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The Anastatic Option:

Christian Theological Scaffolding for Constructivist Pedagogy

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ABSTRACT

In the context of this dissertation, 'constructivism' signifies a cluster of pedagogical beliefs and practices that can develop from a non-foundationalist educational philosophy and that encourage classroom members, both teachers and students, to engage in a process of teaching/learning as meaning-making rather than the giving and receiving of objectivized knowledge. The author argues that the 'anastatic option', a Christian theological trajectory where the Christian life experienced as the power and presence of the Holy Spirit is the central conviction, encourages Christians to participate in constructivist pedagogy.

The author argues that we can conceive of knowing, the knower and the known in ways that are coherent with constructivist pedagogy and the anastatic tradition. This argument is offered to philosophically and theologically reflective Evangelical teachers as an encouragement and motivation to participate in church and school reform. By attending to elements of current epistemological debate and a submerged radical protestant heritage, teachers can participate, with credibility and integrity, in the conversations and practices of constructivist educators.

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The community of scholars assembled at North American Baptist College and Edmonton Baptist Seminary since the fall of 1966 have had a significant influence on me. The late Dr. Bernard Schalm, Prof. Werner Waitkus, Dr. Charles Kiker and Dr. David Priestley in particular encouraged me to develop "a reason for the hope that is within me."

Finally, thank-you to the Grande Yellowhead Regional Division #35 and the Evergreen Local #11 of the Alberta Teachers' Association for their encouragement and financial support through the provision of various leaves from September, 1992 to June 1997. Their progressive attitude regarding professional development is an example worthy of imitation.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents, Fred and Anne Hiller and my wife's parents, Arnold and Hilda Ohlhauser. Mark and Kim, Sheila and I have been blessed with parents who never cease to believe that this world ultimately makes sense; all of us are held in the hand of God, even the son whose ideas occasionally make him a stranger.

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INTRODUCTION

The mission statement of the Grande Yellowhead Regional Division #35, my employing school division for the past 26 years, states that "in union with the community, our mission is to inspire all students to develop a passion for learning and to become socially responsible citizens in a changing society." This statement reflects constructivist pedagogy. Constructivist pedagogy emphasizes the process rather than the products of knowing, the communal rather than the universal location of the knower, and the pragmatic importance rather than the absolute truth of what is known. For constructivists, making meaning takes priority over giving and receiving knowledge. This orientation to the work of the classroom teacher, in a variety of ways and to various degrees, denies the existence of objective truth, the givenness of meaning or knowledge and thus can be said to emerge from a non-foundationalist epistemology.

What should a responsible, modern, evangelical and Christian educator do when confronted with a constructivist agenda? This is the organizing question for this dissertation. This is not only a matter of deciding whether to agree or disagree with a mission statement. A host of system wide, classroom focused initiatives can emerge from such a statement and each one demands a response. I will argue that when faced with a mission statement such as this one,

we are confronted with more than a series of faddish initiatives that we can either ignore, hoping they will soon go away, or, that we can, without major adjustments, accommodate within an established pedagogy. Rather, I will show that a mission statement such as ours confronts us with a fundamental shift of perspective, what Thomas Kuhn popularized as a 'paradigm shift'.[1] This shift relates to the basic questions and associated answers that philosophers and theologians, educators and parents, indeed most human beings at some point in their lives confront: what is real? what can we know? how should we live?

I will argue that among North American evangelical Christians, the common way of doing theology encourages an evangelical Christian teacher to view 'knowing' as the acceptance of orthodox meanings rather than the construction of heretical[2] meanings, to view the 'knower' as the recipient and preserver of knowledge, and to view the 'known' as objective and universally true rather than subjective and locally true. Thus most evangelical Christian teachers approach epistemological issues from a foundationalist perspective.

The lives of theologically and philosophically reflective evangelicals in

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[1] Hans Küng quotes Stephen Toulmin (*Human Understanding: The Collective Use and Evolution of Concepts.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972) who traces the concept of a "paradigm shift" from Kuhn back to Georg Christoph Lichtenberg, a professor of philosophy at Gottenberg in the middle of the eighteenth century. Lichtenberg influenced Ernst Mach (1838-1916), professor of philosophy at the University of Vienna after 1895 whose writings on the philosophy of science profoundly affected the Vienna Circle, leading Mach to be regarded as a progenitor of logical positivism. Mach influenced at least two thinkers who were at the vortex of paradigm shifts of considerable importance, Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) and Vladimir Ilich Lenin (1870-1924)! cf. Küng, H. *Theology for the Third Millennium; The Ecumenical View.* (New York: Doubleday Books, 1988) p. 132.

[2] In the sense that "orthodox" is the common opinion and "heretical" is a contradiction, without reproach, of the orthodox opinion.

constructivist classrooms appear to be fraught with conflict. The purpose of this dissertation is to articulate aspects of constructivism that may be problematic for evangelical educators when viewed from the foundationalist perspective common to evangelical theology, but yield an outline of themes that could invigorate participation in our churches and in constructivist classrooms when approached from an anastatic perspective.

The possibility of an anastatic tradition was first suggested to me by Lesslie Newbigin. In chapter three of *The Household of God* ("The Community of the Holy Spirit"), Newbigin suggests that there are three ways of doing Christian theology: the Catholic way, the Orthodox Protestant way and the Pentecostal way. The Catholic and the Orthodox Protestant ways place immense stress on that which in the Christian tradition is given and unalterable, the known. For Catholic theology, the apostolic structure is given and unalterable and it produces knowledge. For Orthodox Protestant theology, the message is given in the Bible and is unalterable. An apostolic succession on the one hand and adherence to the principle of *sola scriptura* on the other, it is claimed, clearly and correctly articulates Christian theology.

The Pentecostal way begins with the active presence of the Holy Spirit and theology becomes the articulation of her activity.[3] Newbigin's observation suggested a research project; could this third option become theological scaffolding useful to a constructivist teacher? However, I was uncomfortable with Newbigin's term 'Pentecostal' because it has been denominationalized within the Canadian Christian community. James Wm. McClendon Jr. also encouraged me to pursue a third option but his term for a third way is another that can easily be mistaken for a narrow denominational perspective: the 'baptist vision'. I will use the term 'anastatic' to refer to a way of doing theology within the Christian tradition. McClendon uses the term in *Ethics*[4] as one of three strands of Christian ethics (i.e. the organic, the communal and the anastatic). The etymology of the word suggests that it means 'again stand' or, more plainly, 'resurrection'. I will use the term in a broader sense to refer to the power and presence of the Holy Spirit currently creating, redeeming and reconciling the world. I will argue that this option encourages a more dynamic epistemology, a scaffold for the evangelical Christian's participation in constructivist pedagogy.

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[3] The use of "her" to refer to the Holy Spirit is not offered as a sop in a gender war. Clark Pinnock (*Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996) outlines the issues relative to the use of the feminine pronoun when referring to the Holy Spirit. He takes the conservative option and retains the use of "he" but recognizes that he does so for political reasons. Those who refer to the Holy Spirit as feminine include Yves Congar, Jürgen Moltmann, John J. O'Donnell, F.X. Durrwell, Donald L. Gelpi, and Geoffrey Chapman. For a more complete reference to these writers see Pinnock, pp. 15-17 and 251. Either Hugo Meynell, Bernard Lonergan or both are also of this persuasion (cf. Meynell, H. *The Theology of Bernard Lonergan.* Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1986) p. 76.

[4] McClendon, J. Wm. Jr. *Systematic Theology I: Ethics.* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986).

CHAPTER ONE

CONSTRUCTIVISM AND MODERNITY

Constructivism has become one of the major influences on present day science and mathematics education and is increasingly exerting a major influence in other areas of education as well. The central principle of constructivism is "that knowledge does not exist independently of the subjects who seek it, and in this sense it constitutes a human construction recognizing the active capacity of the cognizing subject."[1]

Stated in such a general way, however, it is difficult for those familiar with the history of epistemology to understand the significance of such a viewpoint; we seem to be faced with a version of Kantian epistemology. Indeed, this is precisely Roberta McKay's complaint.

> Constructivism ... is not new. The constructivist perspective is supported in the philosophical tradition of pragmatism and is also argued in the philosophical tradition of Piagetian neo-Kantianism. Jerome Bruner traces the constructivist stance, that is, what exists is a product of what is thought, to Kant.[2]

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[1] Olssen, M. "Radical Constructivism and its Failings: Anti-Realism and Individualism." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 44 (3), p. 275.

[2] McKay, R. "Constructivism: Defining our Beliefs, Examining our Practices." *Canadian Social Studies 27* (2), p. 47.

How could constructivism, defined in such a general way, be heralded as a new panacea for transforming educational practice? How could a practice that is rooted in an epistemological tradition that is at least 200 years old be contentious for any teacher, Christian or otherwise? Surely all teachers acknowledge the importance of the active involvement of students in the learning process and surely we have by now granted Kant his point that we will never know 'the thing-in-itself'. We may not want to take on all the Kantian baggage related to *das ding-an-sich* and the '*a priori* categories of the mind' but surely we have conceded his general point that we will have to make do with sense perceptions that have been organized into a space-time framework by the individual, perhaps adding the role of a community and a tradition.

1. Toward a Definition of Constructivism

The contentious qualities of constructivism become more apparent when we consider various metaphysical and epistemological aspects of this movement. McKay gives us a sense of where some contention may lurk when she reminds us of Bruner's own word of caution.

> There are differing stances [within constructivism]. In the Piagetian stance, constructions are seen as representations of an autonomous "real" world to which the growing child accommodates. In the work of Nelson Goodman, the meanings we construct do not correspond to an ultimate reality, but rather, as individuals, we construct personal meanings from meanings that are givens in the social and cultural environment into which we are born.[3]

[3] Ibid., p. 47.

Perhaps constructivism is related not only to 18th century Kantian epistemology and early 20th century Piagetian theory of mind but also to more current debates regarding the social construction of knowledge and anti-realist metaphysics. Perhaps constructivism demands from teachers more than a cursory and dismissive reference to Kant. Indeed, McKay continues to say she believes that

> we make a very serious mistake when we [i.e. educators] focus on educational ideas only at the level of teaching methods, materials, and activities... *Unless we understand constructivism at the level of beliefs about teaching and learning* ... this current focus on constructivism will also be short-lived, just as previous constructivist based educational practices have been (emphasis added).[4]

In this dissertation, I intend to show such an understanding of constructivism, one that is cognizant of at least a few of its underlying epistemological and metaphysical issues, one that considers some theological implications of and suggestions arising from it, and one that is capable of informing my participation in a congregation of Christian believers and in a school of growing learners.

I first encountered the term 'constructivism' in a pamphlet written by Jacqueline and Martin Brooks.[5] Here constructivism is presented as a theory of knowledge and learning: *knowledge* is temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated and thus non-objective, while *learning* is a self-regulated

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[4] Ibid., p. 48.

[5] Brooks, J. G. & M. G. Brooks. *The Case for Constructivist Classrooms* (Alexandra, VG: ASCD, 1993).

process resolving inner cognitive conflicts. Subsequent to my initial introduction to constructivism, I have determined that it is a movement comprised of a heterogeneous grouping including the so-called radical constructivist Ernst von Glasersfeld, psychologists with views represented by the work of Jean Piaget, social-psychologists influenced by Lev Vygotsky, American philosophers including Hilary Putnam, Jerome Bruner and Nelson Goodman, as well as thinkers and writers who work primarily from the sociology of knowledge movement popularized by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann. I have also come to believe that constructivism is not *only* about knowledge and learning but is also about metaphysics, theology and our behaviour in churches and schools. I have come to believe that McKay's advice should be taken seriously; we need to understand constructivism at the level of beliefs.

To move to a consideration of the epistemological and metaphysical challenges of constructivism, I will begin with Michael Matthews' presentation of the core epistemological theses of constructivism.

> 1. *knowledge* is actively constructed by the cognizing subject, not passively received from the environment;
> 2. coming to know (i.e. *learning)* is an adaptive process that organizes one's experiential world; it does not discover an independent, pre-existing world outside the mind of the knower.[6]

The first thesis is a psychological claim, the second is an epistemological claim with a hint of the anti-realism that lurks within constructivist theory. Mark Olssen summarizes other closely associated propositions offered by various constructivists that begin to give us a sense of what I believe to be the core philosophical knots embedded in constructivism; a non-foundationalist epistemology and an anti-realist metaphysic.

> Knowledge is personally and socially constructed; knowledge is made rather than discovered; interpretive categories are prior to facts; truth is provisional rather than certain, limited rather than foolproof; rather than revealing an objective, independent world, knowledge gives us constructs or frameworks by which we make sense of experience.[7]

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[6] Matthews, M. "Constructivism and Empiricism: An Incomplete Divorce." *Research in Science Education 22*, p. 301, acknowledges his reliance on S. Lerman "Constructivism, Mathematics, and Mathematics Education." *Educational Studies in Mathematics 20*, pp. 211-23 who in turn acknowledges his reliance on J. Kilpatrick "What Constructivism might be in Mathematics Education." In *Psychology of Mathematics Education.* Edited by J. C. Bergeron, N. Herscovics, & C. Keiran (Montreal: Proceedings of the Eleventh International Conference, pp. 3-27) for these core epistemological theses of constructivism.

[7] Olssen, M. op. cit., p. 276.

Ernst von Glasersfeld defines radical constructivism according to these basic principles.

1. Knowledge is not passively received either through the senses or by way of communication, but is actively built by the cognizing subject.
2. The function of cognition is adaptive and serves the subject's organization of experiential world, not the discovery of an objective ontological reality.[8]

Brooks and Brooks summarize the guiding principles of constructivist pedagogy to be the following.

