg, however, nothing will happen and we will see neither liberation nor development. But if the egg has been fertilized (i.e. carries within it the seeds of development), we will soon

see a small chicken struggling to liberate itself from the restraints of its limited incubator.

We then have only a chick, and no egg. Over time, though, perhaps following a transitional period of rest and orientation, we may observe the process of development as the chick grows into an adult chicken. And if it is fertile, (i.e. if development carries within it the potential for renewal) new eggs will be produced which may result in even more liberative activities, and so the process continues, cycles, and multiplies.

The important feature that I am attempting to tease out of this metaphor, however, is that it is not a question of which comes first, liberation or development, nor is it a question of keeping the two in some kind of balance or tension. Neither can exist without the other, and the seeds for each must be inherent in both despite the reality that each activity requires a completely different mindset. (For example, liberation is "fighting against" injustice and oppression, while development is "building for" an envisioned situation of wholeness). Some people are able to move from the mindset of development to that of liberation and back again, being able to work within the demands of each situation as it arises. Others cannot, for any number of psychological and/or cognitively based reasons.

Admittedly, we have already pushed our metaphor beyond reason, but I beg your indulgence to entice yet one other insight from the construction. The processes described above are an act of creation, requiring interaction between the masculine and the feminine. Social liberation, and development, are creative (and therefore spiritual) activities which require the combined efforts of the (masculine) left hemisphere of the brain which operates with logic and conceptual activities, and the (feminine) right hemisphere which expresses our creativity and intuition. This relationship can represent the spiritual and mental activities which take place within individuals and social groups during their maturation and development, but it also represents the equality and interdependent cooperation essential to the relationship between men and women, with the very special and necessary gifts each brings to the process of transformation.

### ***A Revolution In Development Theory and Practice***

Alan Rogers maintains that there are three major categories of exclusion theories, with very real differences in the use of language between them. Dependency theories, of course, speak in terms of dependency and self reliance, while other theories speak of oppression and liberation. A third category speaks of marginalization, and of participation (Rogers, 1992:101). But just as there are psychological problems for the poor in terms of needs theories, Gustavo Esteva concludes that there are potentially negative psychological effects that may derive from the language of exclusion theories of development:

In order for someone to conceive the possibility of escaping from a particular condition, it is necessary first to feel that one has fallen into that condition. For those who make up two-thirds of the world's population today, to think of development - of any kind of development - requires first the perception of themselves as underdeveloped, with the whole burden of connotations that this carries...Today, for two-thirds of the peoples of the world, underdevelopment is a threat that has already been carried out; a life experience of subordination and of being led astray, of discrimination and subjugation. Given that precondition, the simple fact of associating with development one's own intention tends to annul the intention, to contradict it, to enslave it. It impedes thinking of one's own objectives...it undermines confidence in oneself and one's own culture...it clamors for management from the top down...it converts participation into a manipulative trick to involve people in struggles for getting what the powerful want to impose on them...(Esteve, in Sachs 1992:7-8).

Nevertheless, Rogers perceives the real revolution in development thinking to be the process of empowerment and participation, which reverses the negative thinking of both needs and dependency theories, and identifies people (somewhat) more positively as "marginalized potential participants" (Rogers, 1992:104). This understanding is shared by development practitioners, and as we see in Figure 1, the nineties have seen a predominant focus on participatory theories of development.

Creating an environment where people are able to participate in the decisions and activities which concern their own lives, and their own development, is believed to be empowering of people, and to lead to sustainable development. Just what this may or may not mean for our search for a Model of Leadership in development is the subject of the next chapter.

## 2

**DEVELOPMENT AS TRANSFORMATION**

Continuing on from the previous chapter, the pages to follow cover topics such as participation, spirituality, and leadership as we work our way toward a more wholistic understanding of development as transformation. Hopefully, the reader will have taken note from the last chapter that this work is not an attempt to discredit the role of liberation as a prerequisite for transformation. Rather, I will suggest that liberation is more than sociopolitical (a horizontal, or outward journey), but must include inner liberation, as well as liberation within the vertical relationship to God. These "triple freedoms" undergird the transformation process, and are always in a dialectical interaction with it.

It is precisely the inner journey of transformation that is so neglected in development theory and practice, yet all the evidence from experience strongly suggests that lacking this inner journey, development based solely on economic growth, or even on economic and sociopolitical progress, cannot be sustainable. Therefore, in our search for a Model of Leadership that is empowering of people, we must add to our prerequisites that the Model must include a spirituality that is both religious and psychological in nature; in other words, a spirituality made up of the three "liberations" cited above. Important to these liberations is the concept of participation, because freedom is not a passive exercise.

***Participation***

"Participation" as a vital factor in the development process has been recognized since as far back as the 1960's. Through the process of trial and error (mostly error), practitioners began to realize that if the community did not "own" the process, the project was doomed to failure and this at a point in time directly related to the withdrawal of external involvement.

Once the concept of participation was popularized, however, it was discovered to have unexpected characteristics. Because it was "trendy," donors began to demand evidence of community participation before they would release funds to a given project. Not surprisingly, this demand very quickly gave rise to an ingenious variety of questionable participatory methodologies. For example, the agency would provide the planning, the administration, the fundraising, and the management of the project. The community, in their turn, would provide cheap (i.e. "free") labor. According to the agency, the community was therefore "participating."

In another scenario, the community would be told that the agency would fund their project, if they (the community) raised matching funds from their own resources. Another version of this scene shows the community being expected to pay a nominal fee for use of project services. Either of these situations would be described as "participation," despite the community's lack of input into the decisions that were affecting their lives.

In other words, the concept of participation has all too often become another means for protecting vested interests on the part of those who have power. As Rahnema eloquently observes:

Participation acquires a moral aspect, according to the ethically defined nature of the goals it pursues. It is generally associated with moral or desirable goals and, as such, given a positive connotation. It seldom comes to mind that the act of partaking may apply to evil or malicious purposes...participation tends to be perceived as a free exercise. This perception neither conforms to the meaning of the word, nor the way in which it is translated into practice. For, more often than not, people are asked or dragged into partaking in operations of no interest to them, in the very name of participation. Neither the pyramids, nor the many contemporary mass demonstrations in favor of repressive regimes, have represented free acts of participation (Rahnema, in Sachs 1992:116).

He continues, claiming that "with a few exceptions due to the personal qualities of the [facilitators], the new instrumentalities of participation served to promote a kind of 'fast food' or do-it-yourself development, made out of the same old ingredients" (*Ibid.*, 124).

Despite the potential for abuse and misuse of the concept, then, Rahnema does not entirely rule out facilitated participation as a means by which communities may empower themselves. He does, however, place responsibility for success in this instance not simply on the community, nor on the skills and knowledge of the facilitator, but on the personal qualities of the facilitator. Perhaps it would be in order to review our understanding of facilitation before we attempt to identify some of these personal qualities.

The primary goal of facilitation is to mobilize the community to participate in their own developmental task. This participation, hopefully, will help the people to develop a sense of expectation, to capture a vision and a sense of hope that things can be different; to get excited about their own potential to do something about their own problems (Ewert, 1987). Facilitation is accomplished by establishing trust within group relationships, by asking people the kinds of questions that lead them to discover the solutions to their problems for themselves, and by offering relevant information when appropriate (as opposed to making decisions for the community, or its opposite which is the failure to provide any input at all to the process). The process begins with the facilitator carrying most of the responsibility for keeping things going in the group, (ensuring full participation and consensus as much as possible) and over time will taper off until the group has taken responsibility for itself. At that point, it is time for the facilitator to exit, and go find something else to do.

“Facilitator,” then, may also be described as “servant leader,” and although it is an effective means for empowering others, this is not a natural way for a leader to act. In fact, for some of us, when we first abandon the traditional decision-making, authoritative, and powerful role of the position, along with the power of words (as in lecturing), the process feels more like martyrdom than service. Joy only comes with results, and even then only if you can take pleasure in watching people regain their self-esteem and take control of their own lives.

Self-esteem, as practicing psychologists agree, is basic to the issues of both personal and community processes of development; it is also foundational for any ability to maintain and to generate hope. I have always found it interesting that despite the emphasis on marketable skills and applied theory in the Diploma Program at African Enterprise the response of students almost always centered on the change in their self-image, and its relationship to hope, e.g.: “Now I can face the world with great courage;” and “This has given me back my dignity.”<sup>5</sup>

Students speaking at each of the first two graduation ceremonies were unanimous in speaking of restored self-esteem; for regaining (or obtaining in the first place) a realistic belief in their own ability to accomplish what they set out to do. For these students, self-esteem has been a prerequisite for development. The chaplain of the program, Mbulelo Hina, writes:

No development can happen if the individuals within the community have a low self-esteem. In fact they cannot do anything for themselves let alone doing something for the community, it would be the death of whatever initiative is done. So development has a task of building up the individuals' self-esteem within the community...So working with the poor and the marginalized is not taking their problem away from them but it is working together with them...Taking into consideration their fear to stand alone...the [facilitator] helps the community to have a sense that it can do it and encourages the community to embark on an action that would accomplish their goal (Hina, 1995:14-15).

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<sup>5</sup>It should be noted here that nothing in this thesis constitutes an attempt to claim that the training programs in Development at African Enterprise can be identified as “development.” They are very clearly second generation interventions, originally designed (with representatives from communities acting as consultants) in such a way as to promote increased self-esteem among the students based on the acquisition of skills and knowledge, interaction with other students, networking among development agencies, and a classroom environment where dialogue and interactive learning were the core features of a curriculum designed with a potential for practical application. In this way, students were prepared to return to their communities, where development did indeed often take place.

Incidentally, one must not expect any credit or gratitude for empowering people; after all, if you were a good facilitator, they will have done it for themselves. This is why we may alternatively refer to facilitation as servant leadership, and it explains Rahnema's emphasis on the personal qualities of the successful facilitator. To those qualities just identified (the ability to release control to the community, and the ability to enable the community by raising their self-esteem), I would certainly add a spiritual dimension, which I would deem necessary to the development of servant leadership, and to the rise of hope in communities. For me, it is spirituality that provides motivation for the kind of leadership that is empowering of communities.

### **Motivation**

Having reached the conclusion that a good facilitator is able to empower others, rather than accumulating power for him- or herself, it becomes important to understand and examine the motivations of the leader/facilitator who is involved with the community. Motivation in leadership that comes from our own need to be needed, or even solely from a well-developed sense of social obligation, is insufficient and tends to grow weary and cynical over time:

Most of us too easily assume that all we need to do is decide to bear the burdens of others and we can do it. Then we try it for a time, and soon the joy of life has left, and we are heavy with the sorrows of others. It does not need to be so. We can learn to uphold the burdens of others without being destroyed by them (Foster, 1989a:172).

Motivated through a desire for obedience to God, however, a facilitator acts not with intent to change the surroundings of the people, but with intent to be faithful to God's direction (even if it means changing one's own ideas):

...we must see the difference between choosing to serve and choosing to be a servant. When we choose to serve, we are still in charge. We decide whom we will serve and when we will serve. And if we are in charge, we will worry a great deal about anyone stepping on us, that is, taking charge over us. But when we choose to be a servant, we give up the right to be in charge. There is great freedom in this. If we voluntarily choose [to be a servant], then we cannot be manipulated (*ibid.*, 165).

This "giving up the right to be in charge" describes the action of the facilitator, who recognizes and accepts the necessity for the community to make the decisions about its own future, rather than being told what must be done. It is the act of a true community servant. An example of "serving," on the other hand, might be the elected political representative of a community who, during his term of "service," makes unilateral decisions for the community while living on a handsome salary with a huge expense account, and who does not perceive him or herself as being accountable for his/her actions. This person sees their elected position as a position of power, where power resides in the position and not with the electorate.

## **Power Relationships**

We cannot address the subject of leadership without facing up to the problem of power. Equally, we cannot address any questions of development without facing up to the same problem of power. The use or abuse of power is at the root of our problems of development, and power is also a potential obstacle to the realization of redemptive community. This obstacle is obvious when power is deliberately misused in order to attain selfish ends; it is obvious and still abusive when one's power to act to transform (or redeem) the situation is denied. The denied power becomes destructive to some extent; it certainly cannot be used to empower the community:

To the degree that we do not fully claim our own power to transform, we are more likely to be possessed by this energy in its shadow form and to use it, unconsciously, for no good ends. Power will not be denied. This power is never neutral; it either heals or harms, although to various degrees...Although many of us are afraid to acknowledge...the power we all have because of the power we have to harm, [this power] provides a link with the numinous--especially the power of the divine to save, redeem or forgive. (Pearson, 1991:207)

According to the New Testament, one who would be powerful, or "great," must be the "servant of all," "humble," "least, very last." (Mark 9:33-37; Matthew 18:1-5; Luke 9:46-48). In John 13:1-15, after Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, he emphasized that they were to do this for each other, because he had given them an example. This is a powerful illustration of what it means to be a servant, or a servant leader; the symbol of servant leadership is "not the crown, but the towel."

In some ways we would prefer to hear Jesus' call to deny father and mother, houses and land, for the sake of the gospel than His word to wash feet. Radical self denial gives the feeling of adventure. If we forsake all, we even have the chance of glorious martyrdom. But in service we must experience the many little deaths of going beyond ourselves. Service banishes us to the mundane, the ordinary, the trivial (Foster, 1989a:159).

The servant leader or facilitator empowers others (as opposed to making them dependent). The two best described methods in use today for the empowerment of people are delegation, and facilitation. Delegation, which demands the transference of the knowledge, skills, and authority to do the job, has been the traditional organizational method for empowerment. Since the widespread acceptance of the pedagogy of Paulo Freire, however, the method and terminology most frequently utilized is facilitation. The facilitation model is presently being used in every area of life from development to modern organizational management, and even in health care models.

The failure of old management systems, and old development theories, to bring about justice and equity in our world, our nations, or our communities has highlighted the need for a value system and methodology which will make room for the two-thirds of the people of the world who are excluded from power;

from even that amount of power that would allow them to make decisions about the things which affect their own lives. It is not only the powerless who are in need of development; those who have power require an inner development (as do those who would achieve power over their own lives) to enable them to live responsibly in a world where the injustices of the past can no longer be tolerated. For those who would actively engage in correcting these injustices by working with and among the poor, sustainable motivation can only come from spiritual maturity.

In the section to follow, we will look at spirituality, and how it not only assists leaders to empower others in the outward journey of transformation, but matures and cares for the soul in the inward journey. We might be justified, then, to assume that if the power relationships involved are redemptive in nature, participation in a facilitated development process does have some potential for community empowerment, especially if the leader comes from within the community. This partially explains Korten's insistence, in his description of Fourth Generation development, that it is the agencies which may serve (participate in) people's movements, and not the reverse, as is more often practiced. In Fourth Generation development, people move out on their own, to take control of their own lives.

To take control of one's own destiny and accept responsibility for one's life and the choices it poses is central both to personal and societal development. It is central both to the inward journey of inner transformation, and the outward journey of structural change that makes justice possible (Elliott, 1987:78).

### ***Spirituality and Development***

Sadly, it is secular development theorists and Third World communities, rather than church leaders, who have begun to call for the inclusion of spirituality in development theory and practice. David Korten presents the challenge:

According to Charles Elliott, most structural theories of the determinants of poverty and injustice fail to take an essential additional step. Unjust structures are the creation of people and are products of the greed and egotism that are deeply imbedded in human nature. The human spirit must be strengthened to the point that greed and egotism play a less dominant role...This is perhaps the most central of religious mission, and a far worthier challenge for religiously oriented voluntary development organizations than the distribution of charity to the victims of the failure of spiritual teaching...The elimination of unjust structures depends on the emergence of an alternative human consciousness (Korten 1990:168).

And from Rahnama, a critic of development theory:

As a rule, the necessity for a spiritual dimension, and for the revival of the sacred in one's everyday relationships with the world, seems to be rediscovered as a basic factor for the regeneration of people's space. Wherever this spiritual dimension has been present, it has, indeed, produced a staggering contagion of intelligence and

creativity, much more conducive to people's collective 'efficiency' than any other conventional form of mass mobilization...and also in helping people to resist the disruptive effects of economization...It implies, above all, the recovery of one's inner freedom (Rahnema, in Sachs 1992:127).

Of course, the next difficulty we run into if we accept the truth of statements such as those above is to define just what we mean when we speak of spirituality. Psychologist and theologian Thomas Moore writes:

The soul needs an intense, full-bodied spiritual life as much as and in the same way that the body needs food. That is the teaching and imagery of spiritual masters over centuries. There is no reason to question the wisdom of this idea (Moore, 1992:228).

For many Christian churches, however, spirituality is something that is confined to the religious sphere and is centered on God. They may extend that spirituality to a moral code of behavior, but it is confined to the relationship with God and is more specifically a "vertical" journey than either the inward or outward journey spoken of by Elliott, above. Moore explains the relationship between religion and spirituality in a more wholistic sense:

In the broadest sense, spirituality is an aspect of any attempt to approach or attend to the invisible factors in life and to transcend the personal, concrete, finite particulars of this world. Religion stretches its gaze beyond this life to the time of creation...that other time outside our own reckoning, the 'time' of myth. It also concerns itself with afterlife and with the highest values in this life. This spiritual point of view is necessary for the soul, providing the breadth of vision, the inspiration, and the sense of meaning it needs, [but]...Spirituality is not always specifically religious (*Ibid.*, 232).

Moore goes on to pose a spirituality that challenges Western tendencies to intellectualize and rationalize the world:

There are serious drawbacks to the soul in the abstraction of experience. The intellectual attempt to live in a 'known' world deprives ordinary life of its unconscious elements, those things we encounter every day but know little about. Jung equates the unconscious with the soul, and so when we try to live fully consciously in an intellectually predictable world, protected from all mysteries and comfortable with conformity, we lose our everyday opportunities for the soulful life. The intellect wants to know, the soul like to be surprised. Intellect, looking outward, wants enlightenment and the pleasure of a burning enthusiasm. The soul, always drawn inward, seeks contemplation and the more shadowy, mysterious experience...(*Ibid.*, 233-34)

We are not going to have a soulful spirituality until we begin to think in the ways of soul. If we bring only the intellect's modes of thought to our search for a path or to spiritual practices, then from the very beginning we will be without soul. The bias [against] spirit is so strong in modern culture that it will take a profound revolution in the very way we think to give our spiritual lives the depth and subtlety that are the gifts of soul (*Ibid.*, 246-47).

Does this spirituality have any connection with community relationships, or, beyond that, to our discussion of development? I believe in both instances

the answer is a resounding "yes." Insofar as spirituality, or an "inner life" is related to the concept of others, of communality, it takes on qualities which make us more completely human. For example, when people encounter one another in Paulo Freire's "dialogue," and I-Thou relationship is implicit and reciprocal. Not only is it impossible to dialogue with an object--an "it"--but according to Freire it is also impossible to be an "I" unless "Thou" is understood. In other words, if "I" dehumanize another human by treating him as an object, "I" am dehumanized as well (this comes very close to my own understanding of the deeper meaning of the African term "ubuntu," but I would not presume to try to explain the concept for others).

The words "I" and "Thou" must be spoken together, and in fact Martin Buber describes "I-Thou" as a single word. "The risk," he cautions, "the basic word can only be spoken with one's whole being; whoever commits himself may not hold back part of himself; and the work does not permit me...to seek relaxation in the It-world" (Buber, 1958:60). Further, he states, "The concentration and fusion into a whole being can never be accomplished by me, can never be accomplished without me. I require a You to become; becoming I, I say You. All actual life is encounter" (*Ibid.*, 62).

Freire describes the action of this encounter as both "creation," and "dialogue:"

...it is an act of creation...Dialogue cannot exist, however, in the absence of a profound love for the world and for men...At the point of encounter there are neither utter ignoramuses nor perfect sages; there are only men who are attempting, together, to learn more than they now know (Freire, 1989:76-79).

The importance of creativity to development, or transformation, has been essentially ignored by development theorists as well as educational Institutions. Freire and Buber suggest that this creativity is inextricably bound to self-image and to the dialogue of community relationships, a point which is upheld by the discipline of psychology:

We are lonely only when we are conforming or hiding and not sharing what we know with others. When we have the courage to be who we are--to see what we see, know what we know, and act on that knowledge--we can find others like ourselves. And then together we can begin creating new worlds. (Pearson, 1991:281).

For theologian Friedrich Schleiermacher, the communal relationship is also integral to both the inward journey and the outward journey toward encounter, and he relates this to the life of the early Christian church:

...there is a behavior directed outward that proceeds essentially from internal activity and originates from it, but without intending that change should be the result. We find hints of this even in the description of the absolute happiness of Christians. For everywhere in these descriptions, Christians are conceived as part of the ongoing community since their situation is never spoken of in Scripture except as one of a community. Mere coexistence, however, is not a community, for in community belongs a circulation, a communication of life. *There is absolutely no internal behavior of human beings that is not also, at the same time, an outward behavior, which,*

*strictly speaking, is only a communication of what is internal...Only under this condition can a community persist.* The situation of perfection should be a situation of life; therefore, there must be within perfection an internal activity. At the same time it should also be a community. For that reason, there must be a manifestation of the activity. We can regard this behavior as depending throughout, not on imperfection, but solely on the idea of the communal life (Schleiermacher, 1989:72-3, *emphasis mine*).

Community building is therefore very much concerned with the spiritual or inner life of people as well as with their physical and material lives; indeed, the two are inseparable. The soul of the community is only healthy insofar as the souls of the people are fed, and allowed expression in the world around them.

To the soul, memory is more important than planning, art more compelling than reason, and love more fulfilling than understanding. We know we are well on the way toward soul when we feel attachment to the world and the people around us and when we live as much from the heart as from the head (Moore, 1992:304-5).

As long as we leave care of the soul out of our daily lives, we will suffer the loneliness of living in a dead, cold, unrelated world. We can "improve" ourselves to the maximum, and yet we will still feel the alienation inherent in a divided existence. We will continue to exploit nature and our capacity to invent new things, but both will continue to overpower us, if we do not approach them with enough depth and imagination (*Ibid.*, 284).

Community, then, as the "outward journey," has a close and direct connection to both the inward and upward (vertical) journey of the soul. Also, we see that the outward journey includes care of the physical environment, as part of the external expression of the inner life. I am claiming here, therefore, that spirituality, leadership, community and development are terms which have both conceptual and experiential links in the journey towards transformation. To further consolidate this claim, I would like to introduce another perspective, that of development psychology.

### ***Development Psychology and Spirituality***

The study of human growth and development lends to the people-centered development process an understanding of psychological tasks that must be accomplished at various stages of life. As the discipline comes to us from Erickson, Piaget, and others it tends to be very westernized, however, leading towards the development of Ego, or self-actualization as a highly individualized achievement. There is little, if anything, of the spiritual or communal nature of humankind in that study, but it is still useful to spiritual psychology, within which we were working in the paragraphs above, in identifying the reality of psychological tasking for development.

Spiritual psychology, also referred to as transpersonal psychology and "sacred" psychology, is a form of developmental psychology leading toward "individuation" (as opposed to "individualization") and is based on the work of C. G. Jung. This psychology works with concepts of archetypes in order to

outline a developmental psychology where the ultimate goal is to bring what you have learned or gained through your own accomplishment back into the community, for the transformation of all:

Most importantly, the quest helps us learn that God is within us. When we discover this truth, we do not 'disappear into a never-never land of no return, our duty is to return bearing the gifts of the grail within ourselves, that we might be a cup, a means of regeneration and remembrance to every living creature. We become the Grail that others might drink, for to find the Grail is to become it'...This means dying to one's egotism and being reborn in love for all humankind. The inner Seeker is the part of us that is willing to seek not only for ourselves but for all humanity. (Pearson, 1991:131).

According to this "sacred" psychology, macrolevel development is necessarily dependent on the spiritual, psychological development of people and communities at the microlevel. The relationship to God is certainly not ruled out by these psychologists (as it often is with other branches of modern psychiatry and psychology). John Bradshaw writes, at the end of his work on reclaiming the inner child, *Homecoming*: "I believe we came forth out of the depth of being, and being calls us back. I believe we came from God and we belong to God...Augustine said it well: 'Thou has made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless till they repose in Thee' That will be our true homecoming" (Bradshaw, 1990:286).

The search for a spiritual "home" as the impetus for spiritual growth and development is a fascinating and complex study, and one for which we certainly cannot do any justice in one small section of this paper. What we can do, however, is acknowledge that spiritual development is not confined to the religious sphere, and not even to those religious who are active in social and political concerns. The development of the inner person requires courage and commitment. Acknowledging this, there is a paradigm of conversion, or transformation, from which we can work within this thesis to locate ourselves in the three-fold journey of spiritual development.