1. Posing problems of emerging relevance to students.
2. Structuring learning around primary concepts.
3. Seeking and valuing students' points of view.
4. Adapting curriculum to address students' suppositions.
5. Assessing student learning in the context of teaching.[9]

M. D. Roblyer et al.[10] present constructivism in contrast to what they call 'directed learning' and they point out that different underlying epistemologies inform these two instructional methods. They agree with J. Willis that

> the practitioners of directed learning believe that knowledge has a separate, real existence of its own outside the human mind and believe that learning happens when this knowledge is transmitted to the learner. The practitioners of constructivism believe that humans construct all knowledge in their minds and believe that learning happens when a learner constructs both mechanisms for learning and his or her own unique version of knowledge, colored by background, experiences, and aptitudes.[11]

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[8] von Glasersfeld, E. "Epistemological Constructivism." 1995. F. Heylighen, *Principia Cybernetica Web.* URL: http://pespmc1.vub.ac.be/CONSTRUC.html. 16/12/97.

[9] Brooks & Brooks. op. cit., p. viii.

[10] Roblyer, M. D., Jack Edwards & Mary Anne Havriluk. *Integrating Educational Technology into Teaching* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1997).

[11] Willis, J. "Instructional Systems Fundamentals: Pressures to Change." *Educational Technology 33* (10), pp. 15-20.

Instruction is more concerned with the transmission of knowledge than with its construction. Therefore, instructors (my term for teachers who practice some version of directed learning) tend to concern themselves with a different set of pedagogical issues than constructors (my term for teachers who practice some version of constructivism). Instructors tend to give greater attention to individual pacing of a student's path through the collected knowledge (with 'enrichment' for those who speed ahead and 'remediation' for those students who fall behind), to the design of more efficient and effective learning paths, and to the development of skills associated with a subject. They stress more individualized work than group work and emphasize traditional teaching and assessment methods such as lectures, skill worksheets and tests with specific objective outcomes. They are, perhaps naively, teaching from a perspective informed by the behavioural psychology of Edward Thorndike and B. F. Skinner as well as the information-processing theorists including Richard Atkinson and David Ausubel. More specific systems of instruction have been developed for instructors by writers including Robert Gagne, Leslie Briggs, Robert Glaser, Lee Cronbach, David Merrill, Charles Reigeluth, Michael Scriven, and Robert Tennyson.[12]

Technology 33 (10), pp. 15-20.

[12] The interested reader can consult Roblyer et al. (op. cit.) for bibliographical references attached to these "directed learning" theorists and practitioners as well as those listed as "constructivists" in the next paragraph .

Constructivists are more concerned to make skills relevant to students' backgrounds and experiences, to motivate students by engaging them with projects that are authentic to their own problems and questions, and to promote cooperative group work. They tend to focus on learning through posing problems, exploring possible answers, and developing products and performances as presentations to an audience or jury. They pursue more general abilities such as skills in problem identification and solving, communication, teamwork and creativity. They tend to emphasize non-traditional learning and assessment methods such as doing research, developing a product or rehearsing a presentation assessed on the basis of a journal, a portfolio, or a performance adjudication checklist. They are, again perhaps naively, teaching from a perspective informed by educational psychologists including Lev Vygotsky, Jerome Bruner and Jean Piaget as well as the more philosophical John Dewey. More specific constructivist practices have been developed by Seymour Papert, John Seely Brown, the Cognition and Technology Group at Vanderbilt University, Rand Spiro, D. N. Perkins, Ann Brown, Joe Campione, Carl Bereiter, and Marlene Scardamalia.

In summary, constructivism seems to be an alternative to a mindless, disembodied, decontextualized instruction perhaps most clearly characterized as behaviourism. The stress by constructivists on pupil engagement in learning, on the importance of understanding a student's current conceptual schemes in

order to teach fruitfully, on dialogue, conversation, argument, and the justification of student and teacher opinions in a social setting, are all attractive to me. Constructivism seems to cut across the grain of those 20th century movements that promote the view that knowledge is a collection of scientifically established facts that correspond with reality, independent of a will-full knower who is a member of an epistemic community. How should a teacher proceed when, though attracted to constructivism for these (or other) reasons, he is also confused by the variety of definitions of constructivism and is aroused to the possibility that constructivism denies some important, commonly held epistemological and metaphysical beliefs?

I will follow, and recommend, the procedure suggested by Nicholas Wolterstorff in *John Locke and the Ethics of Belief.* He faced an intellectual predicament regarding the meaning of 'rationality' and the role Locke played in the development of a modern rational mind. He saw two ways of extricating himself from this predicament.

> One can compose a taxonomy in which one distinguishes the issues under discussion and lays out the structurally distinct options on those issues.
>
> Or one can engage in the archeology of cultural memory, with the aim of telling the story of how we got to where we are in our thinking... of uncovering some of the assumptions behind our way of thinking ... some of the purposes which those ways of thinking once served ... of illuminating our predicament and inviting suggestions as to how to extricate ourselves from it. [13]

It seems to me that to gain an understanding of constructivism, to move beyond a bandwagon acceptance or rejection of this movement, to illuminate our epistemological, metaphysical, theological and pedagogical predicaments and to invite suggestions as to how to extricate ourselves from some of these predicaments, we are well advised to undertake an archeological adventure of cultural re-memberance.[14] We need to re-member ourselves; we need to bring to memory our membership in a culture that lives with a "modern mind".

2. Growing the Modern Mind

Charles Taylor has identified 'modernity' as the era of western civilization that emerged from the 17th century, characterized by individualism, the primacy of instrumental reasoning and an ironic loss of freedom.[15] It is through a consideration of Taylor's suggestion that a modern mind emerged from the 17th century that I will argue that constructivism is both 'modern' (i.e. Kantian, but not only Kantian) and 'postmodern' (i.e. a critique and a resistance of Kant, but not only of Kant).[16]

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[13] Wolterstorff, N. *John Locke and the Ethics of Belief* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). p. xiv..

[14] Wayne Meeks, a colleague of Wolterstorff's at Yale University, suggests a similar strategy for sorting out two contrary ways of doing New Testament studies. The "rigorously historical quest" reading of the text and the reading motivated by the wish "to help text and reader confront one another" can come together if we "uncover the web of meaningful signs, actions, and relationships within which that text did its work". See Meeks, W. "A Hermeneutics of Social Embodiment." *Harvard Theological Review 79* (1986). pp. 176-86

[15] Taylor, C. *The Malaise of Modernity* (Concord, ON: Anansi Press, 1991). ch. 1.

[16] Taylor is only one of many thinkers who could be consulted regarding 'modernity'. Nicholas Wolterstorff, Noah Porter Professor of Philosophical Theology at Yale University, thinks that Taylor's *Hegel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975) and *Sources of the Self*

Prior to the era of modern philosophy, the era often marked by the work of Rene Descartes (1596-1650), the dominant view in epistemology was that our knowledge was a knowledge of a world that was independent of a knowing mind: man could be in touch with the cosmic order.[17] The dominant view was that a claim was a true knowledge claim if it corresponded to an independent objective reality. Beginning in a formal, articulate way with Descartes and developed into a very complicated cognitive psychology by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) as a response to Descartes and the British Empiricists, the dominant Classical and Medieval epistemology gave way to the kind of thinking that Taylor regards as 'modern'. To better understand the modernity of constructivism, I will outline what I believe to be the conception of mind brought forward in the work of Descartes, John Locke (1632-1704) and Kant himself and I will show that yes, indeed, as Roberta McKay suggests, Kant (but not only Kant) did develop a view of the mind that does seem to be functioning within constructivism.

Bracketing the development of a modern mind with Descartes and Kant is somewhat arbitrary. Descartes' early intellectual development at La Fleche had been guided by the writing of Thomas de Vio, the Cardinal of Cajetan (c.1469-1534) and Francisco Suarez (1548-1617), and they were both deeply influenced by the great Medieval theologian and philosopher, Thomas Aquinas (1225-74).[18]

(Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989) are two good places to start on a very long journey. I am willing to defer to Wolterstorff's suggestion.

[17] Wolterstorff, N. op. cit., p. 237.

[18] Placher, W. C. *The Domestication of Transcendence: How Modern Thinking about God Went*

Descartes had at least one foot on more ancient soil and his mentors had considered at least some of the ideas for which Descartes is the acknowledged innovator. Similarly, Kant does not have the final word regarding modernity. Perhaps more worthy candidates for this role would be G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) on the philosophical side and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) on the theological side.[19] For my purposes, the brackets do not need to be indisputable. All I need to establish is that a profound shift regarding 'the mind' began to develop around the time of Descartes and that some of the important qualities of a modern mind, qualities important to our consideration of constructivism, had been well articulated by the end of Kant's career.[20]

2.1. Rene Descartes (1596-1650)

Rene Descartes is often regarded as the father of modern philosophy because he played such a major role in the ultimate demise of the Medieval authorities who determined what was true, what was good, and what was beautiful throughout Christendom. As Olssen points out, Descartes himself was

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Wrong (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996). p. 79ff.

[19] This is the opinion of Paul Tillich. cf. *Perspectives on 19th and 20th Century Protestant Theology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968). pp. 90-135.

[20] The flood of talk regarding modernity (as well as postmodernity) cannot easily be dismissed. Although it is difficult to clearly establish the meaning of either term, the recent efforts of philosophers and theologians to at least outline their meaning is offered by credible thinkers including the following: H. Blumberg. *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*. Translated by R. M. Wallace (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983); J. Habermas. *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*. Translated by F. G. Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987); S. Rosen. *The Ancients and the Moderns: Rethinking Modernity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); S. Toulmin, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (New York: Free Press, 1990); L. Dupre, *Passage to Modernity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993); J. Stout, *The Flight from Authority* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).

not only proto-modern, he was pre-modern, pre-Medieval and in some important ways even pre-Classical.[21] Indeed, Lesslie Newbigin is of the opinion that Descartes' epistemological musings coincide with those of some ancient Asian thinkers.[22] In characterizing Descartes this way, both Olssen and Newbigin are referring to Descartes' skepticism regarding the reliability of the human senses to establish valid knowledge of the world; such skepticism did not appear for the first time on the philosophical horizon with Descartes. The point we must recall, however, concerning Descartes, is that though he began his musing in a posture of radical doubt regarding truth based on sensory perception, and in this sense was exercising a pre-Medieval and pre-modern mind, he was confident that his mind could establish indubitable truth, sufficient for successful living. With this second move he was exercising a post-Medieval or modern mind. In his skepticism, he shared the pre-Socratic skepticism of Xenophanes,[23] but in his rational certainty he had moved beyond Medieval epistemology. For Descartes, the mind, by itself, could, if properly exercised, establish peace and stability in chaotic 17th century Europe.

Descartes lived during a tumultuous time. Thomas Aquinas (1225-74) had perhaps initiated the tumult of the 17th century when he folded recently

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[21] Olssen, M. op. cit., p. 278.

[22] Newbigin, L. *Truth and Authority in Modernity* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996). pp. 65-68.

[23] Xenophanes (c.570-c.475 B.C.) was the first of the pre-Socratics to propound epistemological views. Information about the pre-Socratics is sketchy and primarily second hand from Aristotle. However, there is considerable agreement that they were influential in de-mythologizing natural phenomena. See D. W. Graham, *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy.* Edited by R. Audi

recovered Aristotelian ideas into the Platonic and Neo-Platonic theology of Augustine (354-430).[24] The reforming zeal of Martin Luther (1483-1546) and John Calvin (1509-64), the 'new science' of Michel de Montaigne (1533-92), Francisco Suarez (1548-1617) and Francis Bacon (1561-1621), and the bloodshed of the Thirty Years War that more or less ended with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 all contributed to the sense of urgency with which Descartes approached his project, the establishment of a new and solid cognitive foundation upon which the problems of the emerging modern world could be solved. That foundation was the thinking mind, the *cogito.* Ridding himself of the false opinions of his youth, opinions based on unreliable sense perception, and convinced that indubitable knowledge was guaranteed by a God who could not lie and who directed the human mind, Descartes established "a firm and abiding superstructure in the sciences"[25] and thus would "come to know how to distinguish the true from the false, in order ... to discriminate the right path in life, and proceed with confidence."[26] Mathematics and geometry had served Descartes very well during his employment by the Dutch army to calculate cannon trajectories. In the same way, Descartes was convinced, all knowledge that could share the certainty of mathematical and geometrical knowledge could

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). pp. 640-41.

[24] Tillich, P. *A History of Christian Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1968). Part III.

[25] Descartes, R. *A Discourse on Method, Meditations and Principles.* Translated by J. Veitch (London: J. M. Dent, 1994). p. 74.

[26] Ibid., p. 8.

replace Medieval *opinio* as modern *scientia.*[27] Descartes was convinced that his mind, aided by mathematics and the existance of a trustworthy God, could establish such knowledge.

2.2. John Locke (1632-1704)

Although emerging from an intellectual and social context that was about 50 years later than that of Descartes, John Locke made a major contribution to the emergence of a new human faculty, the modern mind. Locke, like Descartes, entered and lived an adult life of social chaos and political upheaval. Unlike Descartes, Locke's immediate intellectual predecessors were Francis Bacon (1561-1621) and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). They had turned the English intellectual focus toward the objects of the external world and away from Medieval speculation and Classical rationalism.