In a PACSA<sup>6</sup> retreat held at Beth Shalom in November, 1995, Father Chris Langeveld facilitated a workshop entitled "Transition: Memory and the Retrieval of Spirituality." At that time, he related five "realms of experience" to conversion (or transformation, if you prefer), which he defined as "Acceptance of responsibility for Self, for Ourselves as a Group, and for Definite Realms of our Experience." Conversion, or transformation, then becomes a process which includes religious conversion, rather than being solely defined by the concept of salvation from sin. The five realms of experience as outlined by Chris are:

(1) *Affective (emotional) conversion.* The movement from emotional disorder to integrated wholeness. People need to come to terms with rage, anger, fear, greed, etc. It is by achieving emotional maturity that people and communities are able to begin to improve their self-esteem.

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<sup>6</sup> Pietermaritzburg Agency for Christian Social Awareness

(2) *Intellectual conversion.* The movement from inadequate frames of cultural and intellectual reference to the adequate; letting go of the "absolute" character of our cultural ideas, (i.e. patriarchy, cultural differences, etc.), and gaining increased tolerance for the ambiguities of cultural plurality.

(3) *Moral conversion.* Moving from less to more adequate value systems, moving away from responding primarily to instincts and reflex.

(4) *Sociopolitical conversion.* Assuming one's own responsibility and accountability both for and to the community, to communal life, and to the physical environment which supports that life.

(5) *Religious conversion.* Assuming responsibility for my lack of relationship with God. The spiritual journey is ultimately the journey toward God, and all the rest is dependent upon this.

These five areas of conversion outline foundations for a wholistic spirituality; they are also prerequisites for individual and social transformation. They are the steps toward maturity of the soul, and therefore of the person. For many Westerners, however, they describe areas where preoccupation with linear logic and rationalism (our own variety of intellectual conversion) have moved us to locating our "truth" beyond the reality of experience, allowing us to justify our lack of responsibility to the physical environment, and increasing our ability to treat other human beings as objects, or things - as "its" (revealing immature or absent moral and sociopolitical conversion), even if we have achieved a religious conversion. For these reasons, peoples of the Third World, for whom there is usually no separation of the spiritual and the physical, often perceive Western thought and behavior to be curiously underdeveloped.

While the Western world is beginning to seek to redress the evils of dualistic philosophy and its underlying assumptions for themselves, as evidenced by the works cited here, the people of the Third World, having suffered inadequate and ill-advised development interventions, are beginning to demand a spiritual awakening in development practice and theory. For many, this link with spirituality has a direct effect upon the sustainability of any development activity in the present, as well as for future generations. Two very powerful documents are available which outline this perspective, the first being a paper written and distributed by three organizations in development practice (Asian NGO Coalition, IRED Asia, People-Centered Development Forum 1993), and the second a Declaration coming out of Global Forum 92 (International NGO Forum of Global Forum '92, 1992). In summary, they maintain that:

...such a theory and practice [is] grounded in the premise that the [environmental and economic] sustainability crisis is a direct consequence of development's contribution to accelerating the historical processes by which the human species has become

increasingly alienated from its spiritual connection to nature and community. A sustainable social practice must decentralize and distribute economic power in ways that facilitate the restoration of this connection (Asian NGO Coalition *et al*, Abstract, 1993:1).

This environmental and economic conversion, they contend, must be grounded in the cultures of the people:

We recognize the diversity of our religious traditions and cultures which converge at the depths of our Asian identity. Everything that we do is infused with spirituality. It is the web that connects us...As we take from nature, we return something of ourselves. We, therefore, commit ourselves to return to our consciousness of reverence for nature and being true to our inner spirit...Our true identity must be rediscovered in our ethnicity as a community-based people existing within our respective habitat and bio-region. (Southeast Asian Contribution to the Earth Charter, 1991).

And finally, the marginalized cultures of the world recognize the spiritual emptiness of western civilization and its accomplishments, and have long been aware of what we are only now discovering: our own need of development.

*Today, seven generations later, you turn to us as your own culture is failing. The land you took from us, tricked us out of, is becoming too poisoned to feed you. Your rivers and streams are dying. I wonder, why do you turn to us now? Is it because through it all we never stopped praying? Never stopped beating our drums, dancing and singing songs to the Creator? And that somehow, somehow, you couldn't silence us?*

- SIOUX ELDER, Rosebud reservation (USA)  
Johnson 1994:1

## **Summary**

So, from economic reconstruction, through sustainability, to spirituality, we have come a long way in our review of the history of development theory in search of a definition of development and an understanding of development as transformation. Many theories have been only touched upon, or even omitted from our discussion, which does not suggest that they lack relevance or importance to development practice.

Beginning in Chapter One, we traced development theory from its generation in the post-World War II era of newly-liberated countries in the so-called Third World, observing it in four generations of responses to poverty. These generations moved from charity, to community development, to structural sustainability, and finally to the initiatives of people's movements. The implication here, of course, is that people's movements are the most sustainable, appropriate definitions of development. This led us to some discussion about the relationship between freedom and development, and the understanding that development is not a process which may be imposed, willy-nilly, on communities or individuals, nor is it possible to have development

where there is no freedom.

The focus on people's movements led us to the discussion of participation, with excursions into the concepts of facilitation as servant leadership, power as central to development processes, and motivation for leadership. It has been claimed herein that at the microlevel, people and communities must have a positive self-image if they are to develop; such a self-image must come from within the culture, which links it to spirituality. This spirituality is not simply religious, but is also psychological in that it relates the individual to the community and to his or her environment. Transformation, then, like Korten's Generation Four, is not about economic phenomena but is about spiritual journeys: the inward, psychological journeys, the upward, religious journeys, and the outward journeys to community.

From this we realize that development is not something that must be done to or for the poor, but equally important, it is not only about the poor. It is about all of us, and the developmental tasks required of us in order to live together on this small planet in such a way that we do not fail to treat all other human beings and our physical environment with dignity and respect; that transformation is about the lifestyle and three-fold freedoms of every person on earth. When development has been achieved at this microlevel, then macrolevel development will have already begun to fall into place.

Hopefully, what has been presented, though abbreviated, is sufficient to allow us to define a model of leadership which conforms to these recent trends in development, as well as to a potential role for a model of leadership in the Third Quest material on the historical Jesus.

## **A Proposed Model for Leadership**

Based on the discussions in Chapters One and Two, as summarized above, our model for Christian leadership might look something like this:

- (1) The leader would have a well-integrated, wholistic spirituality and maturity. In other words, s/he would be a community builder, and an advocate of environmental stewardship. The leader would have attended to the three-fold journey, in order to return his or her power and skills for the transformation of the community.
- (2) The leader would be motivated by his or her relationship to God, rather than by expectations of power or recognition for service.
- (3) The leader would understand, and act upon, the fact that economic growth cannot be sustainable in the absence of sociopolitical and environmental development and freedom.
- (4) The leader would be a skilled facilitator who would empower the community to take control of their own lives, and the decisions that

affect them. S/he would identify and train others from within the community, preparing them for their leadership positions.

(5) The leader would recognize the difference between welfarist or service activities which empower people, and those which disempower them.

(6) The leader would see community (microlevel) development as a necessary but insufficient prerequisite to macrolevel development, and would mediate between the two levels.<sup>7</sup>

(7) The leader would understand the relationships between liberation and development, and facilitate the community action appropriate to the given situation. He or she would also understand the need for inner freedom and freedom in the relationship with God to be in harmony with the outward freedom of sociopolitical liberation.

We need to bear in mind that social models are ideals, while human beings are not! So while we will expect to see some correspondence between this very general model and the Image of Jesus described in Chapter Six, we would be surprised indeed should it be a perfect match.

What we seek in the chapters that follow is not to *create* an image of Jesus which would be the perfect role model for development workers, but to *measure the Images created by others* as to their relevance for the process of community transformation.

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<sup>7</sup> This mediating activity is a mezzo-level role, which for anthropology, is the "middle layer" of a society, located between the values and beliefs of the society and the tangible, or material, expressions of those beliefs. It is the level of institutions, or the carriers of the value system. Institutions provide and define the "proper and expected behavior oriented to the fulfillment of the particular social need, such as the provision of food and other material goods." Some institutions are fundamental to every society: The family, religion, education, government, and economic institutions, for example. When these institutions are weakened or destroyed, as they have been for the majority of communities in South Africa, attempts to provide development projects or structures centered on the principles of economic growth are the equivalent of the parable about building a house on sand. There is no foundation for economic growth if strong and culturally relevant institutions are not in place. The Church is a vitally important institution. Sociologist Peter Berger identifies the church specifically as a "mediating institution:" which, in addition to its primary institutional role, stands between the individual in his private sphere and the large institutions of the public sphere (or, collectively, between the grassroots and the bureaucracy.)

part two:

setting the scene in first century palestine

3

**BACKGROUND AND METHODS**

The social context of Israel in the first century, which can only be briefly encountered here, included a "very complex and variable set of institutions, rituals, beliefs, stories, and rules" (Meeks, 1986:65). This complexity was only partially the result of a historical tradition that highlighted figures such as Abraham, Moses and the Exodus, Joshua and the conquest of the Promised Land, Samuel and the Judges, David the Warrior King, and the prophets Elijah and Elisha. As a traditional culture, Israel experienced no separation of religion from any other activity of life; the God of Israel was a God who acted in history and in the everyday life of the present in a concrete, recognizable fashion. In other words, the world of spirit was immediately present and interacted with the physical world.

The phrase "Kingdom of God" could thus have been the symbol which codified and evoked Israel's story of the history of God's Kingship over Israel and the world. Borg describes this symbol as a "primordial tradition," a cultural "root metaphor," which states that in addition to the paramount reality of the perceived, physical world there is another dimension of reality. In other words, "this world" coexists with the "world of spirit," which is the source, or ground, of "this world" and is even more "real." More important, *the spirit world is not a belief system, but an element of experience*. Though some scholars will argue against Borg's use of this description for the meaning of "Kingdom of God" as lacking any eschatology (Meier, 1994, for example), this understanding of coexisting planes of reality do apply in the rural cultural setting where we locate Jesus, and are very relevant to any understanding of his ministry.

The Kingdom of God as described by Jesus was thus a coexisting reality which was most real in the Spirit world, but which had founded, yet existed in and consistently interacted with "this" world. This explanation allows Borg to conclude that "the notion of another reality does not have its origin in pre-modern speculation (or anxiety), but it is grounded in the religious experience of humankind...It is not merely believed in, but known" (Borg 1994a:56). Borg's definition is therefore in full agreement with the understanding of liminality as described by Turner, as we will see in Chapter Four. The traditional definition of spirit world as "experienced reality" differs greatly from our secularized modern western definition of the spirit world as "belief system" (which is, in

addition, usually in disrepute); Turner rejects the latter, stating "Anyone who has known African ritual knows better" (Turner, 1987:25).

The co-existing layers of "experienced reality" were part of the social environment of the people of first century Palestine. When we begin to describe Jesus' baptism in the chapter to follow, we must therefore proceed with this understanding clearly in mind. First, however, we may return to the more comfortable (for the Western mind) world of paramount reality, where, thanks to archaeological findings and anthropological studies in traditional societies, we are able to interpret the known history of this time period in greater detail. Prior to taking that step, however, there are other considerations. Therefore, just as we opened Part One of this thesis by asking "Why Development," we can begin Part Two by asking, in some way, "Why Jesus?"

### ***Does the Historical Jesus Matter?***

Marcus Borg poses the question thusly: "Does the historical study of Jesus matter for Christians, and, if so, in what ways?" (Borg, 1994:183). Others might ask "What can we really know about the historical Jesus," or even "Isn't this all a lot of intellectual game-playing, that is dangerous to people's (Christian) faith?" To begin with the last question, to each part I would answer "no, it is not." To be sure, there may be a lot of intellectualizing going on, and some of it might be based upon insufficient information and/or scholarship, and some results may even take on the appearance of fantasy. Meier, however, links this intellectualizing to the historical-critical understanding of our western culture: "From the Enlightenment onward, theology can operate in and speak to that culture with credibility only if it absorbs into its methodology a historical approach" (Meier, 1991:198).

Are these images "dangerous" to faith? Only, I believe, in the same sense that any new information or idea is dangerous to the knowledge that one has been given previously, where a "cognitive dissonance" is effected which must somehow be resolved. The real danger, as Peter Berger points out (Berger, 1980), is that one will take either of the easy options in such situations:

In the pluralistic situation...the authority of all religious traditions tends to be undermined. In this situation there are three major options, or 'possibilities,' for those who would maintain the tradition: They can reaffirm the authority of the tradition in defiance of the challenges to it; they can try to secularize the tradition; they can try to uncover and retrieve the experiences embodied in the tradition...I call these three options, respectively, those of deduction, reduction, and induction (Berger, 1980:xi).

Berger explains that modernity itself creates new situations which make choice an imperative, whether we like it or not. However, the multiplicity of choices, and the variety of plausibility structures in pluralistic situations, turns our freedom of choice into a nightmare of anxiety exacerbated by cognitive dissonance. The deductive response is to relieve this mental and emotional tension by retreating to the authority of the past--this is the first easy option.

The second, or reductive response, is to simply change authorities. The "authority" of the modern or challenging thought is substituted for the authority of tradition, which is now seen as unsophisticated or oppressive. "In other words, modern consciousness and its alleged categories become the *only* criteria of validity for religious reflection" (*Ibid.*, p. 57 *emphasis mine*). These "categories" would include those "scientific" methodologies that anthropologist Victor Turner complains about, saying that they downgrade religion into functional categories.

Berger's inductive "heretical imperative," a concept that Paulo Freire terms the "dynamic option" (Freire, 1989), is the option that investigates and challenges the new information, and where it is found to be reasonable and consistent with elements of tradition as well as modern scholarship and experience, finds the best paths for incorporating it into one's body of knowledge and into one's own lifestyle. Information encountered by this often painful but soul-maturing option is thus rendered either useful or useless, but is no longer dangerous to faith. In many instances, the new information may actually confirm and strengthen faith, (especially for the historical-critical western mind) when approached in this manner.

Now, moving back to the question of "What can we really know about the historical Jesus," as Meier points out this is very little indeed:

Jesus lived for roughly thirty-five years in 1st-century Palestine. Each of those years was filled with physical and psychological changes. Even before he began his public ministry, many of his words and deeds would have been witnessed by his family and friends, his neighbors and customers. In principle, these events were available at the time to the interested inquirer. Then, for the last three years or so of his life, much of what Jesus said and did occurred in public or at least before his disciples, especially those who traveled with him. Again, in principle, these events were recoverable at the time to a zealous inquirer.

And yet the vast majority of these deeds and words, the "reasonably complete" record of the "real" Jesus is irrevocably lost to us today. This is no new insight of modern agnostic scholars...The reader who wants to know the real Jesus should close this book right now, because the historical Jesus is neither the real Jesus nor the easy way to him. (Meier, 1991:22)

Nevertheless, Meier goes on to point out that this problem is not unique to Jesus as a historical figure, and in fact it is "surprising how much we can know about Jesus" (*Ibid.*, 24). Most of what we "know" are constructs of "most probable" situations, to which we add known data about the Jesus Movement and its contemporaries; from this, we hope to glimpse a reflection of the historical Jesus. For Meier this is not a question of faith; the search for the historical Jesus is carried out using empirical data from ancient documents, and modern scientific methods of analysis.

Despite Meier's claim for empiricism as the sole method, however, it is not only the methods of science that determine the nature of the reconstruction, or image. As many "Jesus" scholars note, the "face at the bottom of the well" is

very likely to be one's own (Draper, 1993); or, where it may be believed that one has discovered a philosopher's stone, it may turn out to be one's own "pet rock" (Borg, 1994a:51). The reason that impels one to search is often reflected in what is "found;" this is true of all scientific research.

Which leads us finally back to the first question, "Does the Historical Jesus Matter?" Having faced this question in my own spiritual journey some time ago, it is easy now to say "of course it matters." My first struggles for understanding were not so simple. How much easier my quest would have been had I known of the concepts of the "pre-Easter" and "post-Easter" Christ in contemporary scholarship! I had to develop them for myself, because my own experience precluded ambivalence regarding my self-definition as Christian.

For some time, I had determined on an intellectual level that even if Jesus had never existed, or had not lived as I believed him to have lived, that it simply didn't matter; it did not change my relationship with God. It did, however, call into question whether or not I could say I was "Christian," if I did not believe in the reality of a man called Jesus. I finally concluded that whether or not Jesus existed, or what he ultimately did or did not do, there was a Christ of the Christian faith, and he was, somehow, the source of my personal faith.

This was somewhat more satisfying, and made me feel less hypocritical. But it gave me no role model, no person against whom I could measure my standards for living, and my actions in the world. It left me with a spiritualized Christianity, which was "out there" somewhere, to be accessed by my own spirit, but which was seemingly unrelated to the world in which I lived and operated. This spiritual plane was also primarily eschatological; the best I could do in this life was try to live a perfect spiritual life, which in practice bore little or no relationship to the hard realities I experienced.

It was the Third Quest historical Jesus that finally provided a role model for me, as well as for some of my fellow students in the Leadership and Development classes at the University, for my diploma students in development at African Enterprise, and for Church leaders in an East African workshop on Church and Development. The historical Jesus, as these separate groups concluded, provides the role model, and the connections between this world and the world of spirit; he is the threshold, connecting two coexisting planes of reality that eliminate the dualistic approach to Christianity which has so separated the spiritual and the physical worlds.

So, while I agree with Meier that the historical Jesus is important and even somewhat possible to discover, I disagree with his need to bracket faith-knowledge for the sake of "scientific" method. More and more, especially with the insights gained from quantum physics, we are having to accept the fact that our so-called hard sciences and their methodology do not guarantee us unchanging truth. What science thought to be proofs and laws are being challenged one after the other, and science now finds itself in a similar position to that of the 19th century church, trying to maintain credibility.

The point is that scientific method alone lacks a most important variable when it excludes faith-knowledge from the Quest for the historical Jesus. As Meier himself admits, this is the energy which fuels not only the quest for a historical Jesus, but the effort to live today as we understand him to have lived.

For all this, I concur with many of Meier's conclusions, but more particularly with Borg's claim that the historical Jesus matters:

Historical scholarship about Jesus can help to keep alive the liberating memory of Jesus as one who provocatively and courageously protested against systems of domestication and domination, who pointed beyond himself to the sacred mystery in which we live and move and have our being, and who brought into existence an alternative community with an alternative and egalitarian vision of human life in history...Finally, it seems to me that the Christian doctrine of incarnation implies that the historical Jesus is important. The claim goes back to the New Testament itself: Jesus was God's Word...become flesh...minimally, it seems to mean this: from the point of view of his earliest followers and for Christians in the centuries since, Jesus was an epiphany or manifestation of God. The product of the historical study of Jesus--a historically reconstructed image of Jesus--is, of course, not itself that epiphany. But to the extent that it provides a glimpse of Jesus, it provides a glimpse of the epiphany of God that he was (Borg, 1994a:196).

This glimpse of the epiphany that was the historical Jesus, reflected to us by Third Quest scholarship, owes a great debt to improved anthropological and historical research in the past few decades, as well as to the increasing interdisciplinary work being done by theologians and sociologists of religion.

### ***Using Anthropological Models***

In the past, anthropologists of religion tended to found their research on the work of Durkheim and to essentially ignore the work of Marx and Weber. As a result, there was an anthropological stress on Durkheim's society seen as "a structure of social ties informed by moral consensus" rather than on groups of unbounded political, economic and ideological relationships which relate to different levels of social reality, and which connect with other groups of economic, political and ideological relationships. Religion, therefore, was interpreted in terms of its functions to serve such whole societies, as a reflection of social patterns, lacking ideological interests. In addition, "many anthropologists have failed to see religious beliefs as in any way sanctioning sectional or class interests or that religion may be a form of alienation. Their attitude toward religion has therefore generally been neutral and apologetic" (Morris, 1987:140).

Third Quest studies of the historical Jesus have generally adapted the more recent movement away from Durkheimian functionalism, while assuming positions somewhere between Marx and Weber, but with useful modifications and qualifications from modern scholarship. Marx's thought, defined as

historical materialism, implies that capitalism is a religion, and its economic concepts (value, labor, property, etc.) are religious concepts. It must not follow, however, that the economic base is the cause of religion (or vice-versa); for Marx it is the carrier for cultural concepts such as religion. Religion is also seen as being closely related to *ideology*--Marx's original and most critical concept--but to define the Marxist understanding of ideology merely as a cultural idea is to miss his point and intent. Morris believes that for Marx religion was "the most basic form of alienation, and, historically, the first form of ideology" (*Ibid.*, 42). Marx broadened the scope of ideology, however, situating religion within the concept as merely one manifestation of it, a position that in Marxian terms ultimately implies a necessity for exploration of the interrelationships between religion and the material conditions of life. This implication is vitally important to our present study.

Weber, on the other hand, tried to combine elements from three major currents of thought outside Marxism: Positivism (Comte, Ayer, Hegel), the German idealist tradition (Dilthey, Simmel--the Heidelberg school), and the "recovery of the unconscious" (Nietzsche, Bergson, Freud). Weber's emphasis was on social action, rather than social structure, with the fundamental unit of analysis being the individual, or interest groups. He appeared to disregard functional analysis, taking on what has been described as a "mechanistic" approach, but this is, I believe, a mistaken interpretation--as is the suggestion that he was a systems analyst. Weber was clearly a historical sociologist, and the foundations of social action were, for him, located in the historical situation. Emphasizing the *meaning* of social action, he describes his method of inquiry as *Verstehen*, "comprehending social action through an empathetic understanding of another person's values or culture" (*Ibid.*, 60). He is primarily concerned with the explanation of social facts, which must be understood both objectively and subjectively:

As Weber put it, interpretations that are 'meaningfully adequate' must be complemented by a consideration of their 'causal adequacy.' For Weber this was seen essentially in historical rather than in mechanistic terms and involved determining the role of various antecedent factors underlying a particular social phenomenon or event. *Such a causal analysis could only be hypothetical, he felt, involving an imaginative attempt to locate the specific factor that would have a decisive influence in a given sequence of events...Weber's mode of analysis is therefore concerned not with function but with meaning and cause (Ibid., 61 emphasis mine).*

It has been suggested that Weber advocated the positivist notion of a "value-free" science, a position that some Third Quest scholars have attempted to emulate. However, like the present-day sociologist of religion, Peter Berger, Weber "neither thought that value judgments should be withdrawn from scientific discussion, nor believed that in fact they could be, for in the last analysis all scientific analysis rests, he argued, on certain subjective ideals" (*Ibid.*) "An attitude of moral indifference has no connection with 'scientific objectivity'" (Weber, 1949:60, cited in Morris, 1987:61). Honesty in scientific research therefore demands that scholars be straightforward about their own relevant values and biases, so as to allow readers to understand (insofar as this is possible) the particular "vested interests" of the research.

In keeping with this demand for honesty, I would have to state that my own sociological or anthropological bias is founded in Weberian concern for meaning and cause; it is primarily phenomenological in nature, and seeks to empathize with the culture and its values. My value system includes a Marxist belief in the linkages between religion and the material life of the society (not excluding its power structures), and the necessity to work for a more humanly mature management of our economic and power systems. Theologically, I claim the Christian faith, but unlike Marx I see not only its potential for alienation, but its profound potential for transformation, as well. Like Third Quest scholars, therefore, my search for the understanding of social phenomena borrows not only from other avenues of sociological thought, but even from other disciplines. It is quite possibly the generic nature of a certain breed of development theorists and practitioners to operate in this fashion, however, in their unending attempt to find interdisciplinary answers to the holistic developmental problems of our age.

Given the interdisciplinary nature of this thesis, and a consequently high potential for the generation of chaos, I have chosen to attempt some organization and restriction of input by creating an anthropological framework for the study based on the specific school of thought described as symbolic anthropology. The symbolist approach to religion, as represented by such writers as Turner and Douglas, does reflect a particular interpretation of the work of Durkheim, particularly within the sociology of knowledge. It is the sociology of knowledge which allows us the freedom to move between Durkheim, Weber, and Marx to work in phenomenology; more particularly, it allows us to work within the *meaning* of social phenomena.

For symbolists, there is no point in discussing the apparent irrationality of religious beliefs (as most anthropologists would do), rather, they argue that these beliefs should be interpreted symbolically. In fact, some might say that there are two kinds of truth, that of empirical experience, and that of religion, myth, and poetry as symbolism. We westerners often tend to concretize our material truth, our intellectual rationality, to the point of materializing our very consciousness; we see no reality beyond that of our literal experience. We lose the symbolic nature, and to lose the symbolic is to lose sight of the spiritual, to forget our inner natures. Ritual is the means by which the symbolic returns us to that which is spiritual in our reality. In addition, ritual performance and its symbolism are transformative:

Rituals help group members experience a sense of intimacy and connectedness. If the same ritual actions are repeated over time, they provide a sense of connectedness with history. If they change to meet the needs of the time, they help people live in the now and bond in a more spontaneous, creative way...Rituals help bond people together...and lend group support to individual and group goals and transformations. (Pearson, 1991:203).

For our purposes in this thesis, the works of two symbolic anthropologists have been chosen to provide us with models within which to work, rather than

one, because each presents a different perspective on society: Douglas gives us a typology which draws heavily on the historical context, while Turner allows us to see all the drama of the phenomenon, including its spiritual nature. In each case, I will be using models and studies drawn from the anthropologist's later life work, as these seem to fit both my own inclinations toward phenomenology, as well as those inclinations in a number of Third Quest scholars. Accordingly, in the chapter to follow we will examine Jesus' baptism in light of Victor Turner's model of ritual performance; in the immediate chapter we will set the scene for understanding the social context of Israel by looking at Mary Douglas' cultural typology for her study of defilement in the book of Numbers.

### ***Mary Douglas' Model of Israel In the Second Temple Period***

Admittedly, Douglas' study of the Book of Numbers considerably predates our interest in first century Palestine. I don't believe it is irrelevant, however, first because its placement at the beginning of the period of the Second Jerusalem temple (and the end of Babylonian exile) provides an important historical background setting for the phenomena under study, which come at the end of that same period. Briefly, Douglas is looking at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, of the return of the exiles from Babylon and the writing of the early books of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament). This is also the period when we see an exacerbation of the separation of the Judaic Great Tradition of the elites who returned from captivity, and the little tradition of the peasant farmers who remained, continuing their customs and beliefs unadulterated by foreign experiences.

Second, the cultural typology itself is applicable to most cultures and most time periods; it is Douglas' specific use of the typology in interpreting the setting of the book of Numbers which ties it to that time period. We might safely take the typology and Douglas' interpretation, and compare and contrast her findings with those of the latter part of the Second Temple period, without violating the model itself.

The model is a simple typology, which Douglas explains is defined along two dimensions: "one based on the concern with the outside boundary, the other on the articulation of the social structure...[they] enclose a social field of possible stable environments, of which four are usually identified" (Douglas, 1993:44). The typology is a model of social mobilization.

The left hand side of the diagram shows a non-communal cultural bias which is unable to demand altruistic contributions to the collective good from its members; an appeal for mobilization of the community so inclined would have to appeal to individual self interests. "Such an appeal can be very effective in producing wealth, political concentration, and armies" (*Ibid.*, 48).

### Cultural Bias

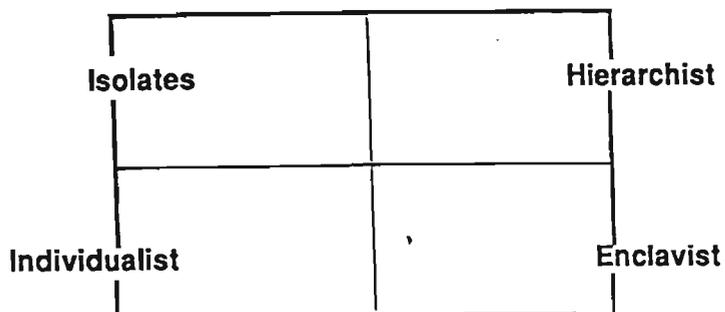


Figure 1  
Douglas' Cultural Typology (Douglas 1993:45)

Douglas claims the culture of the *isolate* is the most interesting; here, the person is so constrained within the structure that has been established by others that they have little or no room for their own choices. They are alone in crowds, "no one needs their advice or offers them any." Some people choose to be isolates, and avoid being drawn into other people's worries or interests. In our modern, western societies there are probably more opportunities for people to live as isolates than at any other time. We will not be concerned in this study with isolates, but will merely take note of their existence as one option in the cultural typology.

*Individualists*, the other culture on the left side of the diagram, are also very distinctive. Group membership is unimportant to this competitive, entrepreneurial culture, and the "individual is expected to negotiate his own status unconstrained by group allegiance or prescriptive rules" (*Ibid.*, 45). Human interactions take the form of expanding personal networks, and in terms of religion, people call upon God in their own name--the religion will be a personal one.

On the right hand side of the diagram we find the cultures that will concern us in this chapter: The *Hierarchical*, and the *Enclave*. These are both collectivist cultures, where community claims have priority over those of individual members; emphasis is on the "good for the many." Norms are self-operating; everyone understands what is acceptable, and what is not. Severe sanctions are undertaken against those violating such a culture's norms and values. Community boundaries are therefore also self-maintaining, for the most part, as members will be quick to accuse anyone stepping out of line. This is particularly true in the hierarchical culture, which is very stable. Here, we find a community with strong boundaries, a well-articulated and self-repeating

social structure with subdivisions, or social stratification. It is a system of positions, whose members make their claims upon God to safeguard those positions within the whole structure.

The heart of *hierarchy*, says Douglas, is a "distinctive pattern of accountability...In early Christian political philosophy the dominant idea was of an encompassing, rationally integrated whole...Hierarchy has its own recognizable and complex project of bringing space, time and all the materials of living within the same pattern that governs the relations between persons, and making that pattern conform to the laws of the cosmos" (*Ibid.*, 64-5).

Douglas uses the term "*enclave*" for the final cultural bias she describes, preferring it over the similar terms "sect" or "faction" because both of these words have modern connotations which alter the meaning for this typology, yet neither fully describes the particular type of culture in question. (It is important, however, that those additional meanings of the term "enclave" not be forgotten.) The enclave is usually a dissenting minority which maintains a strong boundary, but unlike the hierarchy it tends to be egalitarian. There is a weakly articulated social structure, and the religion (being that of a dissident minority) tends to be sectarian in nature. In the enclave, again differing from hierarchy, the source of social pollution is the evil of the outside world.

The question of exclusion is very interesting for development practitioners to understand, as Douglas describes this phenomenon in the three types of relevant cultures:

Each of the three cultures practices its own distinctive power of exclusion, and what each does is abhorrent to the alternative cultures. Our [western] civilization is convinced of the virtues of individualism, and of the evils of hierarchy and sect, while the latter are equally convinced of the opposite. The processes of individualism downgrade the economically unsuccessful, and cannot but create derelicts and beggars. Members of an individualist culture are not aware of their own exclusionary behavior. The condition of the unintentionally excluded, for example beggars sleeping on the streets, shocks visitors from other cultures. Neither hierarchy nor enclave excludes in this unconscious, unintentional way. Hierarchy is essentially based on grading, so it must tolerate the idea of a recognized bottom level and make provision for it. The very explicitness of hierarchical grading shocks the sensibilities of enclavist and individualist alike. Enclavists have reasons to avoid grading their members altogether: their habit is outcasting rather than downgrading: their exclusions all work on the outer boundary, the difference between belonging and not belonging. Their virulent hatred of the outsider is shocking to the other cultures (*Ibid.*, 46-7).

This question of exclusion is usually based on the accusation of defilement, as we have noted above. For both hierarchy and enclave in Douglas' study of Numbers, defilement is used as a reason for exclusion, but for each the cause of defilement is different.

For the enclave, defilement or pollution comes from the evils of the outside world. In a hierarchy, defilement is elaborately differentiated between persons and places; throughout the entire system personal claims are

structured into highly symbolic forms which emphasize the claims of the whole system. Therefore, in the hierarchy personal defilement becomes a collective loss.

We will see a considerable difference between the two cultures, then, in their response to achieving purification. For the egalitarian, loosely-structured enclavists, the emphasis is on the internal personal relation of the individual worshipper to God; the pure heart and its intention. The unique value of individual members is stressed, so discrimination within the group is not permissible. Defilement is therefore more likely to lead to being outcast, than to a ritual performance for correction of the situation. It is the hierarchy that will adapt such strategies as ritual purification, in addition to their manner of structuring society so that even political opposition has its own place, and is allowed for.

Douglas claims that formative Judaism developed not in hierarchy, but in an enclave, and that the characteristics of the enclave culture thread through subsequent cultural changes and modifications. These changes are not unusual, but rather they are the necessary response of any society for its survival. Most communities develop this mixed cultural approach to the problems of organization and maintenance, and "contradictory principles can survive quite well in the same community so long as they are relatively segregated in the community's total space. An enclavist political scene...can tolerate hierarchical families in its midst, so long as the family does not enforce its mode of organizing on politics" (*Ibid.*, 51).

Douglas' analysis of the early Second Temple period, therefore, finds a hierarchical priestly class which included the returning exiles and which was responsible for the manner in which the bible of that period was written. This hierarchy was surrounded by a lay enclavist culture, primarily made up of the peasantry that had been left behind. She does not exclude individualist political figures from her description, but maintains that the hierarchy, being supported by Persian rulers, had a distinct power advantage over the enclavists, even though the traditions of the religion required inclusion of enclavist priorities in their writings.

She therefore interprets the actions and writings of Nehemiah in light of the inevitable question of land; she sees all of his posturing and rationalizations in light of his statements that the land formerly owned by the present returnees and presently occupied and worked by the "people of the land" must be returned to the exiles without compensation to the present owners (pp.235-238). Typical of the hierarchical culture, Nehemiah brings in the whole question of purity and its outward expression in performance; those who do not conform to the new purity laws, including return of the land in a Jubilee as he describes it, will not share in the benefits of the new dispensation.

Given the backing of the Persian empire, as well as the powerful threat of exclusion from the benefits of the new dispensation, it is not surprising that at the end of the Second Temple period in the first century we see a very similar

cultural situation, with the power of the hierarchy and the political individualists (or opportunists) now firmly entrenched, and the enclavist factions within the peasantry truly representative of cultural dissidents.

### ***Israel In sociohistoric context***

First, to look at Palestine generally, we find a complex set of interactions at a number of social and political levels. The entire region was under the imperial control of Rome, governed by Rome's clients and appointees to the region. Following the death of Herod in 4 BCE, rule of the region was divided among his three sons. Galilee and Perea went to Herod Antipas; the northern transJordan districts to Philip; Judea, Samaria, and Idumea to Archelaus. The Jerusalem temple, far from being the spiritual "church" of the Jews as modern Christians imagine it to have been, was the center of Palestinian economic and civic rule, led by priests appointed by the Herodians, and their retainers (much to the distress of the majority peasantry). "The Herodian Judean elite amassed their wealth in the traditional way: they creamed taxes and acquired lands as gifts from the rulers or through foreclosure on debt" (Meeks, 1986:99).

This resulted in a triple taxation system (Roman, Herodian, and Temple) being imposed on the peasant society which formed the greater majority of the population. As in every preindustrial society, the elite class in the urban areas were sustained and fed by the agricultural rural peasantry, and while there did indeed exist an overarching system of symbols and institutions, there was a division of that system into two subcultures: A very hierarchical, urban, structured culture, and the egalitarian, loosely-structured rural world of the peasants (Douglas, 1993). We must not make the mistake of introducing a middle class into Palestinian urban structure, or to believe that this structure invited upward mobility. There was no middle class in preindustrial societies, not even in cities. Artisans and traders, or businessmen, were still members of the lower class and marginal to both the ruling elite and the rural peasantry. Only the ruling elite occupied the upper class strata, and this was an ascribed rather than an acquired status (Lenski, 1984; Sjøberg, 1960).

While the hierarchical elites were primarily descendants of the Babylonian exiles who codified the "Great Tradition" of Judaism, the peasantry had remained in Palestine, working their land, and continuing to practice what Scott (1990) refers to as the "Little Tradition," or popular understanding of the values, rules, stories, rituals and norms of the culture.

Although the rural peasantry of Palestine were very traditional, the cities were very cosmopolitan due to the Mediterranean region's great capacity for sea and land travel and trade; nevertheless, the cities were dependent on the production of rural agriculture and the rents of land produced thereby. Military conquest had also had its effect: Persian arts, music, and culture had certainly imposed their influence on Jerusalem elites, and the experience of exile profoundly influenced the "Great Tradition" in the Second Temple era.

Roman militarism, as well as culture, was certainly effecting social change throughout Palestine in the first century. The influence of the "Golden Age" of Greece had not failed to affect urban Palestine (Horsley and Hanson, 1985:12-13), and Greek was the *lingua franca* in urban settings rather than Hebrew, or the rural Aramaic as spoken in Galilee. While powerful elites were able to coexist with Roman rule to their own benefit, the peasantry suffered oppression under both. This oppression was extremely debilitating to the physical lives and psychological personhood of the peasantry, whose reactions ranged from typically enclavist sects and millenarian movements, to social banditry.

Galilee itself was a special case in Palestine at this time, with its own special history different from that of Judaea in the south, and each province had its own special relationship to Jerusalem. It is in Galilee particularly, the area of the former Northern Kingdom, that we see evidence of the pre-exilic tradition, now become the "little" tradition, and a strong focus on the liberative traditions of Moses and Elijah.

Galileans therefore tended to be more flexible in their interpretation of scriptural tradition than were the Judean and Jerusalem elite descendants of Babylonian exile, who expanded and codified the purity laws. Their distance from Jerusalem allowed the Galilean peasants a certain amount of independence, as administration was largely a matter of collection of taxes in the triple system described above.

The actual government of the area was still carried out in the traditional manner, by village and town elders and heads of families. "This meant that local initiative was possible in a way it may not have been in Jerusalem and Judaea" (Draper, 1993). Nevertheless, the Galilean peasants were not free to assemble at will, act at will, or speak their minds as they might wish. "Their activity, movements and language [were] patrolled by the ruling elite, for whom not only acts which challenge the system are a threat, but even appearances are important in the maintenance of control" (Draper, 1995).

This system of power and control is central to understanding any peasant society, and particularly that of first century Galilee, where we thus must place the peasant Jesus in a context of contested power relations. The life of Jesus is therefore framed by "the extensive peasant insurrections of 4 BCE and the massive Jewish revolt of 66-70...The aspects of the 'colonial situation' of Roman imperial rule in Jewish Palestine that most concerned the people were the fact and rate of taxation and their relative freedom from outside interference in pursuing their traditional socio-religious way of life" (Meeks, 1987:35). This was more than a question of national or group freedom; it was, in addition, a question of purification as understood by the enclavist tradition of the society.

## ***Introducing Jesus***

Although we lack specific biographical details, there is still quite a lot that we can say in answer to the question, "Who was Jesus?" The Gospels, of course, refer to him as a carpenter from Nazareth, for example. This information alone allows us to infer that Jesus was a marginalized member of Palestinian society. Carpenters were not the skilled professionals we think of today. They were members of the lower class, usually landless, and they held no elevated position, being even marginal to the society of the peasantry.

We know that Jesus was a Galilean, from the small town of Nazareth, and therefore more likely to be a part of the rural peasantry than an urban artisan. This much is confirmed by the records of the stories and examples he uses, all of which have rural and agricultural settings; also, his words have often been left in their original (rural) Aramaic even in the Greek transcriptions of his teachings in the Gospels; others make more sense when translated back into the closest approximation of Aramaic.

As a Galilean rural peasant, Jesus would have been a part of the egalitarian foundational enclave culture of Judaism that tended to consider God a friend at some times, and a punishing ruler at others. He would have believed in a personal God, who had chosen Israel as his people (Douglas, 1993).

He would have believed that a spirit world coexisted with the everyday world of Palestine, and as a Jew he would believe that individuals must choose to bring the spirit world of Yahweh into their paramount reality through the exercise of covenantal justice. He would have suffered with the peasants of Galilee in their triple oppression of tax burdens, and with all of Israel in the daily oppression of Roman imperial rule and the presence in Israel of Roman military legions.

Jesus very likely participated in the traditions and practices of Galilean Judaism, learning the hymns and prayers, and the stories of how the world was created, about Joseph, Moses and the Exodus, about the Wilderness and the Promised Land, etc. He would have celebrated the festivals, including those pilgrimage feast days meant to be spent in Jerusalem.

There is considerable debate concerning the possibility that Jesus may have been illiterate. On the other hand, he could very likely have attended a synagogue school in Nazareth, learning the basic skills of reading and possibly writing.

At some point, as a young adult, he would have somehow begun a religious quest which resulted in his baptism by John. It is this Jesus, the marginal Jewish peasant, who led a small group of disciples in a public ministry which lasted, probably, between one and three years. He was crucified for his efforts, and some therefore classify his efforts as a failure.

A simple description of the Jesus movement, and its leader, is not necessarily much different from that of similar prophets and their followers, including their similar fates, in that same region and time period; yet Jesus became the founder of one of the world's great religions--a religion that some say endures despite the activities and beliefs of its followers.

What was Jesus really trying to accomplish in his ministry? What manner of man was he? These are the questions that both fascinate and inspire the Third Quest scholars who provide the images of Jesus we will be observing in the pages to follow.

In Chapter Four we will examine the phenomenon of Jesus' baptism, locating it at the beginning of his ministry to the people of Israel. Most scholars do begin the quest for the historical Jesus at this point, because of the questionable nature of the infancy narratives, and the lack of information from the so-called "hidden years."

Our reason for beginning at this point, however, is twofold: first, it is from the time of Jesus' baptism that we have information regarding his leadership. Second, we begin at this point not simply because it marks a chronological beginning, but because, as we will argue, it may have actually been a significant transitional point in the life of the carpenter from Nazareth.

## 4

*JOHN THE BAPTIST AND THE BAPTISM OF JESUS  
AS RITUAL PERFORMANCE*

In the previous chapter, we explored what is a likely social environment for the ministry of Jesus. We can know more about who Jesus was through what he did and said, as reflected in the Gospels (and to a lesser extent in other literature), as well as from looking at the sociopolitical activities and effects of the Jesus Movement itself. We can also learn something about the kind of person he was by looking at the decisions that he made (Nolan, 1976:11). One of those decisions was to be baptized by John.

In this chapter, it would perhaps be useful to place our information of Jesus' baptism into one coherent anthropological model of ritual, the model from the work of Victor Turner. It will be my argument that Turner's definition of *liminality* and *communitas*, particularly as they apply to structure and anti-structure in society, are central to understanding the baptism of Jesus as well as his transformed role as a result of that baptism. We will then review relevant aspects of the works of McLann and van Eck on this subject, as each of them has used Turner's model of ritual as part of their own explanation and conclusions regarding the role of Jesus' baptism with respect to his ministry. Returning to Turner, then, I will highlight additional factors in his writings which I believe to have been neglected by McLann and van Eck, and which may make a great deal of difference to their conclusions.

Finally, in my own reconstruction of John's baptism in general, and the specific baptism of Jesus, I conclude that John's baptismal practice was not, in fact, a rite of passage as implied by McLann and van Eck, and that the baptism of John comes closer to fitting Turner's category of pilgrimage ritual, if it is indeed ritual performance at all (by Turner's definition). The unique nature of Jesus' visions at the time of his baptism and during the wilderness experience suggest cross-cultural prerequisites for initiation into the life of a traditional healer/diviner, and this fact will be briefly explored in light of some of the Third Quest material.

### ***Turner and Ritual***

Anthropologist Victor Turner describes ritual as "the performance of a complex sequence of symbolic acts. Ritual is a transformative performance revealing major classifications, categories, and contradictions of cultural processes" (Turner, 1987:75). It is social drama. He contrasts ritual with

ceremony, stating that “by definition, ritual is associated with social *transitions* while *ceremony* is linked with social *states*” (*Ibid.*, 158). The symbols of ritual are “not only a set of cognitive classifications for ordering the...universe. They are also, and perhaps as importantly, a set of evocative devices for rousing, channeling, and domesticating powerful emotions, such as hate, fear, affection, and grief. They are also informed with purposiveness, and have a ‘conative’ aspect. In brief, the whole person, not just the...‘mind,’ is existentially involved in the life or death issues with which [ritual] is concerned.”

The symbols are neither arbitrary nor incongruous. “Every symbolic item is related to some empirical item of experience” (1969:42-3). Thus the symbolic world of ritual is unique for every cultural group, and Turner insists that any analysis of ritual and its symbols be defined in terms of the specific culture and its self-definitions.

A common error made by those using the ritual model is to attribute the identification of the basic elements of the ritual process to Turner, and to limit themselves to interpretation of various ritual phenomena via a somewhat superficial analysis that utilizes those basic elements, along with some description of the relevant symbols. In this way, they are using the structure first identified by van Gennep (1909); all too frequently, they fail to go beyond identification of the phases of separation, limen, and aggregation to work within Turner’s unique contributions to our understanding of ritual process. Turner summarizes van Gennep’s phases of the rituals, described as rites of passage, as follows:

Van Gennep has shown that all rites of passage or “transition” are marked by three phases: separation, margin (or *limen*, signifying “threshold” in Latin), and aggregation. The first phase (of separation) comprises symbolic behavior signifying the detachment of the individual or group either from an earlier fixed point in the social structure, from a set of cultural conditions (a “state”), or from both. During the intervening “liminal” period, the characteristics of the ritual subject (the “passenger”) are ambiguous; he passes through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state. In the third phase (reaggregation or reincorporation), the passage is consummated. The ritual subject, individual or corporate, is in a relatively stable state once more and, by virtue of this, has rights and obligations vis-a-vis others of a clearly defined and “structural” type: he is expected to behave in accordance with certain customary norms and ethical standards binding on incumbents of social position in a system of such positions (Turner, 1969:94-5).

Turner’s experiences of living in traditional communities and participating in their rites of passage, while at the same time analyzing those phenomena using van Gennep’s descriptive phases, adds a depth and richness that cannot be duplicated by anyone using the same material to analyze descriptions of rituals in which they have not participated. Turner describes his own dissatisfaction with an attempt to use comparative material out of context: “This method did not enable me to handle the complexity, asymmetry, and antinomy that characterize real social processes, of which ritual performance may be said to constitute phases or stages. I found that ritual

action tended thereby to be reduced to a mere species of social action" (1975:186).

He is especially wary of descriptions of liminality and *communitas* by authors using cross-cultural material out of context, when they have never encountered the communities involved in the descriptions. This, of course, does not hinder him from using historical description, and even scripture, as part of his own work (1975, 1978, 1987); nonetheless, he makes every effort to contextualize the material and to base his comparative analysis on the results of his own experiences.

It is precisely the concepts of liminality and *communitas* where Turner believes both experience and context to be prerequisites for real understanding. The liminal, or "threshold," stage of ritual is a dangerous place. Here, things are often not as they seem; one cannot remain unchanged having entered this state. Indeed, it is in the liminal state that one encounters an awareness, if not the actual presence, of the supernatural. Those who approach this "threshold" of the supernatural are by definition "threshold" people. They are ambiguous for that period of liminal time; they are undefined, neither one thing nor another. "Liminality is frequently likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, to darkness, to bisexuality, to the wilderness, and to an eclipse of the sun or moon" (1969:95).

It is the humbling egalitarianism and the shared experience of the initiates or participants in the liminal state that creates what Turner labels *communitas*, a state that he distinguishes from communalism, and from solidarity in the Durkeimian sense (1969:132). *Communitas* is likened to Martin Buber's *I and Thou* (Buber, 1958), where human beings confront each other directly and totally, as equal subjects and not as objects. Along with such open and vulnerable confrontation, Turner explains, there arises a model of society where humans would consistently live in such unstructured, homogeneous spontaneity. *Communitas* cannot be sustained, however, and like charisma must soon be routinized into "norm-governed relationships between social personae" (1969:132).

Turner further identifies three kinds of *communitas*: (1) *existential*, or spontaneous, as described above; (2) *normative*, where the need for mobilization of resources and social control "routinizes" existential *communitas*; and (3) *ideological communitas* which relates to utopian models of society based on existential *communitas*. Both normative and ideological *communitas* are already within a structural system, the latter being a particular attempt to outwardly define the inward experience of existential *communitas*.

One might say that the liminal--or "liminoid"<sup>8</sup> in complex societies (Turner, 1987)--experience of *communitas*, as a primordial expression of what it means to be fundamentally human, meets the threshold of the supernatural, with its potential for transformation. Such a moment is intense, it is thick with meaning and potential, it is magical and therefore dangerous. Threshold people, therefore, are themselves dangerous and pollutant; they constitute a threat to the status quo.

As noted by Crossan (1991) and Douglas (1993), the definition of magic may be correlated with or may oppose the definition of religion, depending upon one's perspective. Therefore, we should not be surprised that ritual elders are often the religious leaders and/or the traditional healers or shamans of the community. Turner locates some cultural manifestations of *communitas* linked to religion in symbols and systems other than ritual liminality, such as the environment which provokes the genesis of religious movements. He states such movements "arise in times of radical social transition, when society itself seems to be moving from one fixed state to another, whether the *terminus ad quem* is believed to be on earth or in heaven" (1969:133).