Most of the triumphs of the mathematical and scientific genius of the 17th century came before Locke published *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* in 1690. The influence of Descartes and Spinoza, Bacon and Hobbes, Galileo and Kepler, Harvey and Boyle as well as a host of lesser lights had firmly entrenched the working hypothesis of a universe that consisted of little more than matter in motion. Telescopes and microscopes established the boundaries of reality while barometers, thermometers, mathematics and

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[27] Descartes, R. "Rules for the Direction of the Mind, Rule 3." In *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Vol. 1.* Translated by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, and D. Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). pp. 13-15.

articulate laws explained the movement of the universe within these boundaries. Indeed, this cosmos that did not accommodate miracles, answered prayers or an intercessory God, was the erudite world of the mature John Locke.

More specifically, what was Locke's contribution to the emergence of a modern mind? The Lockean mind was essentially a passive, but reliable, receptor of qualities emanating from objects. These qualities became conscious sensations that were developed into ideas and these ideas established laws that could be used to resolve the problems of society. In the face of the social and political chaos of 17th century England,[28] Locke declared that confusion could be avoided if Englishmen would just open their minds to qualities emanating from the objects of the external world. The famous passage from Book II of *The Essay* proposes that the mind should be viewed as a white paper on which experience paints with "almost endless variety." It is in this experience "that all our knowledge is founded; and from that it ultimately derives itself." Knowledge is ultimately derived either from our observation of "external sensible objects" or from "internal operations of the mind" as we perceive and reflect on our experience. "These two are the fountains of knowledge, from whence all the

[28] Locke's century of chaos included the English Great Rebellion and Civil War (1625-49), the Commonwealth/Protectorate of the Puritans and Cromwell (1649-60), the reign of Charles II (1660-85) that ended with his beheading, and the so called Glorious Revolution of 1685-1714 that included the coronation of a Dutchman, William III of Orange, in 1689.

ideas we have, or can naturally have, spring."[29]

Locke's confidence in the ability of the human mind to accurately receive the qualities of the external world and to develop the laws that governed the movement of these objects sustained him in the task of developing objective, reliable laws useful for the governance of England and the pursuit of individual wealth and freedom. Classic political liberalism based on the exercise of the human mind was articulated in the *Epistola de Tolerantia* (1690-1706 - published in Latin) and in three editions of *Two Treatises on Government* (1690-98), all published anonymously by Locke!

2.3. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

In contrast to Descartes and Locke, the problems of Immanuel Kant were more intellectual than overtly social or political. He lived a relatively tranquil life in Königsberg, East Prussia, well away from the important wars of the time: the Seven Years War between England and France (1756-63), the American War of Independence (1776-83), and the French Revolution (1789). Kant's heroic struggle was an effort to "reconcile reason with feeling, philosophy with religion, morality with revolt",[30] and mechanistic science with human freedom.

Kant's intellectual struggle was initially prompted by local circumstances. The German version of English deism, Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibnitz' (1646-

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[29] Locke, J. "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding." In *The Empiricists*. Edited by R. Taylor (New York: Anchor Books, 1961). Book II: 1, 2.

1716) and Christian von Wolff's (1679-1754) rationalism, did battle with the German version of English puritanism, the pietism of Philipp Jakob Spener (1635-1705) and August H. Francke (1663-1727). Kant had been raised as a pietist and his *Critiques* were developed in part to make room for pietist religiosity in a rationalized world. The second problem for Kant was the skepticism of David Hume (1711-76). Kant agreed with Hume that we cannot receive certain knowledge on the basis of sense perception. Neither experience with the qualities of objects nor the mental manipulation of these sensations into ideas can ground knowledge. For Kant, experience appears in the 'space form of perception' (Gr: *die anschauung* - the upon-lookings - often translated as the intuitions) as it is manipulated in the 'time form of perception'. These 'intuitions' are, however, trustworthy faculties of the mind, a suitable ground for a scientific method, the instrument by which the sensible world (i.e. the phenomenal world) could be explained.

> If we bear in mind the critical distinction of the two modes of representation (the sensible and the intellectual) and the consequent limitation of the conceptions of the pure understanding ... in this way the doctrine of morality and the doctrine of nature are confined within their proper limits.[31]

The problems of the phenomenal world can be solved by the exercise of the mind, according to Kant. Instrumental knowledge is limited, however, to our experience of the phenomenal world, the world of sensations that have been

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[30] Durant, W. & A. *Rousseau and Revolution* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967). p. 531.
[31] Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason.* Translated by J. M. D. Meiklejohn (Rutland, VM: J. M. Dent

cognized, formed by the intuitions of time and/or space, by the transcendental categories and by the principles of judgment. Cognition and the awareness of conceptual knowledge are a consequence of these faculties; concepts are not the consequence of a passively receptive mind.

3. Four Preoccupations of Modernists

These three thinkers, who had a profound influence on modern Western societies, were preoccupied with many of the issues that Taylor associates with 'modernity'.[32] I will draw attention to four modernist preoccupations that were found in the lives of these modern thinkers and that, in my view, still exercise a powerful influence on many contemporary teachers. They are

1. the assumption of a universal point of view.
2. the concern to be practical.
3. the use of archetectonic metaphors to present indubitable ideas.
4. the exclusion of the body from noetic experience.

3.1. The Assumption of Universality

Descartes invites us to consider a modest proposal: to rightly apply (this he believes to be an *uncommon* human project) the 'vigorous mind' (this he believes to be a *common* human endowment).[33] He was convinced that most people have the required endowment that, if exercised correctly, yields

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& Sons Ltd., 1934). p. 17.

[32] Recall Charles Taylor's (op. cit.) identification of modernity with individualism, the primacy of instrumental reasoning and an ironic loss of freedom.

[33] Descartes, R. *Discourse on Method.* Translated by J. Veitch (London: J. M. Dent, 1994). p. 3.

indubitable truth. Unfortunately, from Descartes' point of view, most people avoid the exercise of this endowment. Locke too was of the opinion that knowledge is available to anyone who will take his God-given responsibility seriously.[34] Furthermore, he was convinced that it is not possible to honestly be skeptical of the "existence of those things which he sees and feels."[35] According to him, God has given us the tools needed to establish certain knowledge and anyone who makes the effort will reap the reward: epistemological, ethical, political and theological confidence. Kant speaks of the "constitution of our Sensibility [and] of our Understanding" through which knowledge of Nature is possible.[36] These men do not present themselves as epistemologically gifted individuals; for them, everyone is endowed with the faculties needed to gain knowledge. What they have done, anyone can, and indeed must, do.

The modern assumption regarding the universal endowment of mind is crucial to the eventual liberal/modern belief that each and every individual is able to come to know and to articulate absolute truth (i.e. propositions that are true for all people in all places at all times regarding the reality of nature, society and religion). Universally available, indubitable truth is possible because everyone thinks according to the same method and it is the method that certifies the knowledge claims as true claims. Descartes, Locke and Kant did not agree on the specifics of the method, but they were in agreement that the secret of

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[34] Locke, J. op. cit., Book I,1,1.
[35] Ibid., Book IV,9,3.

indubitable truth had to do with method. Descartes' methodological, radical doubt,[37] Locke's articulation of the four acts of the mind that yield agreement or disagreement,[38] and Kant's confidence in the exercise of the transcendental aesthetic (the conceptualized forms of space and time),[39] the transcendental logic (the categories/judgments),[40] and the transcendental dialectic (the active faculty of reason),[41] are variations on the same theme. Every thinking, reasonable person can be sure that a method is universally available for establishing indubitable, universal truth. After Descartes, an individual did not need to depend on the opinions of authorities in order to know; he could claim to have the requisite tools of the epistemological trade resident within, but separate from, his body. The prospect of an enlightened and autonomous man came into view.

3.2. An Optimistic Practicality

Paul Tillich cautions us to remember

> that every great philosophy combines two elements. The one is its vitality, its lifeblood, its inner character; the other is the emergency situation out of which the philosophy grows. No great philosopher simply sat behind his desk, and said, "Let me now philosophize a bit between breakfast and lunch time." All philosophy has been a terrible struggle between divine and demonic forces, skepticism

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[36] Kant, I. op. cit., p. 79, No. 36.
[37] Descartes, R. *Meditations* . Translated by J. Veitch. (London: J. M. Dent, 1994). p. 74.
[38] Locke, J, op. cit., Book IV,1,3ff.
[39] Kant, I. op. cit., Part 1.
[40] Ibid., Part 2.
[41] Ibid., Part 3.

and faith, the possibility of affirming and of negating life.[42]

I take this to mean that every great philosophy from the pre-Socratics to our own time has been concerned with practical issues of life. Intellectual influences of the 17th century brought the analysis and the resolution of these problems more within the control of the human enterprise and away from some higher authority. According to Tillich, there was a turn from heteronomy (*heteros* other + *nomos* law, rule) to autonomy (*autos* self + *nomos* law, rule).[43] Thus, even though it may be true that the philosophers of every age are in a sense, pragmatic, the pragmatism of the modern mind has this unique feature of optimistic autonomy.

Jeffery Stout[44] and Stephen Toulmin[45] speculate at length regarding Descartes' motivation to establish *the* method of rightly exercising the reason and seeking truth through the sciences. The middle of the 17th century was a time of considerable confusion and instability. The bubonic plague regularly and mercilessly ravaged Europe,[46] England was in the midst of a civil war, Galileo had displaced the earth from the centre of the universe, the once catholic Christian church was fragmenting into warring factions that agreed to an uneasy peace of exhaustion at Westphalia in 1648, and the continuing influence of Islam

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[42] Tillich, P. *Perspectives on Protestant Theology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968). p. 115.
[43] Ibid., pp. xxiiff
[44] Stout, J. *The Flight from Authority: Religion, Morality and the Quest For Autonomy* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).
[45] Toulmin, S. *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (New York: The Free Press, 1990).
[46] According to W. Durant "between 1630 and 1631 there were 1,000,000 victims of the plague

was apparent. According to Stout, Descartes decided to re-establish confidence in the *scientia* of Aristotelian epistemology because the domain of *opinio* "must have seemed beyond repair."[47] *Scientia* was the scholastic domain of demonstrated belief, "that mode of reasoning that displayed the connections between a proposition and its principles."[48] *Opinio* was all the belief that fell short of scientific demonstration. At the time of Descartes, both *scientia* and *opinio* were in disarray and he elected to restore deductive reasoning in the public and ecclesiastical debate. However, Descartes was not motivated to restore the *scientia* of Aristotelian epistemology for its own sake. He wanted to provide the skeptical and confused populations of northern Europe with certainty and clarity for the same reason he sought such knowledge for himself: he wanted to "be able to clearly discriminate the right path of life, and proceed in it with confidence."[49] Descartes wanted philosophy to be the ultimate problem solving human enterprise.

A similar sense of practical urgency accompanied the thinking of Locke and Kant. Locke's life roughly paralleled the tumultuous English 17th century. Civil war, the public beheading of a king, the establishment of common people in government, the overthrow of 'God's commonwealth', the restoration of a king who lived a licentious life, the hasty departure of 'God's regent' and his

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in northern Italy alone". cf. *The Age of Reason* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961), p. 592.

[47] Stout, J. op. cit., p. 41.

[48] Ibid., p. 38.

[49] Descartes, R. *Discourse on Method*. Translated by J. Veitch (London: J. M. Dent, 1994). p. 8.

replacement by a foreign monarch, all describe a century of considerable social and political chaos in Locke's England. In the midst of this uncertainty, Locke spent most of his adult life as a public servant trying to find a new rationale that would justify new solutions to new and difficult political problems. He also struggled valiantly to articulate a natural theology that could replace the increasingly unpersuasive doctrines of revealed theology in order to credential the religious lives of educated Englishmen. Locke's solutions to these problems depended on characterizing individual human beings as endowed with the necessary problem-solving faculties, faculties that, if free from unnecessary interference from God and King, would produce solutions acceptable to everyone.

Kant's life was somewhat more sanguine, socially and politically, but not due to lack of opportunity for greater anxiety. The Seven Years' War (1756-63) re-ignited issues left over from the Peace of Westphalia (1648) and Frederick the Great, King of Prussia from 1740 to 86, was a major combatant in this conflict. The American and French Revolutions, though farther away, were known and of interest to Kant. However, Kant's involvement in political and social debates was more academic than that of Descartes and Locke. The revision of his *Critique of Pure Reason* in 1787 was partially in response to the conservatism of Frederick William II and his reactionary minister of culture, Johann Christian von Wollner and Kant was well aware of the practical

consequences (i.e. social and individual ethical as well as aesthetic judgments) of his theoretical program, a program that seemed to remove traditional rational and theological justifications for the beliefs and practices of European society.

In summary, it does seem to be the case that

> enlightenment thought was inevitably tied to practical concerns, such as how to live a good life, how to reconcile traditional religious belief with new scientific discoveries, what to make of the strange new cultures which were being discovered around the world, how to organize society so that people of different religious persuasions could live together in peace.[50]

3.3. A Preoccupation with Certainty

Earlier I made reference to foundationalism and to the common suggestion that Descartes is, if not the father, at least the midwife to the birth of modern foundationalism and its central role within modern epistemology. This foundationalism is important to contemporary philosophical and theological debates, as well as to the development of constructivism.

To claim that all of these modern thinkers are foundationalists, I need to clarify what I mean by 'foundationalism'. I am using the word to refer to that strategy whereby the attempt to justify a knowledge claim (a belief), to attempt truth-full speech, to gain certain knowledge, proceeds through some series of statements that form a chain of justifications that eventually come to a justifiable halt. The halt occurs when the belief articulated requires no further justification

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[50] Byrne, J. M. *Religion and the Enlightenment: From Descartes to Kant* (Louisville, KY:

in terms of other beliefs (i.e. the justification of mediated beliefs stops at an immediate belief). The confidence of a foundationalist is based on the observation that to deny the existence of immediate or foundational beliefs would be self-contradictory; the denial itself would be based on an unstated but functioning immediate belief. Foundationalists claim to avoid an infinite regression of justifying statements as well as the vicious circularity of justifying one belief (b_1) with another belief (b_2) that in turn is justified by the original belief (b_1).

Nancey Murphy comments that

> it is only recently that philosophers have labeled the modern foundationalist theory of knowledge as such, so it is a view of knowledge that has merely been assumed by modern theologians [and philosophers], not explicitly advocated between the covers of their books.[51]

She continues by setting two criteria by which to judge whether a thinker is a foundationalist or not. A thinker can be fairly regarded as a foundationalist if her epistemology includes

> a. the assumption that knowledge systems must include a class of beliefs that are somehow immune from challenge, and
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> b. the assumption that all reasoning within the system proceeds in one direction only — from that set of special, indubitable beliefs to others, but not the reverse.[52]

Westminster John Knox Press, 1996). p. xi.

[51] Murphy, N. *Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism: How Modern and Postmodern Philosophy Set the Theological Agenda* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1996), p. 13.

[52] Idem.

Using Murphy's definition of 'foundationalism', how does it emerge in the thinking of Descartes, Locke and Kant and through their influence in the exercise of modern minds?

When Descartes began to write *The Discourse on Method* in 1637 as a reflection on the enlightenment that the divine spirit had shared with him in a dream almost 20 years earlier, he made extensive use of the architechtonic language characteristic of foundationalism. He commented on the disorganized state of the streets outside his window because the village had been allowed to evolve into a city without the guiding hand and eye of an architect. He was convinced that

> the buildings which a single architect has planned and executed, are generally more elegant and commodious than those which several have attempted to improve, by making old walls serve for purposes for which they were not originally built.[53]

Similarly, in the first *Meditation* he uses architectural language to introduce his epistemic program. Since this quotation is so often referenced in the context of modern foundationalism, I will quote it in full.

> Several years have now elapsed since I first became aware that I had accepted, even from my youth, many false opinions for true, and that consequently what I afterwards based on such principles was highly doubtful; and from that time I was convinced of the necessity of undertaking once in my life to rid myself of all the opinions I had adopted, and of commencing anew *the work of building from the foundation,* if I desired to establish a firm and

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[53] Descartes, R., op. cit., p. 10.

abiding superstructure in the sciences (emphasis added).[54]

He observed that many of the preconceived opinions he had accepted since childhood had turned out to be unreliable; it was necessary, once in his life, to rid himself of all of them and to commence "anew the work of building from the foundations."[55] He then subjected all previous beliefs to a systematic critique and dismissed any based on the senses (the option later followed by Locke). He became convinced that reliable beliefs would have to be like mathematical statements, knowledge that is immune to the deceptions of altered states of consciousness. The *cogito* (or perhaps the existence of God) became the indubitable foundation from which "all things which I clearly and distinctly perceive [and that come from the God who does not deceive] are of necessity true."[56] The existence and eloquence of a God who does not deceive became the Archimedean point, the certain and indubitable fulcrum on which Descartes could lever his epistemic program.[57] In the third *Meditation* he clearly says that an infinite regression of justifications must be avoided[58] and he expresses his confidence that he has avoided arguing in a circular fashion.[59]

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[54] Descartes, R. *Meditations*. Translated by J. Veitch (London: J. M. Dent, 1994). p. 75.
[55] Ibid., p. 74.
[56] Ibid., p. 116.
[57] Ibid., p. 79.
[58] Ibid., p. 100.
[59] It seems to me that he did not successfully avoid arguing in a vicious circle. To argue that (b_1) God exists because we have a clear and distinct idea of a perfect and infinite being, and then to argue that (b_2) clear and distinct ideas are trustworthy because (b_3) God would not deceive us, seems to repeat (b_1) with (b_3).

The foundationalism of Locke and Kant is not expressed in language that is so clearly architectonic but they both reference beliefs that are, in their opinion, indisputable and they both use a process of justification that proceeds in only one direction, from the immediate belief to the contested mediate beliefs. For Locke, the foundational belief has two parts:

> a. a belief in the existence of external sensible objects that have the power through their qualities (primary and secondary) to produce an idea.[60]
>
> b. a belief in the existence of a mind that can yield knowledge whether by sensation or by reflection.[61]

He does suggest one further path to knowledge, one based on an examination of the probability of a proposition being true, but even here Locke insists that in support of the probably true proposition, the evidence put forward must be things that one knows, propositions of the first order of truth.[62] It is these object-based, or probably object-based, ideas, accurately re-presented by words, that Locke calls true belief or knowledge: the words of the proposition correspond with reality.[63]

In the case of Kant, the epistemological foundation is the transcendental self and its *a priori* categories. The senses provide raw data that the mind then systematizes. Only that part of our experience that can be systematized by the categories and forms can aspire to knowledge. The formal categories of the

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[60] Locke, J, op. cit., Book II,8,8.
[61] Ibid., Book II,1,2ff.
[62] Ibid., Book IV,15,1.

mind act as filters providing the parameters that make knowing possible. Kant's foundationalism is not focused on principles deduced by the mind, or on the nature of objects perceived by the mind but on the nature and structure of the mind itself. Kant's epistemology is more psychological than Descartes' or Locke's. Kant is certain of his knowledge because he is certain of the ability of the logically *a priori* categories and forms to yield such knowledge.[64]

3.4. A Preoccupation with the Mind

A fourth observation of the work of these philosophers is the contribution these thinkers made to the concept of a disembodied mind. One of the prejudices of modern thinkers is to reserve the production of knowledge to the activity of the mind. The mind's enclosure in a physical body, or its location within a community of social interaction, or an inherited tradition, is not considered to be of critical importance to the functioning of the mind or to the production of knowledge.

Early in his career, Descartes wrote extensively about the human body in a little-known work called *The Treatise on Man*, a physiological account of the human body that was probably finished in 1632.[65] This work was written five

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[63] Ibid., Book II,9,9.

[64] I must point out that there is a lively debate among some scholars concerning whether Kant is a foundationalist or not. This debate is extensively addressed by O. O'Neill, "Vindicating Reason," in *The Cambridge Companion to Kant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). p. 208-308. I think we can still conclude that Kant is a type of foundationalist, though perhaps not a Cartesian or an empirical foundationalist.

[65] Descartes, R. "Treatise on Man." In *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Vol. 1.* Translated by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, and D. Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University

years before *The Discourse* and nine years before *The Meditations* but was not nearly as well known as these major works; it was published posthumously in 1664. Donn Welton[66] argues that the key to the modern understanding of the relationship between the mind and the body does indeed rest with Descartes' dualistic model, but this is not because of Descartes' description of the mind. Rather, modern mind-body dualism developed because of Descartes' description of the body in his early writings including *The Rules for the Direction of the Mind* (1628)[67] as well as *The World* and *The Treatise of Man* (1629). In these early writings, Descartes described the body in mechanical, physical and mathematical terms; as wax receives the imprint of the seal, so the body receives the imprint of the objects.[68] Such a body did not seem to have a role to play in the production of knowledge and therefore, for Descartes and his followers, "it is only the mind that is capable of perceiving the truth."[69]

The early career of John Locke was also devoted to the study of the human body; Locke graduated as a medical doctor and served the 1st Earl of Shaftesbury as his personal physician. However Locke did not, anymore than Descartes, assign a noetic role to the body. It was on the mind, the *tabula rasa* that reposed behind human eyes, that the qualities of objects imprinted

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Press, 1985). pp. 99-108.

[66] Welton, D. "Persons of Flesh." Edited by C. S. Evans and M. Westphal. *Christian Perspectives on Religious Knowledge* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1993).

[67] Also published posthumously in 1664, in French.

[68] Descartes, R. "Rules for the Direction of the Mind, Rule Twelve." In *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Vol. 1.* Translated by J. Cottingham, R. Stoothoff, and D. Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). p. 40.

themselves. In "Locke's Philosophy of Body", Edwin McCann develops an argument that

> Locke's treatment of such central philosophical issues as ... the structure and limits of scientific explanation was fundamentally shaped by the conceptions of body that he inherited from Gassendi and Boyle. This conception of body was corpuscularianism.[70]

Corpuscularianism was a form of mechanistic atomism that was intended to replace competing theories about the structure of matter including the Scholastic-Aristotelian doctrine of four elements, the alchemy of Paracelsus, and Cartesian identification of matter with extension. According to McCann, Locke's commitment to some version of corpuscularianism committed him in turn to an epistemology that emphasized impressions by particles on the mind through the sense of sight.

Kant seems to have come to an explicit consideration of the noetic role of the body later in his career. Robin Schott accesses some of Kant's later work[71] to develop an extended argument that

> Kant's treatment of sensibility reflects an ascetic tradition inherited from both Greek and Christian sources, which views the body, sexuality, and in particular women's sexuality as a source of pollution. According to this tradition, thought must be divested of the pollution of sensuous existence, in order to achieve the purity associated with truth.[72]

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[69] Ibid., p. 39.
[70] McCann, E. "Locke's Philosophy of Body." In *The Cambridge Companion to Locke.* Edited by V. Chappell. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). p. 56.
[71] Including *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797) and *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (1798).
[72] Schott, R. "Kant's Treatment of Sensibility." In *New Essays on Kant.* Edited by B. den Ouden.

Schott goes on to show that 'sensibility' is a technical term in Kant that can have either a comprehensive meaning referring to empirical apprehension, or a more restricted meaning where empirical receptivity has two parts, sense experience and feeling. In this second sense, 'sensibility' becomes a more restricted portion of our total sensible apparatus, the faculty of 'intuition' or *anschauung*, and observation becomes primary for knowledge. The other senses (touching, smelling, hearing, and tasting) are less trustworthy as faculties of the intuition. Schott quotes from the *Anthropology*.

> The sense of sight, while not more indispensable than the sense of hearing, is, nevertheless, the noblest [sense], since, among all the senses, it is farthest removed from the sense of touch, which is the most limited condition of perception.[73]

Schott's reading of Kant is that "since inner perceptions contribute nothing to knowledge, one must distance bodily awareness from sensible apprehension in order to have knowledge of the external world."[74]

The role of a 'community' is, as far as I have been able to determine, absent from the reflections of Descartes and Locke. However, there is a role for an 'extended body' or a community in Kant's epistemology. It seems that, according to Kant, the noetic exercise of *pure* reason is an entirely autonomous act; but, when Kant develops his notion of *practical* reason, he acknowledges a major role for a community. Within Kant's larger epistemological program (the

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(New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 1987).
[73] Ibid., p. 215.
[74] Idem.

entire opus of the three *Critiques*), there is a role for the community. The communal element of practical knowledge is most clearly articulated in *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*. In summarizing Kant's view of community and ethics, Byrne says that

> it is plain, then, that Kant did not see moral agents as isolated individuals standing apart from the great mass of humanity... We cannot be ethical in isolation... therefore, according to Kant, the moral law impels us toward the formation of a moral community.[75]

However, Kant outlines a severely limited role for a carefully delimited community, or church.[76] First, the conclusions of practical reason or ethical judgment are not to be confused with knowledge; Kant is *not* arguing that knowledge is contextual or relational. Second, it is still the individual who exercises ethical freedom. Kant is not arguing that ethical convictions are properly a communal construct. He is simply saying that we need a community in order to exercise moral judgment. In a sense, according to Kant, a hermit could not be a moral agent even though he might be capable of moral insight (i.e. could formulate various categorical imperatives).

I realize that we must be cautious in our estimation of these readings of Descartes, Locke, and Kant. Descartes was careful to limit his program to *scientia* and did not claim to be developing a comprehensive epistemology. Locke makes some curious comments regarding the possibility that

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[75] Byrne, J. M. op. cit., p. 223.

[76] Kant's "church" has a decidedly Enlightenment quality. See Kant, I. *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*. Translated by T. M. Greene & H. H. Hudson. (New York: Harper & Row Pub.,

"Omnipotency has given to some Systems of Matter a power to perceive and think"[77] that suggests he was at least willing to admit that the mind may not have exclusive jurisdiction over the process of human thought. Finally, other readers of Kant are less convinced than Schott that the body is despised by Kant.[78]

I believe it is fair to say that when considering the production of knowledge, these modern thinkers emphasized the role of the thinker's independent mind over that of the thinker's body, over the thinker's communal relationships, and over the influence of an epistemic tradition. From these writers, though not exclusively from them, modern cognition became a "strictly mental activity performed on the objects of thought or ideas which populate the mind, a mind isolated from its somatic connection with the physical and social environment."[79] They contributed in a major way to an "Enlightenment worry"[80] about prejudicial traditions and the deceptive power of the body. From a modern perspective a thinker must work hard to get outside all traditions to gaze upon the *ding an sich* without the biases and distortions of bodily senses or traditions. The post-enlightenment regret is that it seems to be impossible to get outside all points of view, to gain a point-of-view-from-nowhere, from which to adjudicate

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1960), p. 93.

[77] Locke, J, op. cit., Book IV,3.6.

[78] An example of such a reading is a work that has only recently come to my attention, S. M. Shell's *The Embodiment of Reason: Kant on Spirit, Generation and Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

[79] Gill, J. H. & M. Sorri. *A Post-modern Epistemology* (Queenston, ON: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1981). p. 105.

[80] I am indebted to Doug Harink of The King's University College, Edmonton, Alberta for this turn of phrase and its explication, communicated through theologos@bethel.edu on Wednesday,

the validity and reliability of all other points of view. We seem to be limited to perspectives; knowledge of the *ding an sich* seems to be an unattainable ideal.