Specifically, he refers to millenarian movements that arise among marginalized populations, particularly where "formerly tribal societies are brought under the alien lordship" of more complex societies (1969:111). He points out that these movements exhibit many of the attributes of liminal *communitas*, such as minimization of sex and status distinctions, unselfishness, suspension of kinship rights and obligations, simplicity of speech and manners, acceptance of pain and suffering, and holding all things (property, wealth) in common (*Ibid.*). Turner explains that such societies are in transition, and believes that this may be the reason so much of the millenarian symbolism and mythology is borrowed from traditional rites of passage. The similarity of Turner's observations to the conditions prevailing in Galilee in the first century is inescapable.

Similarly, persons who are marginalized and/or members of the lower strata of society sometimes may become liminal people, such as prophets and healers, symbolizing the evolutionary "life-force" values of *communitas* (1969:128). As Meier and others have noted, the Jesus of history certainly was a

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<sup>8</sup> Turner's definition of "liminoid," as shown in his model of the movement from "liminal" in traditional societies to "liminoid" in complex societies (1987:9) is consistent with Peter Berger's concept of "multiple realities:" "The capacity to move from what Schutz calls the 'paramount reality' of everyday life in other spheres of meaning may be assumed to be anthropologically given. What happens under modern conditions, however, is that this given capacity is vastly intensified. Plurality becomes a basic theme of life. With this pluralization, the creation of any overarching symbolic universe becomes increasingly more difficult (Berger, et al, 1973:112). While Turner describes theater and performance as one expression of the liminoid (1987), Berger, in discussion and lectures on the Sociology of Knowledge and Religion, also uses the example of attending theater or a movie to describe the difference between paramount reality (everyday life) and an alternative reality (that of the movie or play, including the separation of the theater itself from the world of everyday existence.

marginalized member of the lower strata of society, and he indeed became a prophet and healer. It is our contention here that he also became a liminal, or threshold, person. Turner goes on to say that even small or marginalized nations may become liminal representatives and upholders of religious and moral values, such as the Hebrews of the ancient Near East (1969:109), who provide the context of this paper.

Further discussion of Turner's lifelong discoveries concerning the importance of ritual and *communitas* can be brought into the discussion as the need arises, as we now turn to the specific studies on the baptism of Jesus, each of which claim to have based their conclusions, to some extent, on Victor Turner's work.

### ***Ritual of Baptism In McVann***

In "Baptism, Miracles, and Boundary Jumping in Mark" (1991a), McVann has two themes: Mark as a document, and the intended audience of Mark. He concludes that Mark is an initiation book, intended for people (*baptizandi*) about to be inducted into Mark's community. Identifying the baptism of Jesus as a status transformation ritual, he then structures the entire book of Mark around activities that are interpreted through the moments of separation, liminality-*communitas*, and aggregation. The miracle stories, based on situations involving the sea in some manner, are therefore "baptismal" in their nature and intent.

McVann draws more on Wedderburn (1987) in this paper than on the work of Turner (though Turner is cited), which allows him to conclude that those who receive baptism "repudiate their previous allegiances and the status quo, and thus make themselves marginal, indeed, expendable" (McVann, 1991a:151). This marginality is described as the result of the ritual, rather than the condition of liminality to be found within the ritual as explained by Turner. Therefore, McVann concludes that the baptism of Jesus resulted, following aggregation, in his becoming a marginal, expendable person; this, he explains, is the model of Christian baptism (*Ibid.*, 152).

In "Rituals of Status Transformation in Luke-Acts" (1991b), McVann uses Turner's terminology much more extensively. He then identifies Jesus, as well as John the Baptist, as Prophets. Looking at Luke rather than Mark, McVann sees John as the model of prophet (as well as ritual elder in baptism) for Jesus, who then becomes the model of the prophetic role for the apostles. Although John preaches repentance for sin to the multitudes who come to him for baptism, he does not have the same relationship to Jesus. John is only ritual elder in baptism for the multitude, effecting their transformation from sinners to righteous. Jesus is excluded from the sinning multitudes, as John acts as ritual elder for Jesus' initiation into the role of prophet, following the model of Moses. Jesus is therefore not simply "another person undergoing a purification rite" (1991b:344-45).

In considering the manner in which Jesus experienced liminality-communitas, McVann claims that Jesus' status is unclear, i.e. liminal, upon his arrival for baptism: his liminal, or low status is reflected in his role as disciple of John. McVann assumes that Jesus experiences communitas with John and with other initiates for baptism (*Ibid.*, 351). Jesus also experiences liminality-communitas in his Wilderness experience of temptation by the devil. Specifically, McVann claims that communitas is experienced in Jesus' response to the tests in his unreserved and total faithfulness to God., which constitutes his solidarity with God, Moses, Elijah, and John the Baptist (*Ibid.*, 352-53). The Wilderness experience is the narrative defense of the legitimacy of Jesus' new role as prophet. The meaning of holiness, faithfulness, and singleheartedness were taught to him by John the Baptist (*Ibid.*, 357).

Jesus was never aggregated back into Jewish society, because his role as prophet made him a "limit breaker," or boundary jumper. He remained always in a liminal state (*Ibid.*, 358). McVann concludes that "ritual analysis sharpens...general insight by attending to the change of status that Jesus achieved at the Jordan and in the wilderness" (*Ibid.*, 359).

From McVann, then, we have descriptions of the ritual Baptism of Jesus that include descriptions of liminality and communitas which do not correlate entirely with Turner's definitions and explanations, and which include some uncorroborated assumptions about the context of relationships. Because McVann makes no effort to help us understand the cultural/social setting of Jesus baptism, the reader finds precisely what Turner fears: What should be a description of complex interaction of social symbols and entities becomes merely a socio-literary device for restructuring the given material.

Further, McVann does not faithfully reproduce Turner's understanding of communitas, and has Jesus enjoying this very human, social phenomenon with God and with those who have long since died. Finally, we also have two potentially conflicting definitions of the roles from which, and into which, Jesus was transformed, that, combined, identify his new role as that of a "marginal, expendable, but legitimate Prophet, like Moses."

Ernest van Eck is somewhat more consistent with Turner's descriptions of liminality and communitas, and offers his own conclusions regarding Jesus' new role.

### ***Ritual of Baptism In van Eck***

In his introduction, van Eck outlines the information that almost all scholars of Jesus' baptism are agreed on the following points: (1) The baptism is the beginning of Jesus' ministry; (2) At the baptism Jesus becomes the Son of God; (3) At the baptism Jesus is equipped for his ministry as the Son of God; and (4) Jesus is the "bringer of the eschatological expected salvation" (van Eck, 1995:1-2). Van Eck's stated purpose is to show that Jesus' baptism can be understood as a rite of status transformation (status reversal), in which Jesus

becomes Broker to the Patron God, for the Patron's clients "including the so-called expendables of society" (*Ibid.*, 2).

Van Eck's resources include Wedderburn, McLann, Bruce Malina, John Dominic Crossan, Victor Turner, and Marcus Borg. His anthropological models for the proof of his hypothesis are a mixture of ritual/ceremony models from Wedderburn, McLann, Malina and Turner, and the patron-client model of God's relationship with Israel primarily identified by Malina and picked up by Crossan. At the end of the paper, van Eck claims to have proven the case for the opening points regarding most Markan scholars' understanding of Jesus' baptism, and made them more explicit. "Jesus is the Son of God, in that he is the new broker of God, the Patron. Also, Jesus' baptism...inaugurates the eschatological end-time, the present and available inclusive kingdom of God" (*Ibid.*, 20). Taking up Borg on the noetic, knowing, spirit nature of Jesus, he ends his paper by asking "Could Jesus' baptism, therefore, be understood as a momentary seeing into another layer of reality, an experience that sparked...his unconventional ministry as social prophet and subversive sage?" (*Ibid.*, 21). Van Eck is not certain.

Van Eck's articulation of the phases of ritual is set within a cultural description of Palestinian society that has been gleaned from some of the Third Quest scholarship. To some extent, it is therefore a richer and more complex social analysis of Jesus' baptism than that of McLann. One must wonder how he could then conclude that the question of Jesus' (liminal) experience of multiple reality remains problematic. I would suggest that his eclectic use of portions of several anthropological models is partially responsible for this lack of clarity, and further, that the use of the patron-client model itself is not only inappropriate for the context, but has moved him even farther away from understanding the spiritual nature of ritual in traditional cultures. We will look further at this model in Chapter Five.

"One has to consider religious phenomena in terms of religious ideas and doctrines, not only, or principally, in terms of disciplines that have arisen in connection with the study of secular institutions and processes...Religious symbolism...gives us actual clues to the nature of realities we cannot perceive by means of the senses alone. *It is not a question of setting the intellect to work at reducing the religious symbol to sensory terms*" (Turner 1975:195, *emphasis mine*). The symbols of which Turner speaks, of course, would in this instance be those of Judaism in the first century, and not western theology in the near 21st. We may now return to the overview of first century Palestine, in order to locate one John the Baptizer.

### ***John the Baptizer***

According to Horsley and Hanson, until the period of the monarchy in Israel, prophets had functions within the society which involved political-military *leadership*, and *message*; the latter included prophecy (the word from

Yahweh), as well as communicating Yahweh's redemptive action of protecting Israel against foreign invasion and domination (Horsley & Hanson, 1985:138-40). With the institution of monarchy, these functions were split: The king became the political-military leader and the prophet was the messenger. Scholarship has tended to maintain that following the Babylonian conquest of Israel, the line of prophets ended. There is considerable evidence, however, that the prophet tradition continued, with an emphasis on liberation, and on redemption. There are records of a line of such prophets arising from the peasantry, and described as rustics, clad in hairy mantles (*Ibid.*, 147-48).

In the first century, prophets fulfilled one of two potential functions in society, depending upon whether they were isolates, or leaders of popular movements (Webb, 1991:342). For the latter, the "memory of ancient prophetic movements of liberation informed new prophetic movements, and traditional oracular prophecy was revived among the people" (*Ibid.*, 160). These prophets, being filled with the Spirit, thought that they were helping to bring about the transformation of the society of Israel; that in the transformed society there would be justice under the rulership of God (*Ibid.*, 161).

...they faced opposition and suffered death at the hands of the Romans, and were sometimes opposed by the Jerusalem aristocracy as well...the entire orientation of the strategy and ideology of these prophetic movements indicates that their primary goal was deliverance. The large response by the people to these prophets indicates the widespread sense of oppression and dissatisfaction among the peasantry, thus leading to felt needs for deliverance...[Another] common element among these prophetic movements is that their basic tactic for achieving deliverance was to gather their groups together and lead them in a symbolic event at which point they evidently believed God would intervene to perform the expected deliverance...the symbolic events employed important images and themes from the past history of the people (*Ibid.*, 342-43).

John the Baptizer is just such a prophet. He appears, hairy mantle and all, in the wilderness--the "symbolic place of purification and renewal." The imagery used in his warning that eschatological judgment was at hand is that of the agricultural peasantry. Judgment "is now not only inevitable, but imminent, because Israel has not been faithful" to keep covenantal justice. Repentance, and baptism in the Jordan (also powerfully symbolic) were the means by which the people could survive God's judgment, provided that repentance bore the fruits of socioeconomic justice (*Ibid.*, 177-78). Given the symbolism of "Jordan" and "Wilderness," one has a sense of Passover connotations in John's whole ministry: If the baptism is performed (i.e. the blood is on the doorpost), then the people (the house) will be spared from God's judgment (the Angel of Death).

Although John obviously had disciples and followers, there is little evidence that he actually intended to found either a sect or a mass movement, however. According to Gospel writers he was only a messenger to prepare the way for Jesus (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:2-4; Luke 3:16-17; John 3:28-32). He was completely within the tradition of a line of messenger-prophets in Israel,

arising from the peasantry, and relevant to the social situation in which they lived.

### ***The Nature of John's Baptism***

Was John's baptism intended as an act of conversion with forgiveness of sins, or was it simply an alternative to the temple purity rites? We cannot bypass this question if we are to attempt to define the kind of ritual performance that may, or may not, be representative of Jesus' baptism. According to Webb, the interpretation of John's baptism as recorded by Josephus in *Ant.* 18.116-119 claims "John's baptism is acceptable to God when used 'not for seeking pardon of certain sins but for purification of the body...[because] the soul had already been cleansed before by righteousness'...[This probably refers back] to an earlier description of John's demand to practice virtue, justice, and piety" (Webb, 1991:35). Webb accepts this text and its implications as being a reliable source (*Ibid.*, 167-68).

There would appear to be some difference in understanding the nature of John's baptism between the interpretation of Josephus and the recorded accounts of the Gospel writers. Matthew says "Confessing their sins, they were baptized" (Mt. 3:6, NIV<sup>9</sup>), and John is reported to say "I baptize you with water for repentance" (Mt. 3:11, NIV). Mark, a probable earlier source, says "And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mk. 1:4 NIV). In Luke we read that John preached a "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Luke 3:3 NIV). If we accept the Markan material as an original, or at least earlier, source we see that Matthew and Luke have utilized the same material; we have one tradition here, and not three.

Interestingly the fourth gospel does not specify the nature of John's baptism. There is, on the other hand, a story about a debate that arose between some of John's disciples and some other(s) Jew(s) because Jesus' disciples were baptizing. According to John, this argument concerned "the matter of ceremonial washing" (John 3:22-36 NIV). So while the synoptic writers appear to interpret John's baptism in light of later Christian tradition, the author of John's gospel infers the more traditional understanding of the baptism as a purification ceremony. Given this tension between the interpretations, we need to dig a bit more into the historical understanding of purification rites and baptism as practiced in the first century.

Long before the first century, converts to Judaism were required to baptize themselves as a sign of entering the covenant. Some of the later prophets envisaged that Jewish exiles returning home would cross the Jordan and be baptized with its water, cleansing them from their sins prior to the establishment of the kingdom of God (Ezekiel 36:25). In the early Christian church, baptism was often called illumination and came to be regarded as the

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<sup>9</sup> New International Version of the Bible.

renunciation of the world, the flesh, and the devil, as well as initiation into the community of the New Covenant. The rite was gradually embellished; the Didache describes a very simple service, but by the third century this had become very elaborate. The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus describes a preparatory fast and vigil, confession of sins, renunciation of the devil, washing with water followed by laying on of hands and/or anointing with the Oil of Thanksgiving. Following this, initiates dress and return to the main assembly where they are confirmed by the bishop and may now pray with the faithful, receiving the kiss of peace. There is a celebration of the Eucharist with bread and wine, and milk and honey (Yarnold 1971:265-70). The stages of ritual and the meaningful symbols are very clearly defined in this later ceremony, but we do not have this clarity with regard to the baptism performed by John.

Robert Webb offers a study of ablutions in Jewish literature, including the Qumran scrolls, to arrive at some conclusions concerning the most probable mode of administration of John's baptism. "First of all," he claims, "there are two agents by which a person is made unclean: physical contagion and moral contagion. This does not, however, imply two types of uncleanness...Secondly, there are two primary agents which make a person clean: water...and blood [sacrifice]. In some cases, sacrifice has the supplemental role of providing atonement" (Webb 1991:97).

When eschatological cleansing is expected, as in the case of John's ministry, the use of the ablution language was historically metaphorical and only Yahweh performed the ablution. "The cleansing may involve causing certain sins to cease, but the emphasis is the removal of the defilement caused by the sin" (*Ibid.*, 104-5). We must keep in mind here that Old Testament Jews made no distinction between body and soul; it was the person, in his or her entirety, that was cleansed. The Hellenized dualistic separation of body and soul appears later, in both Christian literature and in Josephus, where we see the cleansing of the soul by Yahweh as a separate act.

Webb concludes that during this later period, the ablutory practices of the Jews remained consistent with those of the Old Testament literature, with some extended practices referring to handwashing prior to prayer and eating, for example. Some groups, like the Essenes, took up regular or daily ritual bathing, sometimes more than once a day, as a means of purification. However, Webb cannot rule out the evidence of repentance baptism from the synoptic gospels. Some texts, many with uncertain dating, indicate that in certain groups baptism (or immersion), possibly during the era of John and Jesus, may have been associated with repentance and the forgiveness of sin, as well as conversion. Immersion in rivers, including the Jordan, is common with such groups.

...the primary function of the ablutions in the Second Temple period is the same as that in the OT: *restoration* from a state of uncleanness to a state of cleanness. However, their function appears to have expanded...the function of immersions in particular appears to be also expanding as an expression of repentance and conversion, and perhaps in symbolizing cleansing from sin. In this sense, the

metaphorical use of ablution language in the OT to express cleansing from sin is being linked to the actual use of ablutions as cleansing from [defilement, or] uncleanness (*Ibid.*, 132).

So far, we have not been able to show conclusively that John's baptism was only an alternative purification rite. On the other hand, we cannot say with complete certainty that it was the forerunner to Christian repentance and conversion that the synoptic writers suggest, either. Elements of John's baptism do appear to be distinctively unique compared to the most commonly practiced immersions of his day, however.

### ***Elements of John's Baptism***

John baptized in the Jordan, probably on the eastern side, in Perea, where he was arrested and executed by Antipas because of his public criticism of that ruler. People from Jerusalem and Judea who came to John to be baptized, therefore, had to go through the wilderness, cross the Jordan, and then re-cross the Jordan in order to return.

As we have already implied, the evidence suggests that the baptism experienced by these people was by immersion. The sources use the Greek word *baptizo*, which was not commonly used to describe a ritual ablution, or cleansing. It was unusual, in that the baptism was performed by a person other than the one undergoing the process; it was performed by John himself, or possibly by one of his disciples. Webb suggests that since the cleansing was not self-administered, it was something people could not do for themselves, and probably pointed to some symbolic significance of the nature of John's specific baptism.

Webb also points out evidence implying the significance of river baptism. "In the OT, 'living' water was required, in cases of the most severe uncleanness...Second Temple literature did not find many explicit references to running water, especially rivers, but there were three (*T. Levi* 2.382; *Sib. Or.* 4.165-67; and *Apoc. Mos.* 29.11-13), and in all three cases they were associated with repentance and confession as well as a desire for forgiveness" (Webb, 1991:181). In addition, the phrase *baptisma metanoias* in Mark 1:4 is usually interpreted as referring to baptism that expresses repentance.

The confession of sins which accompanied the baptismal act formed part of this expression of repentance. For John baptism was not an option: the expression of repentance required baptism, and the efficacy of the baptism required repentance. These two are inextricably linked (*Ibid.*, 189).

Finally, this baptism as repentance, implying forgiveness of the confessed sin, indicated that the usual means of receiving this forgiveness as offered by the temple was no longer valid. John's baptism was clearly a protest against the temple establishment and their perceived abuses. It was intended at least as a means of unifying a repentant and cleansed remnant community of

the true Israel.

### ***Jesus and His Baptism***

We do not know for certain the length of time that John and Jesus were associated in any way, nor do we know the depth and strength of that relationship. If it is true that they were cousins, then it is very likely that they knew each other well. It does not necessarily follow that Jesus was a long-term or devoted disciple of John, or that he learned everything about being a prophet, and the meaning of holiness, faithfulness, and singleheartedness from John, as claimed by McJann.

Scholars are agreed on only two elements of the baptism by John of Jesus as being historical descriptions: the baptism itself, and the vision experienced by Jesus when he came out of the water. We do know that Jesus heard the message of John concerning the immanent destruction of Israel, and the need for repentance and baptism. This call would have registered in the heart of the peasant, Jesus, who daily experienced the chaos and pain of the social environment of Israel: who, like other peasants, resented both the existence of a Roman/Herodian-appointed priestly hierarchy in the Jerusalem temple, as well as their rigidly structured purity laws.

Contrary to McJann, we also do know the status of Jesus as he came forward as initiate for baptism: He was a Jewish rural peasant carpenter. He was already a person of marginal status in the society, and therefore, contrary to both McJann and van Eck, his baptism did not render him a marginal person as a status change. At the very least, it changed his state from that of being impure, as part of Israel's impurity, to that of being purified. At most, he may have completed a ritual status transformation to that of prophet, through his experience of baptism and his wilderness solitude.

### ***Was Jesus' Baptism Ritual Performance?***

When analyzing ritual, we have already noted Turner's insistence that the ritual be interpreted through the symbols and meaning given to the ritual by that specific culture, as well as by cross-cultural models. From the description of John's baptism in general and his baptism of Jesus in particular, we have practically no concrete evidence of the process itself, but only of its outcome as far as Jesus is concerned.

There is also no evidence that the baptism performed by John was a rite of passage, which, by definition, is a "once-for-all-time" status transformation ritual entered into at specific life transition, by specific initiates, because it is required by their culture that they do so. "Rituals reveal values at their deepest level...men express in ritual what moves them most, and since the form of expression is *conventionalized and obligatory*, it is the values of the group that are revealed" (Turner 1969:6 *emphasis mine*). The baptism of John was not obligatory. It had to be voluntary; the ethos of the enclave

culture of the peasantry required this voluntary choice for God at this time, as did John's requirement for repentance.

According to Turner, rituals entered into voluntarily are, at best, *liminoid* or quasi-liminal situations (Turner 1987:393). The intensity of liminal and *communitas* experiences would therefore be less than in an obligatory, tradition-bound, complex ritual. He specifically mentions pilgrimage in this context, stating that it was "one of the first forms of symbolic religious action to assign an important role to voluntary action." The earliest pilgrimages *may* have involved a more intense liminality and/or *communitas* than those that became institutionalized at a later period, but not necessarily. One of the first examples of pilgrimage cited by Turner is that of the Jews traveling to Jerusalem for various celebrations.

The key concept in pilgrimage ritual is penitence, and so we might, with some degree of confidence, identify baptism as performed by John in the wilderness specifically as pilgrimage ritual. We can only do this with reservations, however, because the details of the ritual process itself are not available to us. Also, there are other potential explanations.

All ritual is to some degree transformational, by Turner's definition; he distinguishes these from ceremony, which has to do with a state of being. Turner's definition of ceremony thus differs from the model used by McVann (McVann 1991:334-35) and subsequently assumed by van Eck. This difference substantially alters the manner in which we interpret ritual, if we are to consistently use Turner's model. Most of the evidence for the role of baptism in Israel comes from our understanding of purification rites, which show that it is a potentially repeatable process signifying the change from a state of impurity to the state of purity.

Although some "ritualizing"<sup>10</sup> was undoubtedly part of the process, there is no indication that one's social and personal position was changed by Jewish purity rites, which were universally applicable to Jews at every stage of adult life. There is, on the other hand, some indication that some form of baptism may have at times been a means of initiating people into sects; however, we have no evidence that the followers of John constituted a sect. This would imply that the baptism was not an initiation, but possibly a purification rite. Nonetheless we have, with reservations, ruled out John's baptism as a purification ablution but retained the possibility that John's baptism was a specific alternative to the purification processes controlled by the (corrupt) priests of the temple.

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<sup>10</sup> All humans and animals ritualize aspects of behavior. Ritualizing is the patterning of behavior into repeatable constructs of activity, resulting in the feeling that something has thereby been properly accomplished (such as the way one makes a bed, or sets the table, or organizes the desk for work). This patterning of behavior does not reflect the phases of true ritual.

If John's baptism was indeed ritual, then, as opposed to purification ceremony, the most likely type of ritual would be within Turner's pilgrimage category. The lack of detail about the content of the process and symbols of the potential ritual makes other possibilities less likely, but we can consider at least one such alternative possibility, that of affliction ritual, which is undertaken for a person or persons in crisis.

Affliction situations would undoubtedly apply to many individuals and families who may have sought John's baptism. We do know that Israel itself was afflicted by the oppression of foreign rule from without, and covenantally corrupt leadership from within. Given the cultural standards of the people of the "little tradition," that is, the peasants, each person being baptized in an affliction ritual would be acting not just for themselves, but for the whole of Israel (or at least, the whole of the purified remnant).

Turner's description of affliction ritual includes three main phases: (1) performance of a ritual of penitence; (2) a period of partial seclusion which might include interdictions on certain foods; and (3) a complex and elaborate reaggregation ceremony (Turner 1975:249). While we can make some comparison with John's baptism and phase one, we can only surmise the potential for phase two. We have absolutely nothing to confirm any reaggregation phase, though many scholars (including McLann) imply that at this point the people enjoyed John's preaching and instruction, and/or a celebratory feast. Although this is impossible to prove, it is not unreasonable and the possibility allows us to continue this exploration.

What is interesting about affliction ritual is that in some societies a person may become a diviner or religious leader by satisfactorily completing specific requirements in either the first phase, or the first two phases, of this ritual. The third phase is then quite different, and specific to the role of the new "holy man." So it is possible that elements occurring in the penitence phase of either a pilgrimage or affliction ritual could qualify an initiate for further and more specific rituals of status transformation resulting in a new and legitimate status of religious leadership.