4. Modern Pedagogy

In the first section of this chapter, I outlined some of the distinguishing characteristics of constructivism as we find them listed in the literature. From these characteristics alone, it may not be immediately obvious how constructivism can be distinguished from pedagogical practice common to contemporary schooling. It is not unusual for teachers to guide students in the construction of knowledge. From the literature it seems that constructivism is different in some ways from learning characterized by aggressive teacher direction, but can a case be made to distinguish constructivism from pedagogies already, and for some time, common to public schools, schools and pedagogies that are predominantly informed by late 19th century modernity? How might constructivist schools distinguish themselves from modern, liberal (i.e. Descartes-Lockean-Kantian) schools? To make this distinction, I will outline several features of modern pedagogy as it has developed, in part at least, from the influence of these men. At the end of chapter two I will outline several features of postmodern pedagogy as it might develop, in part at least, from the influence of other men[61] and will argue that only if constructivism is postmodern

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January 14, 1998.

[61] I am painfully aware of the gender bias of my research. My thinking and writing would be enriched by the participation of female authors. Unfortunately I have not had the good fortune of

can it inform a profound reform of public education.

Nancey Murphy and James Wm. McClendon Jr. have undertaken a project to distinguish modern from postmodern theologies.[82] Their work is very helpful to my project in that, on the one hand, I want to examine constructivism as an alternative to modern pedagogies, and, on the other hand, I want to develop a constructivist pedagogy that is not necessarily inimical to Christianity. To make the distinction between modern and postmodern theologies, they display the modern style of thought along three axes that establish a three dimensional Cartesian "space - of - sorts". The three axes are identified as epistemological, linguistic, and metaphysical with the latter including social philosophy and ethics. They add that modern thought has been dominated by three central philosophical theses that modify these axes. The first is epistemological foundationalism - the view that knowledge can be justified only by finding indubitable foundational beliefs upon which it is constructed. The second is the representationalist-expressivist theory of language - the view that language must gain its primary meaning by representing objects or facts to which it refers; otherwise it merely expresses the attitudes of the speaker. And the third is metaphysical atomism or reductionism - the view that reality can be understood by reducing it to its smallest parts and then explaining the role of

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making their acquaintance and I have not aggressively sought them out. I hope that this limitation will be somewhat overcome in the future.

[82] Murphy, N. & J. Wm. McClendon Jr. "Distinguishing Modern and Postmodern Theologies." *Modern Theology 5* (April, 1989), pp. 191-214.

these parts within a larger context, the view that sees the individual as prior to the community, and the community as merely a collection of like individuals, what Robert Bellah et al. refer to as 'lifestyle enclaves'.[83] Their presentation of the style of thought called modern suggests a way to identify modern pedagogies.

4.1. Knowing as Thinking

The modern definition of knowledge as justified true belief[84] has encouraged the view that knowing is the process of crafting propositions that correspond to an external, independent reality. The process of crafting justifiable propositions is known as 'thinking'. Thus knowing is thinking and thinking is knowing; the two processes are identical. Epistemologists have developed various methods of justifying a thought or a claim to know and I have already shown how foundationalism has been the predominant method of justification for Descartes, Locke and Kant. Whether we are considering the optimistic end of the foundationalist axis as represented by the rationalism of Descartes, the empiricism of Locke, the transcendental idealism of Kant, or the more limited optimism of 20th century logical positivists (limited in the sense that they were confident that we could come to knowledge, but of a severely restricted portion of human experience), or if we are considering the pessimistic skeptical end of

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[83] Bellah, R. N., R. Madsen, W. M. Sullivan, A. Swidler, and S. M. Tipton, *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1985), pp. 71-75.
[84] Moser, P. K. "Epistemology." In *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy.* Edited by R. Audi

the axis as represented by David Hume, coming to know, if it is possible, is understood to be a mental activity.

Descartes' decision to make cognition the only certainty of existence has continued to distinguish modern human endeavours, theological and pedagogical. Modern pedagogies can be either optimistic or pessimistic regarding the success with which thinking establishes the known but there will be considerable agreement among modern pedagogies that to think is to know and that knowing is restricted to the act of thinking.[85]

4.2. The Known as a Pyramid

It is important to note that the modern notion of developing truth is a construction project; there is a sense in which constructivism is thoroughly modern. Modern epistemology has been concerned with avoiding skepticism by establishing a solid epistemic foundation and then building from this foundation. The challenge articulated by David Hume was to show how such a construction project was possible; what could qualify as foundational and how could the

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(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 232-38.

[85] James W. Sire convinces me that Friedrich Nietzsche's treatment of "I think, therefore I am" is devastating. Sire directs us to: "On Truth and Lie in the Extra-moral Sense (1873), in *The Portable Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Viking, 1954), pp. 42-47; "How the Real World at Last Became a Myth: The History of an Error," in *Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin Books, 1990), pp. 50-51; and "Beyond Good and Evil," in *The Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, edited by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Modern Library, 1969), pp. 213-14. Nietzsche dismisses human reasoning – both Descartes' 'I' and his 'thinking' - as "paltry, arrogant and self-deluded." See James W. Sire, "On Being a Fool for Christ and an Idiot for Nobody: Logocentricity and Postmodernity" in *Christian Apologetics in the Postmodern World* edited by Timothy R. Phillips & Dennis L. Okholm (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1995), pp. 101-127.

certainty of the foundation be transmitted throughout the structure built from this foundation? Hume not only exposed the cracks in Descartes' foundation of innate ideas and Locke's foundation of sense experience; he also argued that the connections between these foundations and the other elements of the structure through deductive and inductive reasoning were more fragile than desirable for a compelling epistemological structure (i.e. his criticism of cause and effect). What Hume did not doubt was that knowledge was a structure that "mirrored nature."[56] For him, the materials and tools of Descartes and Locke were inadequate but their objective was not questioned. Thus Kant was encouraged to attempt to overcome Hume's particular form of skepticism.

Ernest Sosa has characterized this modern construction project as that of building a pyramid.[57] This project assumes a theory of language where words function in one of two ways: to represent objects of the real world or to express the attitudes or emotions of the speaker. The building blocks of the knowledge pyramid are the words that name objects of the real world; knowledge is limited to propositions that use words to represent reality and does not include propositions that express the attitudes or emotions of the speaker; the latter use of words is 'nonsensical'. Sosa describes the construction of the pyramid in the following formal language.

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[56] From the title of Richard Rorty's excellent account of modern foundationalism and skepticism, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).
[57] Sosa, E. "The Raft and the Pyramid: Coherence versus Foundations in the Theory of Knowledge." *Midwest Studies in Philosophy 5* (1980), pp. 3-25.

> With respect to a body of knowledge K, ... K can be divided into parts K_1, K_2, ..., such that there is some nonsymmetrical relation R (analogous to the relation of physical support) which orders those parts in such a way that there is one - call it F - that bears R to every other part while none of them bears R in turn to F.[88]

The modern project to mirror nature in language received an initial boost by Descarte's use of 'idea', was advanced by Locke's more complex suggestions regarding simple ideas of primary qualities and complex ideas of secondary qualities and came to full bloom in the 20th century with the work of the logical atomists such as the early Wittgenstein, Bertrand Russell and Rudolph Carnap. According to the mature versions of the modern theory of language, not only do meaningful words represent real objects, the very structure of language mirrors the structure of reality.[89]

Types of modern pedagogies can be identified using these two axes of modern thought that identify four quadrants: (1) representational language for either a skeptical epistemology or (2) for a foundationalist epistemology, and (3) expressive language for either a skeptical epistemology or (4) for a foundationalist epistemology.

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[88] Ibid., p. 5.
[89] Murphy & McClendon, op. cit., p. 195.

4.3. The Knower as an Individual

The epistemological changes advanced by Descartes et al. as well as the development of a modern theory of language was related to a third characteristic of modern thought, the flight from the authority of the Church, the Teacher, or the Bible, and the relocation of authority within the individual. It became the individual's clear and distinct ideas or experience of sense data that grounded knowledge and that became epistemically authoritative. Furthermore, political authority came to be based on the consent of individuals (i.e. male property owners, plus various religious qualifications depending on the country of Enlightenment) and moral authority was passed to the realm of individual rational will.

Murphy and McClendon point out that individualism appeared in at least two forms, ontological and methodological.[90] According to the first form, only the individual was 'real' (i.e. the collective is nothing more than the sum of its members) while according to the second, the features of the individuals are the features of the collective. These forms of individualism had important consequences for the political features of modernity. Ontological individualism lies behind the various versions of social contract theory put forward by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau as well as reactions to these theories as articulated by Georg W. F. Hegel and his various interpreters,

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[90] Ibid., p. 196

including Karl Marx. Thus Murphy and McClendon develop a third axis of modernity anchored by individualism and collectivism at either pole.

The methodology of modern social scientists has been influenced by this axis. Should social groupings (such as schools) be understood completely by investigating the motives and behaviour of the individuals who comprise them, or should the group itself be analyzed as an independent phenomenon? Do groups exist or do only individuals exist? In addition to this metaphysical argument, modernists debate an epistemological issue: do we have epistemic access to groups or only to individuals? The success of Newtonian explanation depended on the reduction of a complex phenomenon to its smallest parts and then explained the behaviour of the whole in terms of the behaviour of these parts. This model came to characterize modern explanation in general.

The individualist-collectivist axis can be used to identify modern pedagogies; Rousseau's *Emile* comes immediately to mind as an example of a modern philosophy of education informed by the individualist pole of this axis and pedagogies informed by Marx as found perhaps in eastern Europe during this century might demonstrate the collectivist pole.

Modern pedagogy now can be understood as a three dimensional 'space' with room for many variations. A complete examination of every possibility bounded by these axes is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Perhaps I can be allowed one personal observation to show how useful this model could be. In

my view, our public schools are a curious combination of the foundationalist-representationalist-individualist sector and the skeptical-expressivist-collectivist sectors of this 'space'. With respect to the formal curricular element of public pedagogy, dependence on subjects assumes that language represents reality and that it is the responsibility of each individual to absorb, perhaps even extend, this linguistic mirror. When we 'cover the curriculum' we are helping individuals get the 'facts' right. However, the informal curriculum of civilizing young people shifts to the other sector. Here we are not at all sure of ourselves. We believe that when it comes to issues of student discipline and appropriate student behaviour (e.g. dress codes) the best we can do is shape the students into conformity with vaguely expressed opinions of community values and standards. The 'curriculum' is about 'facts', objective truth that we can prove; the 'life' of the school community is based on 'opinion', subjective perspectives that we hope most students will comply with even though we cannot demonstrate their 'truth'.

Summary of Chapter One

A review of the characteristics of constructivism as presented in section one suggests to me that constructivism can be a modern project. To the degree that teaching is concerned with helping students solve their own intellectual and behavioural problems by the 'proper' or 'natural' exercise of the mind, or to the degree that teaching is undertaken to provide students with final, universal, indubitable, objective, scientific 'answers' to their problems, constructivist pedagogy can be a 'modern' activity in our classrooms, as Roberta Mckay has claimed. Constructivism can be undertaken as a pedagogy that shares the preoccupations of modernists. However, to recall the contrast presented by Robylar et al. and summarized earlier in this dissertation[91], do not practitioners of 'directed instruction' also demonstrate characteristics of the program outlined in this chapter as modern? Instructors, as much as constructors, are concerned "to inspire all students to develop a passion for learning and to become socially responsible citizens in a changing society."[92] Indeed, their apparently more 'scientific' and 'objective' procedures may hold greater promise for achieving this mission. If instructors and constructors are both 'modern' and if they share the same mission, why should a teacher give serious consideration to constructivism? Is constructivism, in contrast to instructivism, not just another

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[91] cf. p. 11.

[92] The mission statement of the Grande Yellowhead Regional Division #35, my employing school board.

'modern' pedagogy, all be it one that focuses more on process than product, on using the more time consuming approach of helping students get the 'right' answers on their own rather than the more efficient approach of directed learning?

This is quite possibly true; we very likely have some modern constructivist teachers in our classrooms, teachers who promote what I would prefer to call discovery learning rather than constructivism. Constructivism in the sense of the term that I prefer to use it emerges when a different set of preoccupations begin to inform teachers. It is to a consideration of three 20th century epistemologists with postmodern preoccupations that I now turn to develop a more restricted understanding of constructivism.

CHAPTER TWO

CONSTRUCTIVISM AND POSTMODERNITY

Modern philosophy has been characterized as a quest for certainty.[1] In the middle of 1949, Ludwig Wittgenstein responded to G. E. Moore's claim to *know* a number of propositions *for sure* with reflections that have been collected under the title *On Certainty*.[2] The epistemic temper of Moore can be invoked with Richard Bernstein's phrase, 'Cartesian anxiety'. Moore was still pursuing Descartes' search for a stable and reliable rock upon which to secure a body of theories "from which all prejudice, bias and unjustified conjecture [had] been eliminated."[3] As Bernstein explains, for modern thinkers "either there is some support for our being, a fixed foundation for our knowledge, or we cannot escape the forces of darkness that envelop us with madness, with intellectual and moral chaos."[4] The fact/value, right/wrong, true/false, and objective/subjective dichotomies that we as educators continue to reference when developing curriculum and tests betrays our allegiance to the modern quest for certainty.

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[1] Dewey, J. *The Quest for Certainty: a study of the relation of knowledge and action* (New York: Putnam, 1929/1960).
[2] Wittgenstein, L. *On Certainty*. Translated by D. Paul & G. E. M. Anscombe. Edited by G. E. M. Anscombe & G. H. von Wright. (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1969).
[3] Wolterstorff, N. *Reason Within the Bounds of Religion* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1976). p. 28.
[4] Bernstein, R. *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983). p. 18.