We see from the record that indeed, a second phase of seclusion was executed, with a possible second vision or trance experience in which Jesus, tempted by Satan, exhibited his faithfulness to God alone. This wilderness experience definitely correlates with cross-cultural descriptions of initiates for the role of cultural "holy man" going into the desert, or some secluded place, to experience trancing states wherein the future role would be defined. That we have no record of the details of ritual reaggregation for Jesus is not important, particularly in the event of Jesus' new role as healer and prophet; we do have the records of the legitimation of the new status, which confirms our cultural interpretation of the process.

Whether or not Jesus' baptism was *intended* as a status transformation ritual, he definitely entered into and completed whatever culturally defined

processes that were necessary to change him from a carpenter to some type of "spirit man" (Borg, 1994b:29-30) and to legitimate that role in his own mind, and in the minds and hearts of his followers.

From cross-cultural models, we can offer the suggestion that Jesus did then experience liminality at his baptism, expressed by the record of his vision of being identified, possibly even ordained or anointed, by the Voice from Heaven. This "first phase" vision could have constituted sufficient evidence for his potential as a holy man, or prophet, for him to move into a second phase, with potential for an ultimate status transformation into the role of healer, diviner, or other form of religious leader.

The most relevant *communitas* we can see reflected in this situation is that described by Turner as the condition of the development of every culture: When structure becomes too strong, *communitas* will become strong, and vice-versa. The tension between the two, structure and anti-structure, must be present in every culture (Turner, 1969). The unique situation in Israel was that the oppressive structure of the priestly hierarchy's "Great Tradition" had to be met by the anti-structure of the enclave "little tradition," which would be expressed verbally in terms of ideological *communitas*. This experience of ideological *communitas* would have caused Jesus to consider John's baptism for his own sake, which he would identify as identical with the needs of Israel.

### ***Conclusions***

Our conclusions in this chapter will only need to be partially different from those of McVann, where we have disagreed primarily in terms of the details resulting from his process. If we dispense with his adjectives "marginal and expendable," which he has not sufficiently substantiated in terms of their being a transformed status of Jesus, we are left with the new role of Jesus as Prophet (which does not violate contemporary scholarship on the subject), and with McVann's claim that Jesus became a liminal person. While I do believe the evidence supports the claim that Jesus was indeed a liminal or threshold person, or prophet (but not limited to that manifestation of "prophet" that is confined to "messenger"), I will disagree most strongly with the conclusions of van Eck which support Malina and Crossan in the chapters to follow. I find no cultural justification for describing Jesus as a Cynic, wandering, philosopher (an isolate, in Douglas' terminology), or to describe him as the Broker for a Patron God; nor can I connect either of these with the concept of the Jewish holy man.

We are left, then, with a post-baptismal Jesus described as McVann's liminal prophet, while van Eck's "Could it be...?" is by implication of our discussion of Jesus' probable initiation as a holy man, certainly true. The post-baptism, post-wilderness Jesus was a man whose status had indeed radically changed from that of peasant carpenter, to that of a "spirit-man" (to borrow from Borg), with a prophetic, redemptive and salvific mission to accomplish within his own culture, the people of Israel. He had been "appointed" or called through his vision to a life that may have been beyond even that which he may

have intended at the time of his decision to be baptized by John.

While we can rule out John's baptism as a "rite of passage," we cannot say conclusively whether it was definitely intended as another form of transformation ritual or as an alternative to the temple purification rite. If the former, the information suggests that the ritual was compatible with Turner's definition of pilgrimage ritual. In any case, Jesus was transformed both spiritually and in status as a result of the vision experienced at the time of his baptism, and his wilderness seclusion.

By the end of his wilderness period of trial, he no doubt not only identified his specific role in the redemption of Israel, but believed that he had been called to that role as God's response to the repentance evidenced by the results of John's work. We would not be out of line with the culture of the day to suggest that in the manner of participants in affliction rituals, Jesus very likely saw himself and the other participants in John's baptism as standing for the whole of Israel (though this is not to suggest that we can conclude that Jesus' baptism was intended to be an affliction ritual).

Jesus, as the appointed "spirit man," is the limen, or threshold, for the interaction between "this world" and the co-existing spirit world. He is the Door to the Kingdom of God. Therefore, Jesus does not see himself as an eschatological prophet (Borg, 1994a), nor does his message need to be eschatological like that of John. The Kingdom of God as promised would be God's redemptive action in the present situation of Israel, bringing about their restored enclavist foundations of the covenantal, egalitarian and just society.

In our search for a leadership model from the Images that are presented in the next chapter, therefore, we will look for evidence of Jesus as a healer, a prophet, a "spirit man," and a restorer of freedom and justice for his own people, based on Jewish values and expectations.

part three:  
third quest images

5

VARIATIONS ON THEMES

The images of Jesus presented in this thesis do not, by any means, cover all the possibilities that have been put forward in the last quarter century. There is Jesus as a Galilean rabbi (Chilton, 1984), as a Hillelite or proto-Pharisee (Falk, 1985), and as an eschatological prophet (Sanders, 1985) to name but a few that are omitted. Probably the most glaring specifically Third Quest omission is the image being presented by John Meier (1994, 1991) which, although demanding of respectful attention for its scholarly and lengthy approach, is as yet incomplete with only two volumes of the work available at the time of this writing. Nevertheless, I believe the images presented in these two chapters are fairly typical of the Third Quest material, and sufficiently varied to provide a wide choice of images to compare against the Model for Leadership.

In this chapter, we will review Gerd Theissen's image of Jesus as a *Wandering Charismatic*, and John Dominic Crossan's image of Jesus as a combination of Jewish Cynic Philosopher and Founder of the *Brokerless Kingdom*. I refer to these images as "variations on a theme" because of their basis in the idea of Jesus as a vagabond and wanderer; even though Crossan imaginatively "dresses up" the wandering Jesus as a sophisticated Cynic, he is still the itinerant beggar that we have seen in Theissen. One would not expect the entrepreneurial image of Patronage to fall into the itinerant vagabond category, but since Crossan clearly places the two images together, we will additionally explore the possibilities in that light, as well as taking the Broker image of Jesus as presented by Bruce Malina and by van Eck (as seen in the previous chapter) as a category in its own right, a variation on Crossan's *Brokerless Kingdom* theme.

*Itinerant Vagabond Themes*

**Theissen: Jesus as Wandering Charismatic**

In 1977, Gerd Theissen published *Soziologie der Jesus-bewegung*, which in 1978 was translated into English and published in London under the name *The First Followers of Jesus* (SCM), and in America under the title *Sociology of early Palestinian Christianity* (Fortress). The author explains that through a

sociological analysis of what he refers to as the "Jesus Movement" the foundations may be laid towards an understanding of the historical Jesus. His stated intention is to provide a straightforward functional analysis of the Jesus movement, the functional effects of society on that movement, and its functional effects on the society of first century Palestine.

Theissen describes three social roles within the Jesus movement: The Wandering Charismatics (disciples, prophets and apostles), Sympathizers in local communities (probable locations of early churches post-resurrection), and the "Bearer of Revelation" who is Jesus, and who is also referred to by Theissen as the Son of Man. He begins his descriptive chapters by stating that "Jesus did not primarily found local communities, but called into being a movement of wandering charismatics" (Theissen, 1978:8).

Grounded in Judaism, these homeless apostles, prophets and disciples are the embodiment of what would later become a Christianity that was independent of Judaism, though how this transition takes place is not entirely clear. Theissen's use of the term "charismatic" is "grounded in a call over which [the charismatic] had no control" (*Ibid.*). Theissen explains that these wandering charismatics were still the decisive authorities for the church at the time of the Didache, which he places in the first half of the second century. They were therefore decidedly not marginal to the Jesus movement, and passed down the traditional norms such as homelessness, lack of family, lack of possessions, and lack of protection (a staff). Theissen says that their situation was analogous to that of the Greek Cynics, who were also vagabonds (14-15).

These vagabond charismatics, he explains, were supported and upheld by small, informal communities of sympathizers. After explaining that in reality we know practically nothing about these communities, he implies that nevertheless, they had to have existed. The sympathizers were not as radical as the wandering charismatics, being more tied to socioeconomic factors that kept them both at home, and more inclined to protect their situations (however tenuous that situation might be). We see through Theissen's eyes a nation of people who were dispossessed, anomic, and quite ready to become vagabond prophets if they were called to fill that role; otherwise, some might simply support such prophets with food and shelter when they were in the region, possibly envying them their freedom from community ties and family responsibilities.

The inspiration for this movement of charismatics and sympathizers was, of course, Jesus. Theissen introduces this role, that of the "bearer of revelation," by defining three titles given to Jesus: Son of God, Messiah, and Son of Man. "Son of God," he explains, stresses involvement in the divine world. "Messiah" refers to the expectations of a king who would free Israel and return her to a former glory. Theissen prefers the term "Son of Man," as it is the one used by Jesus to refer to himself. Theissen states specifically that the "title Messiah sees Jesus from an external perspective which needs to be corrected: Jesus was not the national messianic king. The title Son of God adopts a transcendental perspective. By contrast, the title Son of Man

expresses the internal perspective of the Jesus movement and is particularly closely connected with it" (*Ibid.*, 24-25).

Theissen concludes that the title Son of Man formed the focal point for the Jesus Movement, yet the expectations of that movement were that Jesus was independent of it. At the same time, "His situation corresponded to their situation. Here belief and practice formed an indissoluble whole...[which] was deliberate" (*Ibid.*, 30). Consequently, Theissen claims, his analysis cannot answer the question of who the Son of Man is, but merely the significance of that title and role for the Jesus Movement.

From his functional analysis of the society and its problems, Theissen concludes that the Jesus movement was one result of the sociological crisis that existed in first century Palestine, but that the social, economic, and political environment fail to explain the particular form that the Jesus movement took. This form, he concludes, served a functional role for the society in terms of the need to handle aggression:

To sum up: a small group of outsiders experimented with a vision of love and reconciliation in a society which had been put out of joint, suffering from an excess of tensions, pressures and forms of aggression, in order to renew this society from within. The men involved were not lacking in aggressiveness themselves, nor were they untouched by the tensions of their time. There is much to suggest the opposite....A good deal of aggression was diverted, transferred, projected, transformed and symbolized. It was this way of dealing with aggression that made room for the new vision of love and reconciliation at whose center stood the new commandment to love one's enemy. The origin of the 'vision' itself remains a riddle (*Ibid.*, 110).

Theissen sums up the effects of the Jesus Movement on Palestinian Jewish society with the statement that "As a renewal movement within Judaism, the Jesus Movement was a failure" (*Ibid.*, 112). He suggests that this is due to the fact that the Jesus Movement came into being during a comparatively peaceful period, without major conflicts, and that the acute tensions arose after the death of Jesus. He further states that "if a society feels threatened and uncertain, it usually resorts to traditional patterns of behavior; the most sacred treasures of the nation are ostensibly revered, dissociation from anything alien is intensified..." (*Ibid.*). This crisis tendency, occurring after the death of Jesus according to Theissen, decreased the chances of survival for the Jesus Movement, particularly because of their acceptance of aliens.

If we are therefore to use Theissen's analysis to create an image of Jesus, we would thus find him to be a figure of little substance: a founder of a failed movement, vagabond, beggar, rootless, yet a bearer of a revelation from God that upheld a vision of a world where aggressions are turned on their heads to become expressions of mutual love and support. Unexplainably, this same revelation causes the prophet and his followers to denounce family and all responsibility to community.

Although arising from the community of the poor and as a direct response to that poverty, Jesus and the Jesus movement are outsiders, apolitical, and unconcerned with issues of economy and power. This Jesus sounds more like a member of the drop-out movements of the 60s in America than a model of leadership for building communities; but before we critique Theissen's image, we might check our impressions of his Jesus with a "scholarly novel" he has written, entitled *The Shadow of the Galilean: the Quest of the Historical Jesus in Narrative Form* (1987).

Here Theissen allows his imagination to create an environment where, again, we merely glimpse a "shadow" of Jesus, but do not meet him directly. In this work, we discover that Jesus was a very political, though nonviolent, wandering charismatic whose followers left everything behind and abandoned their families and family responsibilities in order to follow him. He was therefore mistrusted by the families so affected, and their friends as well. He came from peasant stock, avoided cities, and began his ministry as a disciple of John the Baptist.

Jesus did not want to found a christian community; he wanted to renew Israel. Anyone who refers his words only to the church fails to see that they were addressed to the whole of Jewish and Palestinian society...He expected a miraculous change in this society: the poor, the children, the meek and the foreigners would come into their own in it. That would be the kingdom of God. It is not a purely spiritual entity. People can eat and drink in it (*Ibid.*, 95).

Quite possibly the most significant question posed by Theissen is: "Is there any value in a picture of Jesus which leaves unexplained why John the Baptist and Jesus were executed by the ruling class?" (*Ibid.*, 127). Theissen, several years down the road and now aware of the many critiques of his *Sociology*, makes his claims for Jesus as a significantly political figure more explicit in the "novel," explaining that Jesus did come into conflict with ruling circles, a Roman procurator was responsible for his death, and the Jewish aristocracy persecuted his followers. Yet he still envisions the wandering charismatic, radical prophet who founded a movement of wandering vagabond beggars, preaching a gospel of love to Jew and Gentile alike.

### **Critique of the Image of Jesus as Wandering Charismatic**

It is a commonly held belief among theologians and laypersons alike concerning the ministry of Jesus is that he and the (twelve) disciples were a community of wandering charismatics, and that new converts left their homes and their communities to follow them. The itinerant nature of the movement, led by these unattached wanderers, continued at least into the second century, according to this line of thought. Such an understanding of ministry would certainly validate the modern verticalist's separation of church and community, if, indeed, it were sociologically as well as historically sound.

The evidence in theological studies, developed from the improved social science research methods and findings from archaeological discoveries such as

those from Qumran, suggests that this specific presentation may not be valid. Interestingly, however, many Third Quest scholars cling to the "wandering vagabond" image to a greater or lesser extent, while challenging Theissen primarily on his sociological analysis and apolitical presentation of the Jesus Movement. There are at least two scholars who do provide such a challenge.

Richard Horsley, for example, states unequivocally that "Jesus was not healing individuals in order to lead them off into some vaguely conceived 'discipleship' or into some utopian community in a new location, like Qumran, but was in effect sending them back to their own homes."

There is no indication whatever that Jesus in any way recruited or even specially welcomed particular groups of people...to form a significant part of some following or movement distinct from the rest of Galilean society. Rather, he seems to have directed his announcement of the presence of the kingdom of God to the common people in general, with special emphasis on its availability to the sick and suffering, the hungry and the mournful, for which "the poor" may well be a general inclusive term. The healing stories, however indirectly, indicate in fact the Jesus, far from forming any special following or movement out of the cripples or beggars responding to him in faith, restored them to regular social interaction in their own communities. Preaching the kingdom of God to the poor and healing the sick clearly had something to do with the renewal of people's lives in their own communities. (*Ibid.* p. 227-8 *emphasis mine*).

"Jesus preached the presence and availability of the kingdom of God for the people generally," Horsley further asserts, "seeking the renewal of Israel as a whole people, not the establishment of a separate community or the separation of a 'remnant' (*Ibid.* p. 211). He reminds us that Mark 10:28-29, often used to substantiate the separatist perspective, should be kept in context by reading it with verse 30. It then "promises full restoration to a new 'home' and the broader 'family' of a renewed community, and with lands!--hardly the homeless wandering of the supposedly itinerant charismatics" (*Ibid.* p. 229).

This redemptive community rejected the oppressive social hierarchy of the time, as we noted above. It was also to be an egalitarian community, where some of the people (men) did not usurp the right over others (women) in leadership and decisionmaking. In addition, the "new nonpatriarchal familial community was to be solidly rooted in lands, the prerequisite for any traditional agrarian or peasant society" (*Ibid.*, p. 239). In summary,

...the vivid verbal element of one 'leaving' home, etc., should not mislead us into imagining that all or most of those who responded to Jesus' message of the kingdom literally left their village homes and settled in some utopian community elsewhere. This, apparently, is precisely what the 'followers' of Jesus did not do. Rather, as is suggested in this and related sayings, they were guided by Jesus to anticipate, and indeed to form, renewed local covenantal communities conceived of in nonpatriarchal [and nonhierarchal] family terms. (*Ibid.*, p. 240).

Jonathan Draper (1993) concurs with Horsley's analysis of Jesus and redemptive (regenerative) community. He affirms the lack of validity of Theissen's "wandering charismatics" theory, quoting from Worsley (1968:xii):

"...charisma is not a factor of a unique individual but of the community which accepts the charismatic leader, it is a 'function of recognition.'" Draper continues: "Thus a founder of a religious movement is not conceivable without the concrete community who accept her/his claims" (1993:7).

I have to concur with critics who find Theissen's sociological analysis unacceptable. Despite his claim to a functionalist approach, the work is essentially ahistorical and atheoretical; there is no framework or specific social theory to provide organizational guidelines against rambling and indiscriminate use of potentially contradictory ideas and abstractions. Further, being functionalist, there is no room in his conclusions for the data about intercommunity conflict that he brings into his analysis of the social situation that resulted in the Jesus Movement.

Richard Horsley has extensively critiqued Theissen's structural-functionalist approach, complaining that "Vagueness and abstraction plague Theissen's presentation repeatedly...He proceeds as if Palestinian Jewish society could be analyzed as a self-contained whole. Yet not only was that society torn by sharp conflicts, but Roman imperial rule and Hellenistic culture intruded at nearly every crucial point...He never provides a...social definition of religion and never focuses on what 'religion' might have been *concretely* in first-century Palestinian Jewish society" (Horsley, 1989a:30). He continues:

...despite the title 'Analysis of Roles,' he does not really discuss the social *role* of his 'wandering charismatics,' but focuses instead on their *life-style* or radical 'ethos.' He does not even pursue his own consciously chosen terms 'charismatic' and 'itinerant.'...the concept of 'charisma/charismatic' denotes an unusual type of authority and one that emerges in distinctive social circumstances. Similarly, 'wandering' is not an ordinary 'life-style' as suggested by Theissen's own presentation...It would seem appropriate to explore the preaching and healing of the 'wandering charismatics' as an integral part of their 'role' (*Ibid.*, 31).

Horsley goes on to challenge Theissen's understanding of the movement's attitude toward possessions, saying that his description is narrowly attached to individual disciples and ignores the communal manner in which wealth and possessions were understood in the movement as a whole. Further, Theissen's "cause by cause" analysis of the uprootedness in Palestine fails to draw a picture for us which illustrates the interconnectedness and cumulative effect of these causes. The isolation of socio-economic, political and cultural factors that Theissen justifies is also challenged by Horsley, because "in an undifferentiated traditional society, what modern sociologists assume as separable categories may not be even analytically separable" (*Ibid.*, 34). Further, Theissen mixes his "cause" and "phenomenon" factors, for example using an "economic" explanation for the "ecological" phenomenon.

"At the worst," Horsley states, "Theissen's procedure separates the inseparable--that is, it becomes seriously reductionist" (*Ibid.*). As to the use of functional sociology (which had long since been essentially discredited by sociologists themselves), he concludes:

The substantive criticisms of structural-functional sociology are principally that it so emphasizes whole social systems in equilibrium that it cannot deal adequately with history, social change, and the seriousness of conflict. Consequently, say its critics, it has a conservative bias in favor of the status quo and serves to support the established order through its emphasis on what is normative for the social system...It goes without saying that these problems would be serious for attempts to apply functionalism to biblical history and literature...Adoption of the conservative functionalist sociological approach to the Jesus movement...threatens to subvert the liberating potential of the Jesus movement, the Gospels, and critical biblical studies (*Ibid.*, 35-39).

Returning to our earlier mention of Theissen's failure to substantiate his claim for the "charisma/charismatics" role in the Jesus Movement, there is more to be said that specifically concerns us in terms of our understanding of leadership. For example, we are not referred to Weber on the subject of charisma, yet Theissen's three roles clearly come from that source (and in my opinion are either misused or misunderstood in Theissen):

The corporate group which is subject to charismatic authority is based on an emotional form of communal relationship...It is not chosen on the basis of social privilege nor from the point of view of domestic or personal dependency. It is rather chosen in terms of the charismatic qualities of its members. The prophet has his disciples...[who] tend to live primarily in a communistic relationship with their leader on means which have been provided by voluntary gift (Weber, 1964:360-61).

If his prophecy is successful, the [charismatic] prophet succeeds in winning permanent helpers. These may be apostles...disciples...comrades...or followers. In all cases they are personal devotees of the prophet, in contrast to priests and soothsayers who are organized into guilds or official hierarchies...in addition to these permanent helpers, who are active co-workers with the prophet in his mission and who generally also possess some special charismatic qualifications, there is a circle of followers comprising those who support him with lodging, money, and services and who expect to obtain their salvation through his mission. These may, on occasion, group themselves into a congregation for a particular temporary activity or on a continuous basis (*Ibid.*, 60).

According to Weber, then, the "permanent" and chosen devotees of the charismatic leader are not separated individuals who go out on their own as "other wandering charismatics," but they live in close community with the "bearer of revelation." He also specifically differs from the notion of hierarchy implied by Theissen in his understanding that there are separate rules of behavior at the various levels of leadership, from apostles down through bishops, priests, and communities (Theissen 1978:17-23). Further, we find that Weber specifically states that such a charismatic community cannot continue over prolonged periods of time; they must inevitably submit to the need for organization (Gerth and Mills, 1946:295-298). This would correspond with Turner's definition of "normative communitas, where the need for mobilization of resources and social control "routinizes" existential communitas;" for it is surely the liminality of communitas that is experienced in the initial stages of the charismatic leader and his followers:

'Charismatic authority'...[refers] to a rule over men...to which the governed submit because of their belief in the extraordinary quality of the specific *person*...The legitimacy of charismatic rule thus rests upon the belief in magical powers, revelations and hero worship. The source of these beliefs is the 'proving' of the charismatic quality through miracles, through victories and other successes...Charismatic rule is not managed according to general norms, either traditional or rational, but, in principle, according to concrete revelations and inspirations, and in this sense, charismatic authority is "irrational" (*Ibid.*, 296).

This authority is threatened any time that the charismatic leader appears to fail in his powers. The system is also threatened upon the death of the prophet, or leader, when the question of succession arises, and it is at this point when the group and its leadership must organize, must have rules of succession and social order (*Ibid.*, 297). Thus the "routinization of charisma," as has been pointed out by Jonathan Draper, is a key factor which Theissen has completely failed to substantiate in his claims for radical itinerancy of the Jesus Movement (Draper, undated).

Where Theissen would have us see an (impossible to sustain) ongoing and uninterrupted movement characterized by the leadership of wandering charismatic prophets, Draper examines the sociological theory of charisma as well as a form critical analysis of the Didache to supply us with a more credible explanation of the events in question. He introduces a description of Weber's typology of the "religious virtuosi" (leaders who bridge the gap between the unusual experience of the charismatic movement and the systemization and rationalization of the methods for attaining religious sanctification--*Ibid.*, 4) and asks why Theissen's later wandering charismatics are defined as virtuosi, while those who lived and ministered earlier are not explained in the same way.

Distinguishing between *apostle* and *prophet*, ("the apostle has a derivative charisma, while the prophet claims a direct charisma" *Ibid.*, 6), Draper explains that in the routinization of charisma, the "apostle is properly a feature of the succession crisis accompanying the disappearance of the revolutionary charismatic leader" (*Ibid.*). Jesus set up this succession himself, Draper writes, using the Jewish legal office of *shaliach*, the practice of designating proxies to act in one's behalf. In Jewish law, "A man's *shaliach* is as himself:"

The principle in Jewish law is that 'the apostle is as the one who sent him', he is a plenipotentiary. He is inextricable [sic] linked to the person and authority of the one who sends him. In other words, he has charisma as a *representative* of the charismatic leader, not as something inherent in himself...The apostle is initially linked to the resurrected Christ, who is depicted handing over his authority to the disciples...It is most clearly expressed in John's Gospel, where the handing on of the charisma is linked with the Holy Spirit, as in Luke, "Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, even so I send you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'..." (*Ibid.*, 7)

Thus the problem of succession is solved through the designation of authority by Jesus himself, in terms of the apostles and their leadership. The prophets, however, whether founders of movements or renewers of tradition,

are not figures of the early stages of routinization of charisma, as theirs is a leadership based on divine commandment and revealed to them as individuals. So the prophets of the Christian church, including the description in the Didache, reflected a re-emergence and not a continuation, and were a response to another specific period of social crisis and unrest (*Ibid*, 9).

In summary, then, while Theissen must certainly be given credit for a bold and generative discussion on the sociological role of Jesus and the Jesus movement, his methodology and use of social analysis are terribly problematic. I find it extremely interesting, however, that in variations on this theme it is the phenomenon of Jesus as charismatic leader that has been abandoned, which, despite Theissen's mangling of Weber's descriptions of charisma and its routinization, social science scholars tend to accept with little question. Much of the Third Quest biblical scholarship, on the other hand, has chosen to rather keep the very questionable wandering vagabond image and build on it, instead. There is, in fact, little or no evidence to support this identification, and Theissen's argument is essentially an imaginative "argument from silence" on the subject, which has subsequently been picked up and elaborated by John Dominic Crossan (among others).

### **Crossan's Historical Jesus: Cynic and Founder of Brokerless Kingdom**

John Dominic Crossan's imaginative, yet intricately methodological *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* begins with an introductory "Overture" that captivates the reader at once:

He comes as yet unknown into a hamlet of Lower Galilee. He is watched by the cold, hard eyes of peasants living long enough at subsistence level to know exactly where the line is drawn between poverty and destitution. He looks like a beggar, yet his eyes lack the proper cringe, his voice the proper whine, his walk the proper shuffle. He speaks about the rule of God, and they listen as much from curiosity as anything else. They know all about rule and power, about kingdom and empire, but they know it in terms of tax and debt, malnutrition and sickness, agrarian oppression and demonic possession. What, they really want to know, can this kingdom of God do for a lame child, a blind parent, a demented soul screaming its tortured isolation among the graves that mark the edges of the village?...To those first followers from the peasant villages...who asked how to repay his exorcisms and cures, he gave a simple answer, simple, that is, to understand but hard as death itself to undertake. You are healed healers, he said, so take the Kingdom to others, for I am not a patron and you are not its brokers. It is, was, and always will be available to any who want it. Dress as I do, like a beggar, but do not beg. Bring a miracle and request a table. Those you heal must accept you into their homes (Crossan 1991:xi-xii).

From this intriguing, but unsubstantiated, photograph of the historical Jesus at work, Crossan brings the reader to a description of his "triple triad" methodology, explaining the process by which the above picture was formulated. The first triad involves a macrocosmic level based on anthropological analysis, a mesocosmic level using Hellenistic or Greco-Roman history, and a microcosmic level using "Jesus" literature, which is itself broken

down into three layers of “retention, development, and creation.”

The second triad involves three steps focusing on the textual problems of the Jesus material, in which Crossan compiles a complete inventory of all major sources and texts (admittedly controversial in itself), the stratification of each source in a chronological sequence (again, controversial), and presentation of the stratified data in terms of multiplicity of independent attestation (which, considering the controversial first and second steps, is indeed problematic). In the final triad, Crossan presents a sequence of strata, a hierarchy of attestation, and a bracketing of singularity (*Ibid.*, xxvii-xxii).

In other words, the data Crossan uses to support his understanding of the historical Jesus is determined to be more or less probable based on the determinations from the third triad. Each complex that he introduces as a data-based resource, such as “Kingdom and Children,” is followed by two numbers in brackets--in this instance, (1/4). These tell us first the stratum (how close to the time of Jesus the material is considered to originate), and second, the numbers of independent attestation. For the example given, then the low number one for stratification and the high number of 4 for attestation gives this particular complex very high credibility for Crossan, but it must be kept in mind that both his methodology and its presuppositions actually present us with some problems of credibility.

This will cause us to have to keep some reservations about his conclusions, regardless of the anthropological or historical reasoning behind them. Although Crossan is careful to present and argue his anthropological and historical models, he is insistent that this material stands or falls on the handling of the literary level of the textual material itself, so the methodology described in the second and third triads would seemingly have primary importance for Crossan’s interpretation and descriptions.

### Jesus as a Jewish Cynic Philosopher

The key to understanding Crossan’s Images of the historical Jesus is found in the beginning of Chapter 4 (1991). Here, introducing Brian Wilson’s (1973) seven-fold typology of religious movements of protest, Crossan clearly identifies the Jesus movement with the *Introversionists*, who “believe that ‘God calls us to abandon’ the world. It is so irredeemably evil that one must withdraw completely, either alone or with and into ‘a separated community preoccupied with its own holiness and its means of insulation from the wider society’” (*Ibid.*, 73). He then goes into a wide description of Greco-Roman Cynicism from the life of Diogenes (400 to 320 BCE) into the second century CE.

The appeal of Cynicism was that of nature against culture; of anti-structure against structure. It was not simply an ideology, but was a way of life. They wore a standard uniform of cloak, wallet and staff; they were itinerant, barefooted indigents who slept on the ground or in public baths, and were usually found in the marketplace. “We are dealing, of course, with

deliberately antisocial symbolism, and the point, say, of an anticultural dress was not that it be uniform for all Cynics but that it be anticonventional for all Cynics...that all Cynics looked sufficiently different from what was normal by contemporary social standards to be recognized as programatically divergent" (*Ibid.*, 81-83).

For a more succinct version of Crossan's argument of Jesus as a Jewish version of the Cynics, we may turn to his 1994 summary of the 1991 book, entitled *Jesus, A Revolutionary Biography*. Here, in Chapter 5 (102-122) Crossan compares the Cynics with the sending out of the disciples, especially in terms of "Knapsack and Staff," concluding:

We have, in the final analysis, no way of knowing for sure what Jesus knew about Cynicism, or whether he knew about it at all...But the differences as well as similarities between the Jesus and the Cynic preachers are instructive even if not derivative...but he is rural, they are urban; he is organizing a communal movement, they are following an individual philosophy...Maybe Jesus is what peasant *Jewish* Cynicism looked like (Crossan, 1994:122).

This conclusion is softened somewhat from the 1991 declaration: "The historical Jesus was, then, a *peasant Jewish cynic*...His strategy...was the combination of *free healing and common eating*, a religious and economic egalitarianism that negated alike and at once the hierarchical and patronal normalcies of Jewish religion and Roman power (Crossan, 1991:422).

### Criticism of the Cynic Model

This very popular image of Jesus as a Jewish version of the wandering Cynic philosophers violates every understanding of contextuality that I can identify. The Greek Cynics were urban, intellectual dropouts with a "back to nature" ideological expression of *communitas*. They do hold their anti-structural bias in common with the foundations of the ideological *communitas* expressed by Rousseau, American flower children of the 1960s, Marx, the Black Consciousness movements of America and South Africa, and community development practitioners, not to mention various movements and their leaders in First Century Palestine, including Jesus. In Turner's terminology, it is this anti-structural motivation which provides a degree of common expression to all of these very different ideologies, and not anything unique to the Cynic philosophers.

The basic principles of the necessary tension between structure and anti-structure as voiced in ideological *communitas* are essential components of every time period, and every culture. They differ only in detail and in context: The Cynics expressed their anti-structural philosophy against a free and highly structured, complex society. They were tolerated because they were non-threatening to the status quo, and because every person in the society could relate, in some deep layer of their psyche, to some degree of longing for an existential *communitas* experience.

I do not rule out the possibility of cultural contamination, but the case for the Hellenization of Galilee is far from proven, and in the specific instance of Jesus, does not in any way fit either his social environment, or his activities. Jesus had no need to borrow from another culture that which was so amply supplied by his own, particularly when the specifics of his own environment supplied far more powerful symbolism for liberation and redemption. Besides, why would a rural peasant need or want to lead a "back to nature" movement?

The peasants of Israel sought liberation from the oppression of a highly structured purity system inveighed by an illegitimate priestly hierarchy, supported by a complex and structured foreign imperial rule. They wished to return to the foundations of their enclavist religious culture, with its egalitarian and just covenantal practices. This was definitely not a "nature vs. culture" protest, but was clearly a protest against their situation of oppression. They definitely threatened the power structures of their society.

The problem, here, is that Crossan sees the Jesus movement as an introversionist withdrawal from society, in Wilson's typology. If we remain within the groups whose emphasis is on response to the world, as Crossan has indicated, then I believe that, given what the Third Quest scholarship has presented thus far, the more likely location of the Jesus movement could be the *Reformists* whom Crossan describes as "very close to secular improvement programs except that it presumes 'supernaturally-given insights about the ways in which social organization should be amended'"

The other two categories are, of course, possibilities and should not be ruled out, especially if taken in combination. There are the *Revolutionists*, who 'believe that 'God will overturn' the world. In this case, 'only the destruction of the world, of the natural, but more specifically of the social, order, will suffice.' This presumes divine and imminent action, with our without human participation." This category might appeal to those for whom Jesus' message is clearly eschatological, but it is not totally consistent with his message or lifestyle.

Finally, there are the *Utopians*, who "believe that 'God calls us to reconstruct' the world. This presumes 'some divinely given principles' of reconstruction, is much more radical than the reformist alternative, but, unlike the revolutionist option, insists much more on the role human beings must take in the process" (1991:73). This category cannot be ruled out at all, but none of the Images we are examining in this chapter provide enough data to support this position.

In summary, the Jesus who experienced John's baptism could not have become any form of Greek Cynic philosopher; he was firmly embedded in the symbolism of his own culture and its critical situation. He was neither a drop-out from a complex urban society, nor did he attempt to create a community of drop-outs who were withdrawn from the world; he was committed to changing the situation of his society. He could not have been that paradox presented by Crossan, described as a "peasant Jewish Cynic sage."

## **Jesus and the "Brokerless Kingdom"**

Crossan claims that the conjunction of "Magic and Meal" (the miracles and healing work of Jesus, combined with his egalitarian approach to shared meals at table) was the heart of Jesus' program, and that this conjunction pointed directly to the intersection of patron/client, honor/shame heart of ancient Mediterranean society. "If that is incorrect," he states courageously, "this book will have to be redone" (1991:304). The bridge that brings these two intersections, or conjunctions, together is, according to Crossan, the radical itinerant nature of the Jesus movement.

"Itinerant radicalism means that one's itinerancy or even vagrancy is a programmatic part of one's radical message" (*Ibid.*, 346) Crossan insists. He proposes that the itinerancy of the Jesus movement is therefore radical because it is a symbol of unbrokered egalitarianism. Why didn't Jesus settle in one place, and let those who wanted to hear him, and those who sought healing, come to him? In that case, his family and disciples would become "brokers" for his patronage as a healer and miracle worker. But this was not the case. He became a wanderer, a vagabond, and this placed everyone on an equal basis in terms of their access: it was Jesus who went to the people, and not vice-versa.

In terms of Brokerage, therefore, we see Jesus denying that he is important. It is always God who has the power, who is the important one. The disciples cannot then represent Jesus, as brokers for him, nor can Jesus be a broker for a Patron God:

...lest he himself be interpreted as simply the new broker of a new God, he moved on constantly, settling down neither at Nazareth nor Capernaum. He was neither broker nor mediator, but, somewhat paradoxically, the announcer that neither should exist between humanity and divinity or between humanity and itself. Miracle and parable, healing and eating were calculated to force individuals into unmediated physical and spiritual contact with God and unmediated physical and spiritual contact with one another. He announced, in other words, the brokerless kingdom of God (*Ibid.*, 422).

The question here is not so much whether the miracles of Jesus and his egalitarian lifestyle were at the heart of his message, but whether this conjunction did, indeed, find its symbolic point of reference in a pan-Mediterranean understanding of the patron-client system. The foundations for claiming this symbolism as integral to the program of Jesus is found in Malina, and picked up later in South Africa by van Eck.

### ***Brokered Kingdom Theme: Malina and van Eck***

According to Bruce Malina, the analogy of patron-client relationships, "as practiced in the Mediterranean" region, is an appropriate one for understanding the role of Jesus and the Jesus movement in first century Palestine:

God is a heavenly patron, allowing vertical dyadic alliances with his people Israel. Jesus announces this arriving patronage and its gathering clientele, thus setting himself up as broker. He recruits a core group to facilitate his brokerage and enters into conflict with rivals in the same profession. With his core group and new recruits, Jesus founds a person-centered faction to compete for the limited resources bound up with brokerage with the heavenly Patron. The vocabulary of grace, favor, reward, and gift all pertain to patronage. With the end of Jesus' brokerage career, his core group emerges as a group-centered faction with features of its own. (Malina, 1988:2)

He claims that patron-client relations essentially entail giving economic, political or religious institutional arrangements an overarching quality of kinship, therefore Jesus' use of the term "Father" for God represented the "kin-ification" which he claims is typical patron-client behavior. The "Kingdom of Heaven," therefore, was God's patronage and the clientele bound up in it; to enter the Kingdom would be to become a client of the Patron God.

In this analogy, the brokerage of Jesus is in competition with the political and religious establishment where the Temple is the official broker for the Patron God. In the message of Jesus (as well as John the Baptist), the temple is no longer required and "clients can now approach the divine Patron without officialdom, and regardless of the clients' social standing" (*Ibid.*, 10). This would seem to support Crossan's argument for a Brokerless kingdom, but Malina claims that Jesus nonetheless acts as Broker himself, and brokers power to his disciples.

Specifically, Malina claims that the patron-client system in which Jesus acts as broker can be understood best as the model of a social entrepreneur, "who, in some discernible form, initiates the manipulation of other persons and resources in the pursuit of personal benefits" (*Ibid.*, 11). These other persons include the Patron, as well as the clients, though in fact "both patrons and brokers are entrepreneurs" (*Ibid.*). The benefit that accrues to the entrepreneur includes "honor as well as material support" (*Ibid.*, 13); therefore, patron-client relations are rooted in the concept of reciprocity. "Patrons provide favors to their clients, while clients know and feel themselves in debt to their patrons for whatever the patron might wish, whenever the patron might wish...It is...an accumulation of debts of gratitude...that serves as gain for a patron" (*Ibid.*).

Following in Malina's footsteps, Van Eck's stated purpose is to show that Jesus' baptism can be understood as a rite of status transformation (status reversal), in which Jesus becomes Broker to the Patron God, for the Patron's clients "including the so-called expendables of society" (Van Eck, 1995: 2). He insists that patron-client systems "in the first place do not intend to exploit people" (*Ibid.*, 18), building on Malina's insistence that the patron-client relationship is synonymous with kinship.

However, Jesus was a 'new kind of broker'. He asked no reciprocity (e.g. Mk 5:19), no gratitude. Jesus also removed the power aspect from the patron-client relationship in that he wanted social relationships to function on the basis of an equal status before God, in which all are fictive kin in God's household. It was therefore a radical

departure from a situation in which wealth, status and power determined social relations...As such, Jesus undermined the 'accepted' and existing horizontal group organization of and solidarity of clients to their previous patrons/brokers. (*Ibid.*, 19).

van Eck ends by claiming that "Jesus is the Son of God, in that he is the new broker of God, the Patron. Also, Jesus' baptism...inaugurates the eschatological end-time, the present and available inclusive kingdom of God" (*Ibid.*, 20). In this way, van Eck actually undermines Malina's entrepreneurial explanation of "Jesus' job description" as broker working for his own gain. He thusly creates what is either a bridge between the two extremes of the Patron-Client analogy, or the first indications that the analogy does not hold.

### **General Critique of the Patron-Client Analogy**

Aside from the fact that the description of Jesus as an entrepreneurial social broker is not logically consistent with the definition of Jesus as wandering Cynic philosopher (which van Eck and Crossan want to combine), like the description of Cynic, it is also inconsistent with the culture and ideological position of the man Jesus.

For Malina, Crossan, and those scholars influenced by them, the definition of Jesus as Broker is dependent upon an important assumption: That there is only one expression of the patron-client complex, and that this expression is universally practiced in all Mediterranean cultures. This assumption is flawed. Malina, the author of the idea (1981, 1988), has fallen prey to a habit that is often attributed to anthropologists, that of generalizing from the particular.

Patron-client systems, like all other cultural manifestations, differ from culture to culture (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989). One of the problems consistent to the arguments of Malina, Crossan and others is to assume that it is enough to identify a category of cultural activity to justify its presence and/or importance to a given culture or sub-region. What is important about the category, however, is not that it exists, but how it may or may not differ in one context from an expression of the same categorical concept in another context. For example, while many traditional cultures had economic activity, the economic system and its underlying assumptions were unique to each culture.

This error is an easy one to make. The patron-client system as described by Malina was definitely a Roman phenomenon, and Romans were definitely present in every part of the Mediterranean world. Yet it would be an error to assume that the Roman patron-client system was the only such system practiced in the Mediterranean. Paul Millett makes an excellent case for the existence of a patron-client system in Athens, despite the effective steps that were taken to minimize such a system because it was hostile to the ideals of political equality in that democratic ideology.

Millett claims that where it did occur, efforts were made to disguise it or conceal it, but that it was most prevalent as a system of reciprocal exchanges between people of similar status, i.e. the wealthy elite (Millett, 1989:15-47).

This would certainly differ from the usual claim that patrons and clients can only be in a status of superior to inferior. One other point to be made here, however, is not the existence of a hidden patron-client system in Athens, but the fact that such a system would be considered a shame in an egalitarian, or democratic, society, and could only openly exist where it took place between social equals.

In Palestine, typical Roman patron-client relationships no doubt existed between the Roman appointees (and perhaps even their retainers) and Rome. The system could even have been reproduced to some extent within the urban hierarchical structure of Judaism in its interactions with businessmen and artisans in the city. But there is no evidence to suggest that any patron-client system was an integral part of the Jewish peasant culture, and indeed, it is not likely that it would have been, given the egalitarian nature of the enclave society that was foundational to the culture, and which still existed as the "little tradition" manifest among the factions of opposition to foreign rule and hierarchical oppression.

According to Wallace and Hadrill, the study of patronage of the poor in the ancient Mediterranean region, and especially the rural poor, is a major area of difficulty:

The relationship between peasant and big landowner may be seen as the archetypal patron-client relationship, both in many anthropological studies...and even in the classical sources. Yet though there can be little doubt of the importance of rural patronage throughout the Roman Mediterranean, its study proves surprisingly elusive. As Garnsey and Woolf reveal, the sources disdain to discuss it until in the fourth century it becomes a focus of conflict, challenging the power basis of the urban elite. (Wallace-Hadrill, 1989:6)

Garnsey and Woolf argue that the survival of the rural poor most likely included other ways of coping with insecurity and deprivation. They could have recourse to a number of strategies such as turning to kinsmen, neighbors, and fellow villagers, for example. They also point out that dependency and clientage are not the same thing, and that dependency relationships are not entered into voluntarily. Neither is tenancy for the landless peasant automatically a situation of clientage, "to the extent that his obligations are limited to a range of economic payments directly related to their joint exploitation of that land."

They conclude that "In the rural communities, it was least efficacious where the patronal class was remote, caught up in the political, social and cultural life of the cities...Patronage of the poor became a topic of debate only in the context of the late antique competition for power and economic resources" (Garnsey & Woolf, 1989:153-70). We must relate this analysis to what we see in Galilean peasantry.

By Malina's own definition, the patron-client relationship was a relationship between the powerful and their inferiors, or between "unequals." Such unequal relationships can only exist within the framework of a

hierarchical or an individualist culture, and the hierarchical sect that arose out of the enclave of the people of Israel constituted a very small percentage of the population.

Jesus was not part of this hierarchical structure, or of its entrepreneurial individualist bureaucracy, and so it is highly unlikely that he would have even considered the possibility of defining himself as a entrepreneurial broker within such a patronage system (see Douglas, 1993). Further, he would have undoubtedly perceived the patron-client practice to be part of the temple corruption that he finally challenged so spectacularly. Given the cultural irrelevance of Malina and Crossan's assumptions, we have reason to look elsewhere to define Jesus' role in Palestinian society following his baptism.

There is, however, one other important point that can be made. My problem with Malina is not simply that the patron-client system may be culturally inappropriate for the Jesus movement, but that the use of such a "this-worldly" activity as patrons and clients to define God's relationship with his people, and to support the idea that this relationship could have been brokered in the manipulative political and economic sense within which Malina's patron-client system arises, would have very likely been repugnant to the enclavist and/or factional Jews. God "cannot come under human control. He intervenes, but there is nothing automatic about his action...It is very much disapproved of for individuals to claim private access to the source of sacred power" (Douglas, 1993:32).

Most of all, however, I believe that this generalized cross-cultural definition would have violated the Jews understanding of their relationship to their God as unique. "A description of a religion needs to bring the ideal and the actual into some coherent relation. For a reasonably uncontroversial discussion of religious change, the main assumption has to be that the ideas are in some way part of the institutions. They work inextricably together in the process of making and resisting claims" (*Ibid.*, pp. 50-51). The notion of Jesus as Broker for a Patron God does not qualify as a legitimate explanation, according to this prerequisite. At best, it can only serve western inheritors of a Romanized Christianity as a metaphor, but one which should not be stretched too far.

## ***Conclusions***

Despite the necessity for brevity in the presentation of the images we have reviewed in this chapter, it is obvious that neither Theissen's nor Crossan's historical Jesus enlivens the characteristics of our Model of Leadership from Chapter Two. Theissen's image is actually destructive of community values, and empowers no one (with the possible exception of his disciples, according to Theissen). He is ahistorical, acultural, and atypical. We are uncertain of his spirituality, or his intentions. According to his creator (Theissen), he is a failure. Even Theissen's "Shadow" image is too vague, too undefined, to fit into either the anthropological models we have suggested in

**Chapters Three and Four, or the Model of Leadership that would inspire today's Christian community workers.**

**While Crossan's Jesus is a little more attached to the historical setting of Galilee, he also is essentially ahistorical, acultural, and atypical. He is no community leader; rather, he is either a societal drop-out (cynic philosopher), or he works within an individualist, entrepreneurial setting (brokers and clients) to refine the system. While Crossan attempts to create an image that embodies both of these characters, I maintain that they are incompatible. Again, we also fail to see a spirituality in Crossan's Jesus that is rooted in either his God or his culture, much less both.**

**One wonders how such "images" could possibly have founded a world religion that has endured for two thousand years. But how are we to judge what kind of image of Jesus might have inspired this enduring phenomenon? Bearing in mind that we cannot possibly prove many "facts" about Jesus' behavior, much less his intentions or his psychological state, if scholars are going to continue to attempt to reconstruct the historical Jesus who "might have been," this Jesus must be represented by a personality and behavior which is *most consistent* with the culture, history, and socioeconomic political situation in which we locate him. Anything less escapes scholarship and becomes fantasy.**

**The images presented in this chapter clearly fail to exhibit these consistencies, whether or not they fit into the specific anthropological models and leadership roles we would measure them against for the purpose of this thesis. In the chapter to follow, we will review images of Jesus selected precisely because they *are* consistent with the history, culture, and situation of Palestine in the first century.**

## ⑥

*JESUS: PROPHET-LEADER, SOCIAL REFORMER,  
AND SPIRIT MAN*

In this chapter, we finally come to the image of the historical Jesus about which this entire thesis has been written. It is this image, I contend, that goes beyond being an intellectual exercise and offers us a useful understanding of the man Jesus, as reflected by our present understanding of his society and of the Jesus Movement within that society. Yet in going beyond being an intellectual exercise, the author of the image has not abandoned academic integrity (as I sometimes believe Third Quest authors tend to do); we find the image well founded upon logical and consistent analysis of the data at hand, thus the imaginative "filling in of the gaps" does not offend the reader's sensibilities.

It is both interesting and important that the above paragraph was written to introduce the author originally intended as the creator of the image around which this chapter would be written, and it is equally true of the author whose image will, in fact, predominate this chapter in its place. In the draft outline for the thesis, Richard Horsley's image of Jesus as a Social Reformer was to have been the work upon which the chapter was based, with excerpts from Marcus Borg's "spirit man" and Jonathan Draper's peasant political leader tacked on to complete a Model for Leadership in keeping with the demands of Chapter Two. There were, however, at least two serious flaws in this approach.

The first problem very nearly permanently derailed the thesis. It was never my intention to attempt to create a new Third Quest image for this work; as I stated in the beginning, the purpose of the thesis was to examine images that have already been created by New Testament scholars, seeing if they were able to stand up to the challenge presented by community workers: "Give us a Model of Christian Leadership that works." When I attempted to write this chapter based on Horsley's image, with the stated modifications, the image became a composite; it appeared to be a "new" image. But I had not created a new image, the image of Jesus I was trying to reflect had already been part of my scholastic experience. This led naturally into the second problem.

While writing the original version of this chapter, I was encountering what felt like monumental difficulties with the logic and flow of the concepts, which did not stem from any improbability of the image, but from building on the wrong foundation--a result of my not being able to recognize the forest because of the trees. I had already seen the image as a whole, and it did not

come from Horsley plus bits and pieces of other works. It had come through the experience of listening to the lectures on the historical Jesus as presented by Jonathan Draper, by reading his papers on the subject, and from listening to the hints about the spirituality of the historical Jesus that entered "pre-thesis" discussions in Professor Draper's office.

In short, the preceding chapters have been leading up to my mentally held image of the historical Jesus based, not on Richard Horsley's treatment of Jesus as social reformer, but to Draper's inclusive image of Jesus as a highly motivated, well-organized political leader of a peasant movement based on the renewal of communities; a leadership acting not on the example of King David the warrior, but on earlier models of Jewish prophet/military leader combinations. As such, this Jesus had to also be some sort of "spirit-man" as Borg suggests, and as Draper hints.