Most constructivists, on the other hand, have abandoned the modern quest for certainty in *both* post-Kantian realms of 'knowledge', in the noumenal realm of faith *and* in the phenomenal realm of science.

At this point, an important question to ask is, of what are most constructivists not certain? Are they not certain that there is an external reality (anti-realists) or are they more conservative in their agnosticism in the sense that they are not certain that we can justify, with certainty, our knowledge of reality (non-foundational realists)? Olssen points out that although "not all post-positivists [a collective term within which he includes constructivists] have adopted the anti-realist position, constructivists do run the risk of scholastic solipsism, of conceptualizing the process of knowledge acquisition in highly individualistic terms, and of ultimately [leading] to idealism and invariably to relativism."[5] Similarly, Matthews states that even though there is no *necessary* divorce between theory-laden observation and realism, constructivism is commonly individual-centred, experience-based, and relativist. For most constructivists, knowledge does not tell us about the world at all; it tells us about our experiences, and how they are best organized."[6]

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[5] Olssen, M. op. cit., p. 285, 289 and 292.
[6] Matthews, M. R. op. cit., p. 301

If it is true that "epistemology, even when abandoned, ... drives the rest of constructivist educational theory and practice"[7] and if anastatic Christian theology is metaphysically realistic though epistemologically non-foundational, yet not individualistic, solipsistic, or relativistic (as will be argued in chapter three), the Christian constructivist teacher is well served by an epistemology that is realistic but non-foundational. For the constructivist teacher who is concerned to promote learning as a process of organizing the experienced world and who views knowledge as constructs that make meaning-full participation in this world possible, the reduction of knowledge in the manner of classical foundationalism is unacceptable. Adherence to classical foundationalism removes too much of the human experience from rational thought and for some contemporary thinkers[8] this tradition faces its own epistemological crises. For them, the epistemic project of the Enlightenment faces a number of unresolved issues that resist solution by inquiry and debate according to the project's own standards. This impasse demands an "imaginative conceptual innovation" while maintaining continuity with the "shared beliefs which define the tradition."[9] To use the term often associated with Thomas Kuhn, the present post-Nietzschean context demands a paradigm shift,[10] a conversion of the modern mind.

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[7] Idem.

[8] I suggest that Wilfred Sellars, Willard Van Orman Quine, Richard Rorty and Donald Davidson are among these writers, in addition to those who will be referenced directly in the following discussion.

[9] MacIntyre, A. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), p. 362.

[10] Kuhn, T. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

1. Converting the Modern Mind

During the second half of the 20th century, a number of non-foundational epistemologists have been at work. I have chosen to foreground the work of Michael Polanyi, Bernard Lonergan and Alasdair MacIntyre because they are openly critical of foundationalism and because they are Christians.[11] Even as I followed an 'archaeological adventure' with respect to Descartes, Locke and Kant to gain some understanding of the relationship between constructivism and modernity, I will now undertake such an adventure with respect to Polanyi, Lonergan and MacIntyre to gain some understanding of the relationship between constructivism and various alternatives to modernity.

Prior to this exploration, one general point needs to be made regarding 'relativism'. From the perspective of classical foundationalism, the beliefs of constructivists will be relativistic, by definition. Absolute, objective beliefs must, according to classical foundationalism, be indubitable foundational beliefs or must in the appropriate way be justified by foundational beliefs. Since constructivists dismiss the possibility of classical foundationalism, those who accept the efficacy of classical foundationalism to establish absolute, universally true noetic claims will view their epistemic program as relativistic.

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[11] I do not want to claim that these are the only or even the most helpful epistemologists available to all Christian constructivist teacher. My only claim is that they have been very helpful to me and represent epistemologists who can inform others who like myself are developing a Christian constructivist pedagogy.

This is a serious challenge to the development of a constructivist pedagogy. It is difficult to imagine a school where 'anything goes' as though 'relativism' meant that anyone's knowledge was as warranted as anyone else's and that there was no way of discriminating between right and wrong. Each of the writers to be examined address this issue in their own way, but they all address it and are in general agreement that

1. there is an objective reality external to us,
2. we have beliefs concerning that objective reality,
3. we can attain true justified beliefs (i.e. knowledge) of reality, and
4. we are warranted in accepting some beliefs as true and rejecting others as false.

What they deny is that the rules for justifying beliefs as true and rational as they have been proposed and practised by classical foundationalism are sustainable. Theorizing or the development of a belief structure regarding the nature of the world must, according to these men, proceed without foundations of the indubitable (and in this sense, absolute, and objective) kind. They can only be accused of relativism (i.e. of proposing that any and every belief is justified and true) if classical foundationalism is maintained as the *only* theory for epistemic theorizing. The following three men invite us to consider the possibility that we can know with conviction even though we cannot know with certainty, without sliding into a relativistic epistemic swamp where right (as well as good and beautiful) is might.

1.1. Michael Polanyi (1891-1976)

Michael Polanyi invites constructivist teachers to consider a 'post-critical' philosophy. His major work, *Personal Knowledge,* "is primarily an inquiry into the nature and justification of scientific knowledge,"[12] but for those teachers who are disenchanted with the predominantly behaviouristic beliefs and practices of public education and who are considering a shift towards a constructivist pedagogy, Polanyi's *magnum opus* is worth the effort needed to gain even a minimal understanding of his epistemology.

In the 1930's, Polanyi was disturbed by events that in his view were prompted by increasing moral nihilism and political totalitarianism. The massive suffering and growing anxiety of the West was, in his considered opinion, due to a growing lack of confidence in our capacity to know. He was forced to face the possibility that we live in a world from which the concept of truth as 'what is the case' had given way to a world where we could speak only of feelings and experiences. His prolonged struggle with 'objectivity' and 'subjectivity' draws constructivist teachers to a consideration of what may be one of this century's most important books on education.

His unhappy hearing before the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Physical Chemistry initially prompted this struggle in 1916. The Institute rejected his thesis regarding "The Absorption of Gases by a Solid Non-volatile Absorbent" because

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[12] Polanyi, M. *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p. vii.

it did not fit prevailing theories on the topic.[13] His initial suspicions regarding the objectivity of science were confirmed in the 1930's when both Joseph Stalin and Adolph Hitler claimed to be developing 'scientific' societies. He gradually came to realize that "science does not represent the attitude of the little child sitting down before the facts, but that science's methodology is guided by belief ... belief which may or may not take into account the full range of substantive evidence."[14] He

> came to see that the general public adoration of the supposed objectivity of scientific endeavour accentuated the use of concealed subjectivity. This shaped [his] conviction concerning the inevitable interaction between science and society, a vital factor in his subsequent work in the area of epistemology.[15]

If science was not about truth, about 'what is the case', and was instead only a tool used by a politically powerful elite to authorize social change, as far as Polanyi was concerned, science itself would collapse. His alternative was not to reinvigorate scientific positivism but to call on the scientific community to acknowledge the element of personal responsibility in its work.

Polanyi traced the source of this crisis within the scientific community to a false sense of 'objectivity', to the illusion that there could be a kind of knowing from which the knowing subject, a human being shaped by historical, cultural and

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[13] Kuhn, H. B. "Michael Polanyi, Modern Pioneer in Epistemology." In *A Celebration of Ministry: Essays in Honor of Franck Bateman Stanger.* Edited by K. C. Kinghorn. (Francis Asbury Pub. Co. Inc., 1982). p. 23.
[14] Ibid., p.24.
[15] Idem.

psychological factors, could be eliminated or ignored. The effect of this illusion was the removal of vast amounts of what we thought we knew to the realm of opinion. Polanyi, as a working scientist rather than as a philosopher of science, was familiar with the personal factors that shape all scientific work. He was familiar with the necessary apprenticeship of the young scientist to the scientific community in order to develop the skills of the trade and the significant influence of intuition, imagination, judgement, courage, and patience within the scientific enterprise.

In the preface to *Personal Knowledge* Polanyi makes his central concern clear. The ideal of 'scientific detachment' is not particularly harmful in the exact sciences because it is in fact disregarded there. Its destructive influence is primarily outside these sciences, in the outlook of those who are not scientists themselves but who aim to know 'scientifically'. Scientific knowing is not impersonal or objective. It, like all human knowing, is a skill performed using clues and tools, things used but not observed themselves.

Polanyi's observation of the tacit integration of the subsidiary or proximal with the focal or distal is at the heart of his philosophy.

> The heart of Polanyi's philosophy is his theory of tacit integration, which makes it clear that knowing must be a personal act and involve personal judgement and commitment, in contrast to the explicitness, critical testing and impersonality required by Objectivism.[16]

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[16] Allen, R. T. "The Philosophy of Michael Polanyi and its Significance for Education." *Journal of Philosophy of Education 12*, p. 167.

Polanyi is concerned to show that there is a *necessarily* tacit (i.e. silent or inarticulate) dimension to all knowing, a dimension the subject *cannot* articulate and may not even be aware of but that plays a critical role in the noetic experience; we know more than we can tell. Polanyi's epistemic model is bipolar in that the active knower is attending *from* what is subsidiary or proximal (e.g. the pianist's hands or the words of an argument) and attending *to* what is focal or distal (e.g. the performance of the music or the disputed claim of an argument). Tacit integration is the process whereby we exercise these two poles of intellectual activity.

Not only does knowing involve tacit integration, knowing demands a personal commitment or what Polanyi calls, an indwelling of the known by the knower.

> The establishment of truth is decisively dependent on a set of personal criteria of our own which cannot be formally defined. If *everywhere* it is the inarticulate that has the last word, unspoken yet decisive, then a corresponding abridgement of the status of spoken truth is inevitable. The ideal of an impersonally detached truth would have to be re-interpreted, to allow for the *inherently personal character* of the act by which truth is declared (emphasis added).[17]

Polanyi insists that the apparently impersonal, objective, scientific enterprise, as much as any enterprise of human knowing, is an exercise of a deeply personal involvement, a commitment. He recognizes the dangers of solipsism and relativism within his program[18] but is convinced that he has avoided them, as

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[17] Polanyi, M. op. cit., p. 71.
[18] Ibid., ch. 10.

best any human being can. If by 'relativistic' we mean any epistemic act of personal choice and commitment, Polanyi is a relativist. However, if Polanyi is correct in declaring that "all thought has a fideistic base, that back of much of verified knowledge, both scientific and theological, lies much that is, in a very real sense, unexpressed and possibly even ineffable,"[19] making a personal choice cannot distinguish relativism from absolutism. Relativism must be about something other than epistemic choice, the unavoidable act of epistemic commitment.

Polanyi argues that discrimination between rival epistemic claims cannot be made with confidence prior to an act of commitment to a particular culture and epistemic tradition. The best we can hope for is truth revealed by an act of commitment in a circumstance shared between those who disagree. Our participation in a 'fiduciary framework' yields as much certitude, though not indubitable certainty, as we can properly expect.

> Tacit assent and intellectual passions, the sharing of an idiom and of a cultural heritage, affiliation to a like-minded community: such are the impulses that shape our vision of the nature of things on which we rely for our mastery of things. No intelligence, however critical or original, can operate outside such a fiduciary framework.[20]

After insisting on the requirement of an act of personal commitment by all who seek to know, Polanyi goes on to say

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[19] Kuhn, H. B., op. cit. p. 30.
[20] Polanyi, M. op. cit. p. 266.

> this does not make our understanding *subjective*. Comprehension is neither an arbitrary act nor a passive experience but a responsible act claiming universal validity. Such knowing is indeed *objective* in the sense of establishing contact with a hidden reality; a contact that is defined as the condition of anticipating an indefinite range of as yet unknown (and perhaps yet inconceivable) true implications. It seems reasonable to describe this fusion of the personal and the objective as Personal Knowledge.[21]

In short, all knowing is an intellectual commitment, in the area of science as well as in the vast areas of everyday knowing that we may not call 'scientific'. Ultimately it is our own "allegiance that upholds these convictions, and it is on such warrant alone that they can lay claim to another."[22] We begin our knowing within a particular community but we reason with 'universal intent'. We make "statements that claim to be accepted by anyone who understands the problem for which they offer an answer."[23] To be human is to enter an adventure of thought in which belief and personal decisions play a critical role; "We must now recognize belief once more as the source of all knowledge."[24] We are protected from vicious relativism by the need to convince other epistemic communities of the coherence of our explanations and the correspondence of our knowledge with an independent reality that draws us to its mysteries. Polanyi is a realist[25] for whom there is no absolute, universal, unchanging knowledge but for whom there is truth (i.e. knowledge claims that show forth the internal coherence of reality).

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[21] Polanyi, M. op. cit., p. viii.
[22] Idem.
[23] Scott, D. *Everyman Revived: The Common Sense of Michael Polanyi* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1985/94). p. 47.

Polanyi's epistemological project can inform an epistemologically non-foundational and metaphysically realistic version of constructivism. Even more important to my mind, not only do we gain confidence in the possibility of an epistemologically and metaphysically grounded constructivist pedagogy from Polanyi, we also gain a sense of urgency regarding the importance of this pedagogy. Drusilla Scott quotes Polanyi's fearful comment that a false scientific outlook will lead to immense evil.

> I [Michael Polanyi] believe that the doctrines derived from our erroneous scientific worldview have in our days shattered our culture, casting much of the world into mindless servitude, while afflicting the rest with basic confusion.[26]

Polanyi's call to a post-critical epistemology, one that I believe coheres with a constructivist pedagogy, can contribute in a profound way to a movement away from a pedagogy that consists mostly of the instruction of objectified bits of knowledge that do not demand acts of personal commitment.

1.2. Bernard J. F. Lonergan (1904-1984)

Bernard Lonergan was born into an Irish, French-Canadian and United Empire Loyalist family of Buckingham, Quebec. He completed his undergraduate education in philosophy, mathematics, and classical languages and in 1940 at the age of 36 completed a doctorate in theology at the Gregorian University,

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[24] Polanyi, M. op. cit., p. 266.
[25] Ibid., p. 133.
[26] Ibid., p. 3.

Rome. He taught in Montreal, Toronto, Rome and Boston. In 1971 he was invested as Companion of the Order of Canada and, at the age of 80 he died in the Jesuit Infirmary of Pickering, Ontario. His two major publications are *Insight, A Study of Human Understanding*[27] and *Method in Theology.*[28]

Lonergan is a significant 20th century Canadian scholar of mathematics, classics, philosophy, and theology. The extent of his influence and the importance of his work are at their earliest stages of development and could become far-reaching. M. J. Matustik and Hugo A. Meynell offer concise overviews of Lonergan's place in the pantheon of contemporary thinkers.

Matustik places Lonergan in a "historical sequence of differentiated controls of meaning and value."[29] From Tradition (i.e. the beginning of articulate philosophy) until Christendom, thinkers such as Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Cicero, and Aquinas were focused on a permanent, external, real, and ideal world that, if properly explicated, properly ordered our lives. From Christendom to Modernity, Descartes and Galileo; Locke and Hume; Kant and Hegel were focused on an interior control of meaning and values. Finally, from Modernity to the Contemporary Interdisciplinary Worldview, Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud; Kierkegaard and Dostoevsky; Camus, Sartre, and Husserl; Habermas, Ricoeur, and *Lonergan* are engaged in a crisis of control and a search for a

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[27] Lonergan, B. J. F. *Insight, A Study of Human Understanding* (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1956).
[28] Lonergan, B. J. F. *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).
[29] Matustik, M. J. *Mediation of Deconstruction: Bernard Lonergan's Method in Philosophy, The Argument from Human Operational Development* (New York: University Press of America, 1988),

method out of this crisis. Matustik further divides the third group into the 'Masters of Suspicion' (Nietzsche, Marx, Freud, Derrida, Foucault, Lacan, Deleuze, and Rorty) who are working in counterpoint to the 'Masters of Recovery' (Habermas, Ricoeur, Metz, and Lonergan).[30]

In brief, Matustik thinks that Lonergan belongs with those thinkers who have not given up entirely on the Enlightenment project. Rather, Lonergan recognizes that some significant alterations must be made to it to avoid the profound skepticism and nihilism of those philosophers who have determined to deconstruct the metaphysical, ontological, epistemological, and ethical systems of the trajectory of systematizers culminating in Kant and Hegel. Lonergan is presented as a thinker within a group of thinkers who are concerned to recover the legitimacy of human subjectivity, human history, and, with the notable exception of Habermas, God.

Hugo Meynell offers additional introduction to Lonergan.[31] In his view, the trajectory of philosophical thought from Nietzsche to Foucault, Derrida et al.

> attribute the intelligible order which we seem to find in the universe simply to the activity of the human mind, and deny that it can be rightly inferred to exist in reality itself prior to the imposition of a conceptual framework by the human mind in the process of understanding it.[32]

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p. 198.
[30] Ibid., p. 189.
[31] Meynell, H. *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991).
[32] Ibid., p. 180.

These 'Masters of Suspicion' are identified as thinkers who are proposing a form of idealism that promotes the notion that when all is said and done, all knowledge claims are made more or less in the interests of self and power.

Interestingly, Meynell places Lonergan in a different trajectory from that of the 'suspicious ones' but in one that includes Nietzsche. From Aristotle and Aquinas, running through an alternative understanding of Nietzsche (i.e. an alternative to the line that leads to Foucault et al.) and culminating in Lonergan, Meynell believes that we are presented with an epistemology where

> both the phenomenon which we experience and the intelligible pattern within which they are found to cohere are aspects of the real objective world which confronts the human inquirer, and which would exist even if there were no intelligent beings to inquire into it.[33]

This quotation anticipates Lonergan's characterization of himself as a realist, a posture he contrasts with empiricism, idealism, and what he calls naive realism. For Lonergan, "the real world is not that which is apprehended by *mere* observation" but demands disciplined experience, understanding, judgement and belief.[34] However, this is to anticipate the discussion of Lonergan's method.

Hugo Meynell has stated that Lonergan "has arguably made the most detailed and searching examination by a contemporary philosopher of what it is to know and to come to know."[35] Unfortunately, this examination is also very

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[33] Ibid., p. 181.
[34] Lonergan, B. J. F. *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 238.
[35] Meynell, H. op. cit., p. 30.

difficult to summarize.[36] His writings on methodology are found primarily in the very long *Insight* and in the relatively short but equally complicated Part One of *Method in Theology*. Lonergan himself summarizes his 'Method' as a framework for "collaborative creativity."[37] For my purposes, this summary is adequate. For Lonergan, coming to know is a collaborative effort and it is one that depends on the creativity of the members of the collaboration. This collaboration is disciplined by what Lonergan calls the 'transcendental concepts' of being attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible. The use of these concepts becomes the 'transcendental method' that "is not achieved by reading books or listening to lectures or analyzing language. It is a matter of heightening one's consciousness by objectifying it, and that is something that each one, ultimately, has to do in himself and for himself."[38] Lonergan does provide an extended discussion of how he sees this method working but he essentially is offering an invitation to the reader to be attentive, intelligent, reasonable, and responsible rather than offering "a set of rules to be followed meticulously by a dolt."[39]

Lonergan was a philosopher and theologian who had a restless modern mind. He was not anti-science but he clearly rejected empiricism and any attempt to ground certain knowledge with ocular experience.[40] He insisted that the act of knowing demands not only attentiveness, intelligence, and provision of

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[36] Meynell certainly offers a helpful summary of Lonergan's views on the nature of knowledge in general in chapters 1-3 of *The Theology of Bernard Lonergan*, op. cit.
[37] Lonergan, B. op cit., p. xi.
[38] Ibid., p. 14.
[39] Ibid., p. xi.
[40] Ibid., p. 8.

reasons but also demands an act of judgement followed by an act of responsible commitment. These assertions have much in common with the ideas of Michael Polanyi, and, like Polanyi, Lonergan explicitly acknowledged the essential role of the community in the formation of knowledge.

> Community is not just an aggregate of individuals within a frontier, for that overlooks its formal constituent, which is common meaning. Such common meaning calls for a common field of experience and, when lacking, people get out of touch [with reality].[41]

These themes of judgement, commitment and communal construction of meaning are mostly silent in the modern mind but begin to resonate in minds tuned to constructivist pedagogy. Frederick Crowe urges us to read Lonergan as a thinker who fully understood the communal nature of coming to know, the importance of commitment, intimacy, love, respect, and friendliness within the community, the tragic consequences of a persistent refusal to convert to an alternate diagnosis of a messy situation, and how communities can be healed. "Where hatred plods around in ever narrower vicious circles, love breaks the bonds of psychological and social determinism with the conviction of faith and the power of hope."[42]

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[41] Ibid., p. 356.
[42] Crowe, F. E. *Bernard Lonergan and the Community of Canadians* (Toronto: Lonergan Research Institute, 1992), p. 14.

1.3. Alasdair MacIntyre (b. 1929)

Alasdair MacIntyre is an enigmatic thinker. He is encouraged to write moral philosophy at a time when the influence of various positivists among intellectuals has declined (an influence that generally discouraged ethicists from making epistemic claims), but when our society's confidence in its ability to make public ethical judgements also seems to have declined. In other words, this seems to be a time when philosophers like MacIntyre are encouraged to make public claims for the truth of ethical discourse, but when many members of our society are content to claim that moral choices are based on nothing more than private opinion.

MacIntyre came to a version of Catholic Thomism by way of Karl Marx! His conversion was announced in 1981 with the publication of *After Virtue* and he followed this initial statement of a change in direction with *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* and *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry.*[43] MacIntyre's central concern is

> to explain exactly why it is that moral debate in today's society is so shrill and so rarely leads to consensus - why, in other words, society seems utterly incapable of coming to enough basic agreement in matters of ethics to enable it to deal with the moral chaos that surrounds us.[44]

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[43] MacIntyre, A. *After Virtue* (1981/84); *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (1988); and *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (1990) all published in Notre Dame, IN. by the University of Notre Dame Press.

[44] Oakes, E. T. "The Achievement of Alasdair MacIntyre." *First Things 65.* (August/September 1996), p. 22.

MacIntyre begins *After Virtue* with a parable of a time after laboratories have been burnt, physicists have been lynched, books and scientific instruments destroyed; the scientific community has been annihilated. Then, an enlightened people seek to revive science although they have largely forgotten what it was. What they have are fragments: archival evidence of experiments detached from their theoretical contexts, parts of theoretical treatises unrelated to other theories or experiments, instruments whose use has been forgotten, detached pages from books and journals, and these not fully legible. These scavengers of a previous, mostly forgotten scientific culture then attempt to re-embody a set of practices that go under the revived names of physics, chemistry and biology.

> Adults argue with each other about the respective merits of relativity theory, evolutionary biology, and the phlogiston theory, although they possess only a very partial knowledge of each. Children learn by heart the surviving portions of the periodic table and recite as incantations some of the theorems of Euclid. Nobody, or almost nobody, realizes that what they are doing is not natural science in any proper sense at all. For everything they do and say [used to] conform to certain canons of consistency and coherence; [but now] those contexts which would be needed to make sense of what they are doing have been lost, perhaps irretrievably.[45]

Such, says MacIntyre, is the present state of moral argument. Some hidden catastrophe has undermined moral reasoning, so that all we have now are words like 'good' and 'moral' and 'useful' ripped from their contexts, surviving only as relics of a previous time. So we live like survivors of a nuclear holocaust, using tools fashioned for a complex moral discourse as crude weapons to carry on

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[45] MacIntyre, A. *After Virtue* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 1.

primitive moral debates.

Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry is MacIntyre's clearest statement of his struggle to find a third alternative for philosophical pursuits following the departure by philosophers from Medieval scholasticism. He shares Nietzsche's rejection of the Cartesian-Lockean-Kantian alternative (the one I have identified as modernity and MacIntyre calls 'encyclopaedia', of which Marxism is one version). However, he is unwilling to follow Nietzsche and his contemporary disciples (particularly Foucault) in a proposed alternative to the encyclopaedic one, an alternative that he calls 'genealogy'. According to some commentators at least (e.g. Oakes), his third alternative, what MacIntyre calls 'tradition', is still being developed and may ultimately collapse.

MacIntyre does not want to concede to either the encyclopaedists or the genealogists the rules of debate concerning what is deemed to be 'rational'. He thinks that both of these two alternatives share the same rules and he wants to pre-empt the debate by redrawing *all* objections offered *against* liberalism (the umbrella term for both encyclopaedists and genealogists) as debates *within* liberalism, debates between conservative liberals, liberal liberals and radical liberals.

MacIntyre's alternative develops from a reconsideration of Augustine, Aristotle, the New Testament and Thomas Aquinas. In this way, he includes himself among the post-scientific age scavengers but he is a scavenger who

insists on digging deeper into the rubble in search of an alternative to the decontextualized mutterings of the neo-scientists. In his view, a coherent, intelligible, and rationally defensible ethical, political, or theological discourse can be re-established only by reconsidering the widespread rejection of Aristotelian teleology. Teleology is a key concept in MacIntyre's proposed solution to our contemporary muddled discourse, and its loss is the cause of the catastrophe described in the parable that opens *After Virtue*. Teleology is the philosophical doctrine that all of nature, or at least all intentional agents within nature, are goal-directed or functionally organized[46] and is a style of explanation that saturates Aristotle's philosophy. After the combined impact of Newton and Darwin however, this type of explanation went out of fashion, not only among physicists following Newton and biologists following Darwin, but also among social 'scientists' and ethicists trying to be 'scientific'. And thus, as far as MacIntyre is concerned, we find ourselves in a state of ethical incoherence and irrationality. "Emptying moral discourse of teleological concepts because of the perceived impact of Newton and Darwin has been for MacIntyre *the* catastrophe of our times."[47]

The remainder of MacIntyre's program is an attempt to convince us that the rejection of a teleological conception of the human enterprise has resulted in various inadequate groundings for human existence. Descartes and his followers

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[46] Hull, D. L. "Teleology." In *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. Edited by R. Audi. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 791.
[47] Oakes, E. T. op. cit.

(i.e. the encyclopaedists) as well as those who self-consciously attempted to reject the encyclopaedic tradition (mainly the programs of Nietzschean genealogy and Kierkegaardian existentialism) rendered us incapable of coherent moral discourse; We must recover from the catastrophic turn away from teleology. To develop ethics from a description of man-as-he-is that omits a conception of his essential, realizable nature can, in MacIntyre's analysis, result only in Nietzschean emotivism and nihilism.[48] However, a judgement of good or bad in the ethical sense is adjudicable *and rational* if moral behaviour is goal-determined.