Therefore, this chapter now begins with the centrality of the work of Jonathan Draper, rather than ending with it as an "add-on." In our examination of Draper's image of the historical Jesus, we will turn to his major sources (Horsley and Borg) in much the same manner as we looked at Weber in Theissen, and Malina in Crossan in the previous chapter--a necessity in this instance, as we have only brief papers from which to present Draper's image instead of whole books. The reader is asked to bear in mind that some elements of the works of Draper, Horsley, and Borg have already appeared in earlier chapters of this work, and will not be repeated here.

Perhaps, if the image of the historical Jesus as presented in this chapter does too much violence to Professor Draper's own understanding of his image of Jesus, he will be moved to publish a corrective to my interpretation; a possible outcome that I, for one, would welcome.

### ***"Wandering Radicalism or Purposeful Activity?"***

In the previous chapter, I suggested that scholars who disagreed with the conclusions drawn by Gerd Theissen that Jesus and his disciples were "wandering charismatics" had abandoned the wrong part of the conclusion, keeping the wandering vagabond image, but denying the suggestion of charisma. Jonathan Draper has specifically challenged the image of wandering radicals in his papers "Wandering Radicalism or Purposeful Activity? Jesus and the Sending of Messengers in Mark 6:5-56" (1995b), and "Jesus and the Renewal of Local Community in Galilee" (1993). In this section, we will focus on the subject of itinerancy.

"There are very few texts indicating itinerancy," Draper claims, "apart from the sending of the twelve/seventy, which was a specific embassy and not necessarily a general one. There is no indication that traveling was a permanent condition" (1993:39). In a key statement, he affirms that:

The Jesus movement originated as a renewal movement among the Galilean peasantry in response to economic and social disintegration and threatened landlessness. It was an attempt to use the space created by the partial power vacuum in outlying Galilee to renew local community in villages and towns, to strengthen and renew family and community relations and reverse the downward spiral of violence (*Ibid.*, 40).

The issue of community, and those specifically those communities of Israel, is central to Draper's understanding of the Jesus Movement and the historical Jesus. He has little patience with the social uselessness of images of Jesus which adhere to the wandering vagabond theories; Jesus was concerned with the immediate oppressive, dehumanized situation of his fellow Israelites, the Galileans in particular, and with their immediate future. "We are human only in society; we attain full humanity only through a liberative, empowering relationship with other human beings in community," Draper claims, pointing out that "We can only begin to define the person of Christ in terms of Jesus as a product and also as a shaper of community" (*Ibid.*, 42).

The community of which Draper speaks is not simply a social entity defined by coming together for meals and worship, but a "community of a particular kind, namely affirming, liberative and developmental community" (*Ibid.*, 41). He summarizes further characteristics of this "redemptive" community as follows:

The family structure, traditionally patriarchal and authoritarian, now in danger of disintegration, is affirmed, but in a new egalitarian way. The role and rights of women are protected by rejecting the divorce law. The dignity and importance of children is affirmed. But no one is to rely on the title father for status and importance. Kinship ties are no longer exclusive and competitive, for in the Jesus movement, whoever belongs to Jesus is his mother, brother, sister. The promise of the renewal movement is houses, land, and family now, not in some eschatological age (Horsley 1989, edited by Draper, 1993:15).

Drawing from the works of Richard Horsley and Martin Borg (whose images of Jesus we will review below), Draper produces a powerful argument for locating Jesus as a vital member of a strong community, committed to the healing and restoration of other communities in Israel. In his 1995b paper, he goes on to present a fascinating and well-constructed original case against the notion that the activities of the members of the Jesus movement were lacking in purpose.

Opening his paper with critiques of the "Jewish Cynic" image (Betz, 1994:453-476; Stegemann 1984:148-168), he offers his own position that the present scholarly debate has almost reached consensus that Jesus was a peasant, but "does not really explore what it means to be a peasant and what peasants actually do and say" (Draper, 1995b:2). Of particular interest is what peasants do and say in the context of their oppression, and Draper explores the works of James Scott (see, for example, 1985 and 1990) on public and hidden transcripts to show that if Jesus was indeed a peasant in early first century Galilee, we must accept the fact that he was not free to say or do whatever he wished in public. "Any breaches of the public transcript would be ruthlessly

dealt with" (Draper, 1995b:5). He then raises the question: "If Jesus did indeed have...a programmatic intention, how did it confront the public transcript without being eliminated at the outset" (*Ibid.*).

The discussions of "wandering radicalism" usually take their reference from the Mission of the Twelve, especially in Mark (as Draper has noted, this is practically the only source which could, possibly, support their theory). Most of the scholars, Draper reminds us, base their assumptions on this text on the priority of Q, assuming that this represents the earliest authority on the ministry of Jesus. Draper does not agree:

My own working hypothesis is that the Q material is relatively late, and that it emerges during and after the Jewish War, probably in Antioch. I have argued (Draper 1991:347-372; 1995[a]:284-312) that the material is first collected by refugees from Palestine who gain admission to the Christian communities in Syria, and who are prophets by virtue of their knowledge of and control of the Jesus tradition (Draper, 1995b:6).

The implications of this later date, for Draper's present purposes, are supported by Draper's illustration of how the structure of the text seems to be dominated by references to the Exodus, and seems to make a connection between the mission of the twelve and the Moses/Exodus/Passover themes, with a possible continuation seen in the Mount of the Transfiguration and the Passover trip to Jerusalem (*Ibid.*, 8). Using the symbolism of the specific items in the texts, rather than trying to compare item for item with the Cynics, Draper shows us the strong cultural meaning of the orders given, tying these also to Jesus' expectations of the renewal of Israel.

If indeed the mission of the twelve was not only a "one-time" specific sending of messengers for a specific purpose, but perhaps also a call to "a new Passover and a new Exodus," as Draper claims, "then a withdrawal to the desert would be the logical next step;"

Is it not a distinct possibility that one of the messages sent abroad with the Twelve was a call to meet Jesus in the desert? The miraculous feeding in the desert would be a sign of Jesus purpose and a call to further action. So the impulse to force Jesus into an open declaration of his pretensions to kingship recorded in John's Gospel may be historical. It would be a natural response (*Ibid.*, 12).

Draper returns to Scott's theories of peasant resistance with hidden transcripts at this point, asking if then the action of the cleansing of the temple, following this incident at a future date, was not the "first public repudiation by Jesus of the public transcript, and undeniable challenge to the ruling elite" (*Ibid.*, 13). If things occurred in the order as we see them in Mark, including Mark's emphasis on the secretive nature of the process, this would be consistent with our present understanding of peasant movements.

The connection of the symbolism with the liberation events of Passover causes us to see the activities of Jesus in an new light; not purposeless vagabonds, wandering the earth, but a tightly-knit movement with specific

(and culture-based) intention to renew and restore Israel. Once seen in this light, it takes little imagination for the reader to believe that this renewal and restoration would be best accomplished with Jesus as the restored "prophet-military leader" (King) in the manner of the pre-monarchy prophets described by Horsley and Hanson in Chapter 4.

Draper himself implies that this is a possibility; however, given the urgent necessity for secrecy and the perhaps inevitable outcome of Jesus' challenge to the elite (the crucifixion of Jesus), he cannot say with certainty that this was so. But the implication of Draper's presentation of an image of Jesus as purposeful political leader and prophet is inescapable. He ends his paper reminding us:

The Mission of the Twelve should not be viewed as the beginning of a process of purposeless wandering or dropping out of the status quo. Rather it is purposeful activity, carefully planned and executed under dangerous and difficult circumstances. Arrest and death were a possibility, even a likelihood from the very beginning of Jesus' ministry. To be effective, Jesus had to make full use of the hidden transcript of the peasantry and their means of resistance, through disguise and evasion (*Ibid.*, 18).

### Jesus and Charisma

So far, we have seen Draper's "Jesus" as a leader deeply rooted in the immediate situation and needs of his community, and in possession of the characteristics and skills to found a movement intended to change that situation beginning with the healing of souls and bodies at the individual level, going to the renewal of communities founded on the best of the egalitarian and God-centered principles of Jewish tradition, and possibly leading to the establishment of a renewed Israel, led by a combination spiritual prophet/political-military leader. Such a man had to possess the kind of charismatic leadership described by Weber. Draper further describes this charisma:

A leader arises from *outside* the normal channels of authority in a given society, 'considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities' which are not available to ordinary people...He claims a special destiny and demands a unique overriding loyalty of his of his followers, validated by signs and wonders, which attest that he is invested with divine power. (Draper, undated, 2)

"The charismatic is often a force for revolutionary change in society in a time of crisis," Draper continues. Therefore, both the leader and his select group of disciples must be free of "ordinary worldly attachments and duties of occupational and family life." Nevertheless, a movement in its charismatic formative period will not be bound by the rules described by Theissen for his "wandering charismatics," because charisma is by its very nature opposed to rules" (*Ibid*, 5). Such ascetic withdrawal as Theissen sees, from social and psychological ties with family, from possessions, and from political and

economic activities, are more consistent with the "routinization" state of the religious virtuosi, as described in Chapter 5.

Clearly, Draper's understanding of the nature of Weber's description of charisma allows us to differentiate the various stages from the Jesus movement to the early Church. It also helps us to see the nature of community and social renewal from the standpoint of Jesus' ministry in a different light, which we will examine further in the section to follow. In our review of Horsley's Jesus as social reformer we will see the charismatic nature of Jesus' leadership in terms of its potential as a force for revolutionary change in greater detail. Following that section, however, we will pick up on Draper's continuous hints of the "magical" and spiritual nature of charisma with Marcus Borg's "spirit man."

### *Jesus, Social Reformer: Richard Horsley*

Horsley has produced several books about the Jesus movement and first century Palestine, but the one which provides the reader with the most comprehensive image of Jesus is *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence: Popular Jewish Resistance in Roman Palestine* (1987). The work examines the ministry and activities of Jesus, locating them within a historically sequential, four-stage, spiral of violence that occurs in situations of imperial and neocolonial oppression of indigenous populations.

The first stage, that of injustice, is described as structural violence. In modern times, this can be seen in neocolonial situations where the ruling groups of the society co-operate with First World governments, multinational corporations, and/or banks in order to benefit (politically and economically) from the exploitation of their own people and natural resources.

The second stage, that of protest and resistance, is often characterized by mass demonstrations and even riots. Traditional societies typically resisted by avoiding any dealings whatsoever with their exploiters or rulers, inasmuch as this is possible. Another form of resistance in such situations is social banditry, and in modern times the most violent form of protest at this point of the spiral is terrorism.

The third stage moves back to the rulers, or oppressors, and is the stage of repression. This may be relatively mild, as in personal intimidation, or in the use of religious beliefs to convince the victims of injustice that their misfortune is the result of their own sinfulness. More actively punishing are such practices as economic sanctions (loss of, or exclusion from, employment, destruction of homes), active persecution, and harassment. The most physically brutal forms of repression are selective tortures and killings, invasions with troops and military tanks. All this is done in the simplistic belief that violence and conflict can be stopped by repressive means, but in fact, all that this blatantly inhumane treatment produces is the driving underground of the conflict and resistance, resulting in forcing the spiral to the next stage.

The fourth stage, returning in its reaction to the oppressed, is that of revolt. This revolt is not necessarily violent, or may be minimally violent, but it may also manifest itself in the massively violent outburst against the ruling group: bloody revolution. It is not difficult at all to see the recent history of South Africa within this spiral of violence, where, Horsley explains, all four stages may be operative at once or the stages may progress as listed. But is this model equally descriptive of the situation in first century Palestine? Horsley provides a compelling argument that it is.

In the introduction to the book, Horsley has already provided a narrative continuum of socioeconomic conditions in Palestine from the beginning of the Second Temple period to the time of Jesus; a provision I found gratifying in light of my use of Mary Douglas' social typology of the earlier period in order to understand the later. He therefore moves easily into a descriptive Spiral of Violence for the time of Jesus. The first stage of institutionalized injustice we have already introduced elsewhere, as it took place under Roman imperial rule and the "neocolonial" oppression of local elites and the Herodians.

Horsley explains that most of the history of first century Palestine involved protest and resistance to the injustices described, illustrating the second stage of the spiral of violence. We have ample evidence of popular prophetic movements, social banditry, and millenarian movements; all phenomena associated with a society in crisis, and specifically with the crisis of the second stage of the spiral. In fact, the characteristics of Jesus' message, and the Jesus movement, are very consistent with those of both millenarian and/or messianic movements as described by Horsley and Hanson (1985), Berger (1973), B.R. Wilson (1973), and Turner (1969:111-113).

The celebration of Passover in Jerusalem was understandably a time of great tension, when second stage resistance was likely to achieve its greatest level of violence. This is not surprising when we recall that Passover is the remembrance of the time of liberation; when remembered in the situation of a structural oppression that vividly illustrated that the Jews were no longer free, the celebration had to take the form of fantasy, or as was more often the case, an eruption of violent protest.

Of interest here is Horsley's description of the way in which the healings and exorcisms of Jesus were a specific protest which countered this injustice. He points out how easy it was for Israel's ruling class to use religion as a means of psychological oppression, blaming the victims for their misfortunes, sickness and poverty because of their sin. So when Jesus healed sickness, and forgave sin, he effectively "removed the sting" from this mode of oppression, rendering it useless. His exorcisms were equally revolutionary:

At the level of the common people, the belief in and the reality of demonic possession was a vivid expression of distress. With a certain assumption of psychoanalytic license, one might suggest that it would have been dangerous for the people to focus too directly on the actual political-economic cause of their distress. In any case, their misery and its symptoms were not comprehensible without the belief that

superhuman, demonic forces were at work. In a sense such beliefs were also a 'protest against distress.' That is, it was unacceptable to the people to believe that the sole cause of their distress was their own sinning. Demonic agents were responsible. Belief in demons at least allowed them not to blame only themselves. (Horsley, 1987:32-33)

To relieve themselves of the pain of believing that they suffered because of their own sin by submitting to demon "possession," however, rendered the victim useless as a member of society. Jesus restored the self-esteem of these as well, not only exorcising the demons, but returning the individual to community (as in the example of the Gadārene demoniac).

Returning to the spiral of violence in Israel, Horsley illustrates the third stage of the spiral by review of the history of a brutal use of violence wherever Roman rule was threatened. He cites an appalling record of "destruction, slaughter, enslavement, and mass crucifixions" (*Ibid.*, 44) utilized by the Romans with intent to terrify and subjugate the people they ruled. King Herod was not the exception to these practices, but rather intensified them. Psychological oppression was effected by denying Jews the active exercise of their religion, allowing them no form of expression beyond cultic celebration, personal belief, and reinforcement of local social order.

Traditionally, social sciences see only these three stages of violence. Occasionally, however, in reality the spiral moves into the fourth stage of revolt, or revolution. "Ancient revolts," Horsley explains, "were almost always the result of spontaneous actions on the part of the peasantry in economically deteriorating and politically volatile situations" (*Ibid.*, 49). Thus the peasantry of Israel society becomes a very important focus for our understanding of the times of Jesus, and like most contemporary scholars, this is precisely where Horsley places the historical Jesus. Horsley's Jesus was a Jewish peasant social activist, acting in and for the people of Israel.

Having previously shown that the Zealots as a movement for violent resistance to Roman rule did not exist prior to 68-70AD (Horsley and Hanson, 1985), Horsley has also effectively removed this group as a foil for those who claim Jesus' position as a pacifist. In fact, there is no evidence for any sustained movement of violent resistance to Roman rule at Jesus' time. We do not know, however, that Jesus advocated nonviolence. On the other hand, there is also no evidence that he advocated violence, either, and Horsley claims that in the society in which Jesus lived, to pose the question in this manner would be inappropriate.

The historical situation of the life of Jesus was one permeated with crisis and with violence, and Jesus did oppose, criticize and resist all forms of violence while acting to mitigate the effects of such violence. He did not seek to avoid it, but entered into the situations of violence and even, by his actions and teachings, actively exacerbated the conflict. Horsley thus concludes that Jesus must be placed in a stage of resistance on the spiral of violence, and given the degree of his opposition, would most likely bring about his own death

as a result. This would put Jesus in the Second Stage, being acted upon by the Third. On the other hand, his actions and prophecies, especially when directed against the ruling elites of both government and temple, also suggests a more serious opposition than that of mere protest.

One example of Jesus' response to foreign rule that I particularly enjoyed, since it is commonly understood in quite a different way, is the story of "Caesar's tribute" as interpreted by Horsley. The relevant part of the story, found in Mark 12:13-17, begins with Jesus being questioned by the ruling authorities: "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?" This was a situation of legal entrapment, because if Jesus said "No," he could have been arrested for encouraging people not to pay their taxes. On the other hand, had he said "Yes," he would have been subject to the disillusioned rejection of the crowd, with whatever results that implied for his leadership.

His response was not a cop-out, as some might fear, nor was it capitulation to Roman rule, but it is all too often seen only for the statement in the first half: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's.." It is indeed the second portion of the statement which carries the weight, and the truth, of Jesus' position: "and to God the things that are God's." Bringing Horsley's explanation to almost criminal brevity, the relevant point here is that in Israel, everything that exists belongs to God! This was no capitulation to the rulers, but an ingenious escape from the corner into which they had attempted to place him, while all the time affirming his opposition to imperialist rule.

If we look further at Jesus' understanding of the kingdom of God as he was teaching and living that phenomenon, we see that the idea of revolution is never out of the question. "In order to understand adequately what Jesus [was] saying and doing, we must take seriously what [he] understood God to be doing, for [he] understood [his] activities as part of God's action in history" (*Ibid.*, 322). Jesus was convinced that God was doing his part in preparing a revolution that would free the people of Israel and bring about an end to the violence.

In other words, God was effecting a political revolution for liberation in first century Israel, and Jesus and his followers were responsible for bringing about the necessary social revolution that would result in a renewal of Israel. This renewal required a transformation of social relations. It was concerned with persons, both individually and socially. "Preaching and manifesting the kingdom of God thus also involved the restoration of the people, Israel...the renewal of the life of the people meant renewal of the fundamental social-political form of traditional peasant life, the village" (*Ibid.*, 324).

Within the local communities, however, in an apparent break with the traditional patriarchal forms that had either broken down or become oppressive, Jesus called for new 'familial' but egalitarian relations. He also insisted on an egalitarian principle in relations going beyond the local community as well--relations with authority figures...the people were to enter a new spirit of cooperation and mutual assistance,

even in relation to their local enemies, responding to one another's needs despite or rather because of the economic pressures most of them faced. (*Ibid.*, 324-25)

Social transformation, or development as we have defined it earlier in this work, is revolutionary when it is threatening to the ruling class within a spiral of violence situation. Horsley's Jesus is in just such a potentially threatening situation, and the spiral of violence response is his crucifixion. Horsley has allowed us to move away from spiritualized forms of understanding Jesus, into a well-documented analysis of the concrete situation within which Jesus lived, ministered, and died.

Horsley does not discuss the spiritual or charismatic nature of Jesus, but then, he is more interested in what Jesus does than in "who" Jesus was. On the other hand, having been introduced to Horsley's Jesus, the reader can easily see him as a vital expression of Draper's image of Jesus; having understood Horsley's description of Jesus' understanding of his role in the social revolution which was to complete God's political liberation of Israel, we have little difficulty probing deeper into the spiritual motivation for Jesus' commitment to that role.

### ***Jesus, Spirit Man: Marcus Borg***

In this section we return to the issue of charisma which has been abandoned by the scholars of chapter five, and downplayed to a considerable extent (if not actually ignored) by Horsley. From the definition of charisma we will here focus on the spiritual nature of the image, but first we will look briefly at Borg's understanding of the non-eschatological nature of Jesus' message. These two important features of Borg's image of Jesus are inherent in the image presented by Draper, and in my opinion, they are interdependent.

In Chapter Three of *Jesus in Contemporary Scholarship* (1994:47-98), Borg challenges the image of the "eschatological Jesus" held dear by contemporary scholarship, defining that phrase as follows:

By it I mean an image or *Gestalt* of the historical Jesus which sees his mission and message within the framework of his expectation of the end of the world in his generation, understood in an objective and not purely subjective sense...The purpose of the historical Jesus, according to this image, was to call his hearers to repent before it was too late, to ground themselves in God because the world was soon to pass away, indeed in that generation. (*Ibid.*, 47).

According to Borg, scholars have based this understanding of Jesus on their interpretation of: (1) the "coming Son of man" sayings, which are now commonly viewed by scholars as not being part of the original, authentic words of Jesus; and (2) an understanding of the kingdom of God as the imminent end of the world, the imminence having been imported from the coming Son of man texts:

It is important to realize how central the coming Son of man sayings are for this position. Without them, there is very little in the gospels which would lead us to think that Jesus expected the end of the world soon. The notion that Jesus did proclaim the end flows from the connection made in the texts between the "coming Son of man" and 'supernatural' end-time phenomena...If one did not think these sayings were authentic, most of the exegetical foundation for the eschatological Jesus would disappear. (*Ibid.*, 52).

On the other hand, Borg has no disagreement with the consensus that the kingdom of God is central to both the message and mission of Jesus, but says that "the association of imminence, end of the world, and kingdom is not justified by the kingdom texts themselves...it is illegitimate uncritically to transfer the imminence associated with the coming Son of man to the kingdom of God sayings...[which] by themselves do not have the element of imminence in them" (*Ibid.*, 54). Building on the work of Perrin, Borg suggests that instead of pointing to the end of the world, the phrase "kingdom of God" was a "symbol which evoked Israel's myth (or story) of God's kingship over Israel and the world" (*Ibid.*, 55), which myth or symbol was in fact an example of "primordial tradition," or root metaphor.

The primordial tradition, he explains, is "a way of 'imaging' reality that appears in a multiplicity of cultural forms" and is almost a cultural universal (pg. 56). It is a tradition with two parts: First, in addition to the material and physical world which we access through our sense perceptions, there is another dimension of reality which is the world of Spirit. Thus, our reality is in fact two-dimensional. The world of spirit is the source of "this" world, and in fact is more real than our world of the senses.

Second, the "other world" is not simply an article of belief, but an element of experience...grounded in the religious experience of humankind...It is not merely 'believed in,' but known" (*Ibid.*, 56). In Jewish tradition, this primordial myth is affirmed in the events of Israel's history, and in the spirit-filled leadership of prophets such as Moses. The temple of Jerusalem was, traditionally, "the navel" of the earth, connecting "this" world to the world which was its source. The primordial tradition of Israel did not preclude the notion of some future "coming" of the kingdom, however:

Israel also affirmed that one day 'this world' and the 'other world' would be visibly reunited, i.e., that the kingdom of God would come in some final sense. 'End of the world' is thus one nuance of meaning, but only one. In Israel's story of God's kingship, the two worlds are related to each other at the beginning (creation), in the present (the 'other world' can be known and experienced), and at the end (consummation). (*Ibid.*)

Borg suggests that our difficulty in understanding the words of Jesus which pertain to the kingdom of God is based in our "modern antipathy toward taking seriously the reality of a world of 'Spirit'" (*Ibid.*, 57), a problem which in fact also complicates our ability to see the "Spirit man" illustrated in the baptism of Chapter 4, and in Borg's image to follow. Further complicating our

**“rational” dis-ability to understand spirituality, and the traditional experience of the existence of spirit-people, is the modern intellectual's view of anything spiritual, which s/he defines (negatively) by the verb “to spiritualize” in the essentially “world to come” religious sense.**

**An example of such an “anti-spiritualizing” scholar has already been introduced, earlier in this paper. You will recall our reporting that John Meier claims to remove elements of faith as well as things of a “spiritual” nature from his multi-volume work: *A Marginal Jew*. (1994, 1991; other volume/s pending). This, he claims, makes his analysis more authentically a work of research; the results more believably true to the possible reality of Jesus' life in first century Palestine. He is specifically critical and mistrustful of Borg's non-eschatological Jesus (1994:9, 77, 398, and 455), or “Spirit Man,” and I find it most interesting that he nonetheless focuses on the baptism of Jesus to disprove Borg's interpretation, for this is the very point around which my own--opposite--understanding of the ministry of Jesus evolves in Chapter 4 of the present work.**

**Meier, however, becomes problematic on quite another level, and perhaps it is precisely his refusal to admit anything that cannot be quantified or empirically accessed into his analysis that leads him to unquestioningly accept the perspectives of his authors as reflective of the reality of the first century. In this mindset, Meier can claim that there was no political upheaval during Jesus' lifetime; there was relative peace in the land.**

**From the perspective of the hierarchical elites who provide us with our textual material, we can be certain that this was a desirable belief, whether or not it was true. A more cross-sectional understanding of the phenomena of the time suggest that it could not be so; that the situations and movements that abound during this period are clearly indicative of a society in crisis.**

**It is this intense social crisis which produces the charismatic prophet; the “spirit-man” who will effect social revolution through both message and lifestyle. This is the subject of Borg's latest work, *Meeting Jesus AGAIN for the first time* (1994). Jesus as spirit-man is not new to Borg's work, but is most thoroughly explored in this book.**

**Unfortunately (or maybe not so unfortunately), this particular work is also about “the heart of contemporary faith,” which allows Borg plenty of room for the “spiritualizing” that perhaps causes less outspoken and more careful scholars of the spiritual nature of Jesus, like Draper and van Eck, to minimize the use of his work to support their Third Quest images.**

**Master's students, however (and especially those with a penchant for anthropological method), unlike established scholars with reputations to maintain, are likely to rush in where angels may approach with far more caution. Borg's Jesus as “spirit man” can be examined in a positive light herein, not simply because the path has been cleared by Turner and our interpretation of Jesus' baptism, or even because Draper has left us an opening with his**

discussion of charisma, but also because our model of development leadership demands a mature and culture-specific spirituality.

Borg summarizes his image of the historical Jesus as “a spirit person, subversive sage, social prophet, and movement founder who invited his followers and hearers into a transforming relationship with the same Spirit that he himself knew, and into a community whose social vision was shaped by the core value of compassion” (Borg, 1994:119). He explains that this compassion means “feeling with,” although the word is usually translated “mercy” in the texts, lending a rather paternalistic, or superior-to-inferior, interpretation of Jesus’ ministry and teachings.

This compassion, says Borg, “was more than a quality of God and an individual virtue: it was a social paradigm, the core value for life in community” (*Ibid.*, 49). It is, in a phrase, “to feel as God feels and to act as God acts: in a life-giving and nourishing way” (*Ibid.*) He compares this “politic of compassion” against the prevailing “politics of purity” in Israel, claiming that the spirituality of Jesus led him to propose a revolution of the society against the latter, and instituting the alternative lifestyle of the former. This is also our present day challenge in the church, he claims, as we struggle against the legalisms of the “purity laws” which define who may be included in our little “kingdoms of God,” and call for the more compassionate “feeling with” lifestyle he describes as coming from the example of the historical Jesus.

What manner of man was this Jesus? He was first of all, Borg claims, thoroughly and authentically Jewish. He surmises that Jesus must have undergone a “conversion experience:”

The conversion, of course, was not from paganism to Judaism, for he grew up Jewish. Rather, as [William] James defines it, *conversion* need not refer to changing from one religion to another, or from being nonreligious to being religious; it may also refer to a process, whether sudden or gradual, whereby religious impulses and energies become central to one’s life...It is reasonable to suppose that Jesus experienced such an internal transformation, which led him to undertake the ministry that he did, and that this probably had something to do with John the Baptizer. (*Ibid.*, 27).

This conversion experience, as I have illustrated in Chapter 4, was important not only to Jesus’ motivation for his future ministry and lifestyle, but to his internal understanding of who he was and his place in that two-dimensional reality of “this world” and the “spirit world.” According to Borg, “the most crucial fact about Jesus was that he was a ‘spirit person,’ a ‘mediator of the sacred,’ one of those persons in human history to whom the Spirit was an experiential reality” (*Ibid.*, 31-32). He was therefore, in Turner’s words, a liminal person--a “threshold” between two dimensions of reality.

Defining the term “spirit person,” Borg explains that these kinds of people are identified cross-culturally, and are people who have “vivid and frequent subjective experiences of another level or dimension of reality...They share a compelling sense of having experienced something ‘real.’ They feel strongly that they know something they didn’t know before. Their experiences are

noetic, involving not simply a *feeling* of ecstasy, but a *knowing*. What such persons know is *the sacred*" (*Ibid.*, 32-33). Sometimes, Borg states, such persons become charismatic warriors or military leaders. Draper's image, therefore, is not only not inconsistent with Borg's spirit man, but could actually represent a *result* of this experience in the life of Jesus.

Given that even 20th century anthropological evidence reveals the existence of such spirit persons (see Turner, as only one of many reporters), and that the first century Jewish tradition included both a history and presence of such figures, Jesus was clearly a spirit person. He had visions, including those at his baptism and in the wilderness experience to follow. The latter, Borg insists, any "cultural anthropologist would recognize immediately as a wilderness ordeal or vision quest, characteristic of spirit persons" (*Ibid.*, 35). He used spiritual practices such as contemplation or meditation, and addressed God intimately as "Abba," as one who is both known and experienced.

He spoke with authority, and there is evidence in the Gospels that there was a "palpable and contagious" presence around him that could be compared to the spiritual presence or zone of liberation of such religious figures as Buddha and St. Francis of Assisi. He was both healer and exorcist, which he attributed to the power of the Spirit working through him. Borg concludes that "all of this makes it plausible to locate Jesus' own spirituality within what we know of Jewish mysticism in his day" (*Ibid.*, 36). He began his public ministry in Luke with the words "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me," and from that point continually gave evidence that he was not simply one who *believed* in God, but was one who *knew* God.

Borg continues his work by enlarging on the other aspects of Jesus, most of which we have explored in the images by Draper and Horsley--with one notable exception. He sees Jesus as a teacher of alternative wisdom, and devotes an entire chapter to the definition of Jesus' wisdom teachings. This leads him quite naturally into another chapter, devoted to an exploration of Jesus as the Wisdom of God: "Sophia become flesh." He explains that in Jewish wisdom literature, wisdom is often described in the female form, and is a feminine noun in both Hebrew and Greek. In the latter, the word is *sophia*, which Borg prefers to the "neutered" sound of the word "wisdom" in the English language.

Borg traces Sophia--wisdom--from her presence with God in the beginning, when she participated in God's creative work, to the Synoptics, where it could be interpreted that the meaning of Jesus' kingdom language should be seen in the context of the wisdom tradition--the feminine, *sophia* tradition. This is, of course, comparatively unresearched and quite speculative, according to Borg. However, it is a perspective that cannot justifiably be rejected out of hand, given the combination of the wisdom tradition and Jesus' own emphasis on the inclusion of women as equals in all of life's situations.

In summary, Borg insists that not only was Jesus a "spirit person," but the very nature of his spirituality was tied to the charismatic, political nature of

**his ministry; these were inseparable elements of the person Jesus and his life. This has undeniable implications for the Church today, according to Borg:**

**Images of Jesus matter. The foundational claim of this book is that there is a strong connection between images of Jesus and images of the Christian life, between how we think of Jesus and how we think of the Christian life. Our image of Jesus affects our perception of the Christian life in two ways: it gives shape to the Christian life; and...it can make Christianity credible or incredible...The understanding of the Christian life as a journey of transformation is grounded in [this] alternative image of Jesus (*Ibid.*, 1-3).**

**In the concluding chapter to follow, I will review this image of Jesus in light of the Model of Leadership for development from Chapter 2, exploring some of the ways in which there is, or could be, connections between this image of Jesus and our expression of our life together as Christians, and as Christians in the world.**

conclusions:  
toward a model for the 21st century

## 7

### *CONCLUDING THOUGHTS AND IMPLICATIONS*

In this, the final chapter, the time has come to draw together all of the concepts, images, and models presented in the preceding pages. Although it may seem in the lengthy and sometimes complex interdisciplinary paths we have traversed that we were headed in several directions at once, we have in fact found what may be a surprising cohesion and correlation between all of these ideas.

A reminder is probably still in order at this point, that the purpose of this paper has not been to create a new "Third Quest" image of Jesus, nor to review and evaluate all of the Third Quest Material. The only intention has been to establish a relevant Model for Leadership from current development theory and practice, and to measure probable Third Quest images of Jesus against that model, in an effort to provide a role model for Christian leadership in development.

As we will observe below, we find that the concept of societal transformation in the first century was not all that different from what we have laboriously arrived at as a model for transformation at the end of the twentieth. So the necessary summarization and consolidation of the diverse ideas from development theory and practice, from "sacred" psychology, from symbolic anthropology, and from New Testament scholarship may not be as daunting as it might have appeared at the start. Nevertheless, I will proceed one step at a time.

First, we will review Draper's image of Jesus from Chapter Six against the anthropological models of Douglas and Turner, to check that the image is consistent with the methodology of those models for the internal consistency of this work. Second, we will check the accepted and implied activities of that image against development theory and practice as described in Chapters One and Two. Finally, we will challenge the image with the Model of Leadership from the conclusion of Chapter Two.

Should we find that the image holds together under all of these challenges and tests, we will then suggest some of the implications of that

conclusion for leadership and development practice, and finally for leadership and the Church. Thus, we will have come at least a short distance toward a Model of Christian Leadership in development for the twenty-first century.

### ***Challenging the Image from the Anthropological Models***

The image under discussion is that of Jesus as a revolutionary political leader, a social reformer working for the renewal of Israel, and a prophet in the style of "spirit man," or holy man. Before proceeding any further, it makes sense to affirm that there is an internal consistency in the image thus presented; that these three aspects of the image are not contradictory. That is perhaps the easiest task we have attempted so far, because there are precedents to which we may turn. Examples of a combination political leader, prophet, and social reformer are found throughout Jewish history: Moses, and Elijah, to name but two. Each leader very likely possessed differing strengths of the three aspects we have outlined, but the tradition is very strong.

The image is therefore well grounded in both the history and culture of Israel; this Jesus is unique only in the same way that all individuals are unique. He is neither the product nor the champion of some tradition or teaching other than that of his own community. That community, as presented in the sociopolitical and historic explanations given for the image, fits well the definition of enclavist opposition to the hierarchical elites who rule the society; in Douglas' model, the existence of imperial rule from Persia is easily modified into the imperialist rule of Rome to account for further continuity in the first century situation. The differing purity systems of the enclavists (pollution comes from outside the community) and the hierarchists (pollution from failure to keep the laws) have become even greater sources of dissension, particularly for the peasant (enclavist) communities. What we see in the work of Draper, Horsley and Borg is fully consistent with where we would expect Douglas' model from Numbers to fit in the first century.

The different ways in which enclavists, hierarchists, and individualists understand the nature of exclusion (see Chapter Three) helps us to understand the depth of feeling behind Jesus' call for an egalitarian, non-patriarchal, kinship-based and just society. These are, in fact, the values of an enclave; they are also traditional values of the peasantry of Galilee. It is equally easy to understand the failure of the hierarchy to understand the outrage of the peasantry; their definition of the purity/value system is based on their need for structure and position, and the values of the enclave are far too threatening to comprehend. What we see in this situation comes close to Turner's "structure-antistructure" situation, which in healthy societies is kept in tension; in times of crisis, it may escalate into Horsley's spiral of violence.

Moving on to Turner and the symbolism of ritual, we find consistency between the anthropology and the image as well. Borg's spirit man is a natural result of the interpretation that I have presented for the baptism of Jesus based on Turner, and we find that Horsley and Draper are also inclined to explain

specific phenomena of Jesus' ministry in terms of the symbolic. By that practice, they remain within the bounds of spirituality as we have defined it in Chapter Two, as well as being well within the parameters of anthropological interpretation outlined by Turner. Jesus as political leader, social reformer, or spirit man is motivated by the oppression of Israel under foreign rule and by the elitist hierarchy within the society; he is further motivated by the symbolism of his culture, most likely specifically by visions at his baptism and during his wilderness quest, to be the kind of leader that he become.

The image has thus passed our first challenge, and while it seems to have been easily accomplished, we must remember the failures of the images of Chapter Five to meet these standards. We may now attempt to merge the concept of this particular image of the Jesus of History with that of twentieth-century development theory and practice.

### ***Jesus , Community, and Development***

Unlike the scholars who authored the images of Jesus found in Chapter Five, Draper, Horsley, and Borg all locate Jesus firmly and irrevocably with community values, community renewal, and community support. Let us take a few paragraphs to compare what we have seen this image of Jesus doing, with the summary of development at the end of Chapter Two.

First, we see that Jesus was often working within the parameters of Fourth Generation responses to poverty; the Jesus Movement of Draper's image is definitely a people's movement against oppression, poverty, and other injustices. We might have some trouble with Horsley's definition of Jesus as working for social revolution rather than political liberation but I do not see that description as inconsistent. Jesus fully expected political liberation for Israel, and was working for the social liberation that would make political liberation viable.

In other words, although he believed that God would act in history once again to save Israel from her oppressors, he expected to perform his own role in that liberation by preparing individuals and communities. (Macrolevel development would therefore be dependent upon microlevel development, despite its different perspectives and actions.) Remember also that in situations of oppression, human empowerment and transformation is always revolutionary; as such, it is also always dangerous, as both Jesus and John the Baptist experienced.

It is important to take another moment here to distinguish the kind of transformation we are discussing at this point from the "development" (or "developmentism," as described by Latin Americans who rejected the process), which only serves the status quo. We described this in Chapter One as development which falls within the categories of responses based on the understanding that poverty is a result of people's needs, rather than the fact that they are excluded from power and resources. This kind of development is

only "making the cage more comfortable," as anti-apartheid activists in South Africa have described it. Development which prepares people for liberation is that which empowers people to believe in themselves, to believe in their culture and history, and to take control of their own lives.

These changes are well within the parameters of the exclusion theories of development, and result in transformation of human beings, whether singly or in groups. Therefore, we can say with confidence that Jesus was definitely working for social revolution as we understand the term today, within a context of political revolution; he expected Israel to be free as a direct result of God's intervention.

In terms of the spirituality of development, we covered this concept in the section above regarding Turner and ritual; but it is further illustrated by the triple freedoms obtained on the inward, upward, and outward journeys described in Chapter Two. Jesus definitely makes these spiritual connections, as we will describe further in the section on the Model for Leadership.

Most important, from our summary in Chapter Two, is the understanding that development is not something that can be done *for* or *to* the poor; nor is it intended for the poor alone. We are all responsible for our collective development, which includes the outward journey of working for the development and transformation of our societies. We see that Jesus does not make the poor to be the sole responsible agents for their own condition, but clearly and consistently demands that those who have wealth and power accept their responsibility for the oppression and misery of the poor, which has occurred as a direct result of the lifestyles of the rich. Nonetheless, he also works to empower the poor by the kind of healing that restores their self-image and dignity; he insists that they do for themselves what they are able to do, whether moving into the pool, or picking up their bedroll, or moving the stone from Lazarus' grave (to borrow from gospel images of Jesus).

It is also true that we see Jesus providing food for the hungry, in a typical Generation One response; but what we do not see is Jesus or his disciples making an institution out of this practice. He only does it when that is the necessary and humane response to an immediate need. What we also do not see is Jesus acting as a broker between poverty-stricken "clients" and rich "patrons," as we might claim, tongue in cheek, that 20th century NGOs do on a regular basis as "agents of development." Aside from his teaching activities, which could be interpreted as second generation services to the community, we have no real evidence of second generation activity in the Jesus movement. The work of Jesus appears to fall very clearly in the third and fourth generations of structural changes, prompted by a community-based people's movement.

### ***Jesus and the Model for Leadership***

Now that we have placed the image of Jesus within the parameters of people-centered development principles, we may safely assume that the Image

can be challenged by our Model of Leadership with some degree of correspondence between Model and Image. Returning to the Model, we will therefore take the requirements point by point, to see if there is any evidence of correspondence with the Image of Jesus from chapter six.

**(1) *The leader would have a well-integrated, wholistic spirituality and maturity. In other words, s/he would be a community builder, and an advocate of environmental stewardship. The leader would have attended to the three-fold Journey, in order to return his or her power and skills for the transformation of the community.***

I believe that Draper's Image of Jesus passes this requirement in its entirety, but some points may have to be implied rather than illustrated. First, in order to determine whether Jesus had a well-integrated and wholistic spirituality and maturity, there are several ways of looking at this requirement. Borg's definition of Jesus as Spirit Man, which carries an understanding of the Kingdom of God as a co-existing level of reality that can be experienced, is one definition from which we might affirm the spirituality of Jesus. Again, the visions of Jesus' baptism and wilderness quest--indeed, the fact that he made that wilderness quest--are additional points. As Borg states, the behavior of Jesus was that of a spiritual person.

Horsley and Draper certainly have provided ample evidence that Jesus was a community builder, and was working for the transformation, or renewal of the community. There is less evidence, however, that Jesus was environmentally "aware" but we do know that the creation myth makes us stewards of the earth; it is not terribly unlikely that a spirit person as described by Borg, who was also aware of the creation mythology, would be environmentally conscious within the constraints of first century understanding.

As to the question of spiritual maturity, we might look at the parameters described by Chris Langeveld, and see if the Image measures up to them; in most instances, however, we can only say that we have no tradition showing him acting in ways other than those described, so this is definitely not conclusive in all points:

**(a) *Affective (emotional) conversion.*** This essentially may be inferred from the lack of evidence to the contrary. When we see Jesus reacting in anger, it is always appropriate; the anger is directed at the source of the problem (cursing the fig tree, overturning the tables in the temple, etc.) His emotional status can otherwise be implied from his compassion ("feeling-with") and love for the people with whom he interacted.

**(b) *Intellectual conversion.*** Again essentially implied, from the intellectual changes described by the sayings which follow the format "It is said...but I say." We might also assume that the drastic changes from rural peasant carpenter to prophet-leader and their attendant spiritual demands enabled an intellectual conversion, as well.

(c) *Moral conversion.* I believe that this category almost speaks for itself. Everything that Jesus did, and especially his concerns for the enclave values of egalitarianism, justice, and commitment to God, shows the depth and quality of his moral maturity.

(d) *Sociopolitical conversion.* All three of our sources (Draper, Horsley and Borg) provide well-researched and well interpreted evidence of Jesus' commitment to working for change and transformation of the sociopolitical situation of the people of Israel, even to the point of risking his own life.

(e) *Religious conversion.* This most likely reached its most effective strength at Jesus' baptism, and continued to mature thereafter.

**(2) *The leader would be motivated by his or her relationship to God, rather than by expectations of power or recognition for service.***

According to gospel tradition, it was Jesus himself who taught that leaders should become servants of the people; further, his sayings and actions affirm his commitment to God, and to the belief that only God should be given the credit for anything that Jesus did.

**(3) *The leader would understand, and act upon, the fact that economic growth cannot be sustainable in the absence of sociopolitical and environmental development and freedom.***

Jesus' understanding and behavior based upon this belief is discussed in the section preceding this one.

**(4) *The leader would be a skilled facilitator who would empower the community to take control of their own lives, and the decisions that affect them. S/he would identify and train others from within the community, preparing them for their leadership positions.***

That Jesus taught and trained his disciples for leadership is well known, further, he accomplished this in the most effective manner by going out with them in a "hands-on" approach to training. They learned from his teaching, from his example, and from preaching and working miracles of healing and exorcism while he was nearby. In other words, they did not sit in the classroom learning theory, to be turned loose on an unsuspecting population with little or no knowledge of how to apply that theory.

Jesus also empowered individuals and communities by forgiving sins, healing sickness, and exorcising demons. Horsley has described how this empowerment took place, given the spiral of violence and the repressive use of religion to make the poor believe that their oppression was the result of their own sin. The psychological effects, if not the physical as well, were illnesses and possession throughout the peasant population. Jesus, by removing these, returned people to a sense of worthiness, and dignity. He effectively restored

people's self-esteem, then returned them to their communities as useful participants. Present-day leaders may not be able to work miracles, but the principles still apply.

*(5) The leader would recognize the difference between welfarist or service activities which empower people, and those which disempower them.*

We described this in the previous section as well, showing how Jesus was operating within the parameters of third and fourth generation development practice. On the occasions when we do see him performing welfarist activities such as feeding the hungry, he is responding appropriately to an immediate situation, and not setting up a habit of providing charity. He also insisted that those he assisted do what they could to help themselves, and he always sent them back to their communities to be useful participants there.

*(6) The leader would see community (microlevel) development as a necessary but insufficient prerequisite to macrolevel development, and would mediate between the two levels.*

Again, we have shown already that Jesus expected macrolevel liberation and renewal for Israel; nevertheless, he worked at the level of individuals and communities in order to prepare Israel so that macrolevel changes would be viable.

*(7) The leader would understand the relationships between liberation and development, and facilitate the community action appropriate to the given situation. He or she would also understand the need for inner freedom and freedom in the relationship with God to be in harmony with the outward freedom of sociopolitical liberation.*

This is tied in with all of our answers above.

I believe that the match between Draper's image of Jesus and our Model for Leadership, given the paucity of historic material, is quite satisfactory. That being the case, can we then find this Model to be a role model for Christian Community workers? If the most recent evidence is any example, the answer is "yes, definitely."

Two classes in the Master's Program in Leadership and Development at the School of Theology, University of Natal (1994 and 1995) were exposed to lectures and readings about the historical Jesus which included the material presented herein. In each of these classes, students who had had some experience working with deprived communities were the first to see this image of Jesus as a role model for their own activities; generally, the image was well received by all for its relevance to the context of development and transformation. One student in 1995 was heard to exclaim "This Jesus is my Role Model!"

In addition, I presented the background information and outlined this Image for a class of 15 development field workers during a two week module on "Church and Development" in August, 1995. For the first time in five years, evaluations of this module listed "Jesus and his life" as one of the three most helpful features of the class, and the students usually listed it as the number one feature. The students were very interested in this part of the class, and reluctant to leave the topic; however, when we came to the section on the modern church and how it could operate "redemptively" in community, it was the students themselves who supplied information based on their understanding of what Jesus had been doing. The students claimed that for the first time, they understood how their faith was connected to their development work.

In May, 1995, I had the privilege of leading a section of a two-week workshop for 25 Church Leaders from six east African countries, in Nairobi. Since these leaders could be described as "trained readers" of the Bible, and all held positions of authority, I did not attempt to teach them the information about the historical Jesus. Rather, in a participatory Bible Study designed as described in the introduction to this work, I asked them relevant questions and sent them into group sessions. They returned to class having discovered much of the entire "social reformer" Image for themselves, and expressing excitement for what this image implied for them in their leadership of congregations and regional church organizations.

I have seen the results of my student's having changed their understanding of development leadership, and instituting a relevant change in their actions as a consequence. By the time I left South Africa, some of these students had made a point of coming individually to my home to describe to me the changes that had occurred already in their communities as a result of the change in their leadership style. I was delighted to attend a celebration, where one of my students was honored for his leadership in empowering the community to achieve their own goals. I have, in addition, on several occasions picked up my telephone to hear an excited voice announce "Hey, Ma, I tried it, and it works!"

It works. If our reconstructed image of the historical Jesus is anywhere near close to reality, it worked two thousand years ago in terms of empowering individuals and communities, and it still works. We know from history that Israel was not liberated for the Jews--at least, not until 1948. We also know that many people have fought their revolutions and won, only to discover that they are once again in situations of oppression. This is not necessarily the failure of the liberation process; but we could ask the question if, perhaps in some instances, doing the microlevel work we have described, including the three journeys of transformation, might have made a difference.

nature of human beings to eventually react against that structured environment when it concerns their spiritual or physical well-being. This is the structure-antistructure of which Turner speaks. The tension between the two is inevitable, just as individual humans must always work to maintain a healthy tension between their own need for autonomy, and their need for social interdependence.

In order to keep this tension healthy, the church as an organization would have to acknowledge the necessity of building into its activities an effective means by which those who are voiceless can be heard, the wounded can be brought to a safe place and healed of physical and psychic wounds, and the powerless are able to realize their own power. This would mean making some very practical changes.

For example, pastors would be given practical training in community organization and empowerment. They would not do all of their learning in the classroom, but would get out into congregations and communities large and small, under the supervision of established leaders, and experience the realities of the poor and oppressed, as well as those of the comfortable and even the wealthy. They would experience both the necessity for, and the dangers of, speaking out against injustice and for empowering the powerless, and would witness other leaders acting with courage and conviction in such circumstances.

The local church is probably the most effective agent for change in a community, but if the church is not a redemptive community within its own doors, it has little to offer the community. One of the most heartbreaking things I have ever experienced (and I have experienced it entirely too often), is the manner in which Christians act in the modern-day versions of "purity laws" to outcast and destroy their fellow Christians. The image of Jesus we have seen here would most certainly be "overturning tables" in most of our churches today, simply because of the way we treat each other. And he would certainly be "weeping over Jerusalem" with regard to the way in which we as Christians contribute to the poverty and oppression around us simply by ignoring it, and by continuing to demand a standard of living far above that which at least two thirds of the world can never hope to reach.

Like the implications for development, the implications for the Church in using this Model of Leadership can only be touched on in this thesis. Even making one relevant and positive change could result in such an effect for good, it would be like watching ripples spread from a small stone thrown into the water. Jesus didn't tell the people he helped to go out individually and accomplish amazing feats of political and material restoration; he sent them back to their communities, restored physically and spiritually, and said they should do the same for others.

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