Finally, to extricate ourselves from our post-scientific muddle, we must not only recover teleological discourse; MacIntyre urges us to recover a 'traditional' discourse. By 'tradition' he means the "*embodiment* of a distinctive conception of rational inquiry" (emphasis added).[49]

> A tradition will have some contingent historical starting point in some situation in which some set of established beliefs and belief-presupposing practices ... were put into question, sometimes by being challenged from some alternative point of view, sometimes because of an incoherence identified in the beliefs, sometimes because of a discovered resourcelessness in the face of some theoretical or practical problem, sometimes by a combination of these.[50]

So a tradition develops within a community of believers, is articulated, amended, modified, and augmented in order to serve the goals of the community. It is also

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[48] MacIntyre, A. *After Virtue* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), ch. 18.
[49] MacIntyre, A. *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1990), p. 116.
[50] Idem.

within this development of a tradition that we discover beliefs capable of evaluating other beliefs and practices as more or less rational, of establishing what truth is and how rationality and truth are connected. The attempt to decontextualize rationality and truth from tradition and community making them impersonal, universal and disinterested was the ill-fated project of the Cartesian-Lockean-Kantian encyclopaedists. The attempt to deny rationality and truth, making them the unwitting representatives of particular, powerful elites was the perhaps even more disastrous project of the Nietzschean genealogists. MacIntyre argues that we can be rational and we can make truth claims but only because we are committed to some particular theoretical or doctrinal standpoint; we must believe in order to understand.

> Reason can only move towards being genuinely universal and impersonal insofar as it is neither neutral nor disinterested, that membership in a particular type of moral community, one from which fundamental dissent has to be excluded, is a condition for genuinely rational inquiry and more especially for moral and theological inquiry ... A prior commitment is required and the conclusions which emerge as inquiry progresses will of course have been partially and crucially predetermined by the nature of this initial commitment.[51]

Polanyi, Lonergan and MacIntyre are three contemporary philosophers who encourage us to seek out epistemological, ethical, theological, and political alternatives to both the Cartesian-Lockean-Kantian tradition of scientistic liberalism (i.e. modernity) on the one hand, and various reactions to this

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[51] Ibid., p. 60.

liberalism that purport to be alternatives but which share fundamental qualities of the very tradition they hope to overcome (i.e. ultra-modernity).

Henry H. Knight III calls these two options (1) the 'critical' tradition of the first Enlightenment that was focused on nature and its explanation through mathematical models and (2) the 'ultra-critical' tradition of a second Enlightenment that has been focused on history and its explanation through models of social structure and function.[52] The critics of medieval scholasticism from Descartes to perhaps Hegel laid out the philosophical foundation of modernity, the features of which include individualism, rationalism, methodological doubt, dualism, and optimism. The ultra-critics from Ludwig Feuerbach (1804-72) through Karl Marx (1818-1883), Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900), Sigmund Freud (1856-1940), and their contemporary deconstructing disciples including Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Richard Rorty, and Jean-Francois Lyotard maintain but radicalize these features of the first Enlightenment. It is the opinion of Knight that thinkers such as those whom I have discussed at some length above urge us to move to a third option, what Knight calls (3) a 'post-critical' tradition.[53]

It is difficult to avoid the 'post' plague that seems to have infected a considerable portion of contemporary scholarship. Polanyi presents himself as a post-liberal. Roger Olson has called MacIntyre "the paradigm postmodern

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[52] Knight, H. *A Future for Truth: Evangelical Theology in a Postmodern World* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997), p. 56.
[53] Ibid., p. 55.

thinker."[54] Lonergan has not, as far as I am aware, been 'posted' but from Matustik and Meynell I have reason to believe that he is post Descartes, Locke and Kant for sure and probably in some sense post Nietzsche, Marx and Freud. Throughout this dissertation I use terms such as postevangelical, postconservative, postliberal and postmodern; some clarification seems to be in order.

Without digressing into an extended discussion of the referential validity and reliability of these many terms, I will just state my procedure.[55] I am using this collection of terms to refer to those who eschew as illusion the notion that there really is philosophy or theology without perspective or theory without vested interests. I will from here on use 'postmodern' to refer to those whom I regard as having renounced the longing for sure and certain, universal, once-for-all foundations to knowledge and action. These include writers and thinkers who have courageously articulated explicitly Christian convictions that contradict in important ways those who claim to speak for a universalized humanity. Their preoccupations contrast with the preoccupations of the modernists and will be called postmodern preoccupations.

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[54] Olson states that "the paradigm postmodern thinker in this evangelical's estimation [i.e. Olson's] is Notre Dame philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre." cf. Olson, R. "The Future of Evangelical Theology." *Christianity Today 42* (February 9, 1998), p. 48.

[55] There is abundant literature devoted to explicating the common themes of what I have termed the 'post' plague. A quick reference is "Toward a Postmodern World - The Santa Barbara Conference, 1987" that can be found at the web site of the Center for Process Studies (ctr4process.org) or in the *CPS Newsletter 11* (Winter, 1987).

2. Four Preoccupations of Postmodernists

Polanyi, Lonergan, and MacIntyre have had and are having an influence on the way we think about thinking and on what we know about knowing in this postmodern era. They are immensely complex writers and cannot be forced to speak with one voice but they do encourage me to consider some options to those developed by and for modernity.

In chapter one, section three of this dissertation, I presented four preoccupations of modernity: an assumption of universality, an optimistic practicality, epistemological certainty via foundationalism and a view of the mind that ignored the body. I am suggesting that Polanyi, Lonergan, and MacIntyre should be included among the postmodern thinkers who have contributed to a shift from these preoccupations and to the development of epistemic as well as ethical, social, and political programs that are discontinuous with modernity. At least four postmodern preoccupations can be outlined in counterpoint to those of modernity.

2.1. From Universality to Community

The image of the autonomous individual in search of universally true laws of nature expressible with mathematical clarity has been exchanged for a more communally situated thinker emphasizing relationality and co-operation. Instead of the individual being removed from the community to an unbiased, objective, scientific perspective to discover the laws of nature, it is recognized that the

individual, even the individual thinker, is always working within a community. For the development of knowledge, the community comes before the individual. The individual is formed by the community and develops her skills, attitudes, and knowledge as an apprentice within the community. Participation in the life of a community is what forms the personality of the individual. Postmodern thinkers do not pretend to be removed from their traditions to a point-of-view-from-nowhere. In fact, they are of the opinion that we can only be sensible and coherent in our speech and behaviour when we acknowledge a point-of-view-from-somewhere, the context within which we function.

Not only have these postmodern thinkers retreated from a universal perspective to a communal one, the ambition of modern philosophers to apply universally true laws of nature to all societies of the known universe has been abandoned. These philosophers have abandoned the claims of most of their predecessors that within the Western experience they had discovered a set of universally true answers to ancient philosophical questions regarding the true, the good and the beautiful.

Alasdair MacIntyre plays a pivotal role in the program to recover moral and epistemological communities as an alternative to the project of the Enlightenment to universalize ethical judgements and epistemological dogma that originated in the private reflection of individual thinkers. MacIntyre shows how "the Enlightenment project of justifying morality ... the attempt to develop an

independent rational justification of morality"[56] failed because it sought to derive a universal ethic from human nature (i.e. from man as he is). Whether the chosen human element was rationality, emotion, or the will, no credible basis for traditional Western morality could be established. There was no third option from which the rival accounts of morality could be assessed.

It is MacIntyre's considered opinion that a critical turn was taken by Descartes, a turn that we must reconsider in order to regain the ability to rationally debate and resolve ethical disputes. His premodern predecessors, both classical and medieval, had grounded ethics and rational debate about ethics very differently. Their accounts of the moral life depended in each case on the contrast between human nature as it is and human nature as it could be, with a means of moving from the former to the latter.[57] It was the description of the essence or goal (*telos*) of humanity that provided the criteria of what was moral, and this goal was embodied in the particular moral traditions of a community. He defines a living tradition as "a historically extended, socially embodied argument" concerning "the goods which constitute that tradition."[58] In one sense the *telos* is already known as the ethical goal toward which the participants strive; in another sense the *telos* is only fully known as it is sought by way of encountering dangers, temptations, and distractions along the way.[59] It is only as members of a community are faithful to one another (remain members) and frame their

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[56] MacIntyre, A. *After Virtue* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), p. 38.
[57] Ibid., pp. 50-51.
[58] Ibid., p. 207.

disputes within their tradition (remember) that disputes can be resolved.

Is MacIntyre, then, a relativist? Can ethical disputes as well as other disputes regarding the truth be resolved only within a particular tradition and only from a particular perspective? In *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* he declares that

> each tradition can at each stage of its development provide rational justification for its central theses in its own terms, employing the concepts and standards by which it defines itself, but there is no set of independent standards of rational justification by appeal to which the issues between contending traditions can be decided.[60]

This would seem to be a claim that we are doomed to perpetual wrangling, a truce of exhaustion or a forced resolution as one tradition imposes itself upon another tradition. We might conclude that MacIntyre is promoting a version of perspectivism, reducing ethics and epistemology to what a particular community happens to do or think, without recourse to adjudication.

I think that this conclusion would be a mistake; I do not think that he is a relativist or a perspectivalist. In *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*[61] and perhaps more succinctly in *Three Rival Version of Moral Enquiry*[62] MacIntyre uses the example of Thomas Aquinas' resolution of the apparently unresolvable differences between the Augustinians and the Averroistic Aristotelians to advance a carefully crafted argument in favour of a version of the

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[59] Ibid., pp. 203-204.
[60] MacIntyre, A. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), p. 351.
[61] Ibid., pp. 356ff.
[62] MacIntyre, A. *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre

correspondence theory of truth and a mechanism for resolving disputations regarding standards of rational justification (i.e. an epistemological crisis).

> So, the rational superiority of that tradition to rival traditions is held to reside in its capacity not only for identifying and characterizing the limitations and failures of that rival tradition as judged by that rival tradition's own standards, limitations and failures which that rival tradition itself lacks the resources to explain and understand, but also for explaining and understanding those limitations and failures in some tolerably precise way. Moreover it must be the case that the rival tradition lacks the capacity similarly to identify, characterize, and explain limitations and failures of the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition [i.e. the tradition that is judged to be superior].[63]

The mechanism for resolving ethical disputes as well as rational disputes of any kind is, for MacIntyre as well as for Polanyi and Lonergan, found in the communal effort to continue to live a tradition and to realize a *telos*.

2.2. From Optimism to Pessimism

As Paul Tillich reminded us earlier, every great philosophy has been concerned with the practical issues of life. Postmodern thinkers are no different. The late 20th century is profoundly more pessimistic about the potential success of linking knowledge with progressive solutions to social problems than was the case in the late 19th century when the modern mind was dominant, at least in the Western world. Stanley Grenz notes,

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Dame Press, 1990), ch. 8.
[63] Ibid., p. 180-181.

> people are no longer convinced that knowledge is inherently good. In eschewing the Enlightenment myth of inevitable progress... optimism has been replaced with a gnawing pessimism.[64]

At the end of this century we appreciate many improvements in our lives but we are impressed with the incredible suffering that this century has also witnessed. The nuclear solution to the problem of a protracted Pacific War in 1945 is but one example of the ambiguity of modern progress based on science.

My characterization of these postmodern thinkers as pessimistic must be qualified. I believe that they have abandoned the exuberant optimism of the late 19th century when there was widespread belief that science and liberal democracy would, in time, solve most of the world's major problems; however, they are not epistemologically pessimistic.

At this point I need to refine my use of the term 'postmodern'. Henry H. Knight III has an opinion that I share and gain encouragement from.

> The term 'post-critical' refers to those who participated in modernity only to come up empty, who pursued the critical quest to its skeptical conclusion and then became skeptical of skepticism. Thus some post-critics will emphasize a retrieval of tradition as an alternative to a modernity that has failed. For all its diversity, the *post-critical strand of postmodernism* can be distinguished from the ultra-critical [Nietzsche et al.] by a far more positive attitude toward narrative, tradition and community [emphasis added].[65]

I find this distinction between post-critical and ultra-critical postmodernists to be useful. The thinkers whom I have discussed above and characterized until now

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[64] Grenz, S. J. "Star Trek and the Next Generation: Postmodernism and the Future of Evangelical Theology." In *The Challenge of Postmodernism: An Evangelical Engagement.* Edited by David S. Dockery. (Wheaton, IL: Victor/Bridgepoint, 1995), p. 94.

[65] Knight, H. op. cit. p. 61.

as 'postmodern', qualify as 'post-critical' thinkers in the sense that they are less pessimistic than the 'ultra-critics' in an important way; they pursue a more confident epistemology based on various forms of a critical realism. Lonergan is very explicit about this and Polanyi as well as MacIntyre share this persuasion. For an evangelical Christian seeking to develop a constructivist pedagogy, this element of optimism is crucial. Christianity demands an epistemology that allows for external, independent realities (nature and God) and is optimistic about the future (expecting a new heaven and a new earth) although it is profoundly pessimistic about the possibility that humanity is capable of saving itself.

2.3. From Certainty to Conviction

The modern search for indubitable universal laws was undertaken with various versions of epistemological foundationalism. The rationalism of Descartes, Spinoza and Leibnitz, the empiricism of Locke, Hume and Berkeley, and the various options that developed from Kant's transcendental idealism were intent on establishing an epistemological structure that was invincible, primarily due to the strength of a foundation and the tenacity with which the parts of the epistemic structure attached themselves to the foundation. Post-critical thinkers have abandoned this project. Rather than construct an epistemic system, these thinkers are intent on using language to maintain a conversation that aids in the resolution of political, ethical, and theological problems faced by a particular community. They have not conceded that this means that all truth is relative or that whatever is true cannot be shared by those outside a particular tradition.

Rather, they have lost confidence in the project of using epistemic foundations as the guarantee for avoiding epistemic relativity and what MacIntyre calls, incommensurability between traditions.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951), particularly with his later work on the philosophy of language, profoundly informs the nonfoundationalism of many post-critical thinkers.[66] There he decisively undermines the long dominant theory of language where it is the function of language to represent or picture things in the world (realism) or ideas in the mind (idealism). Instead, Wittgenstein argues that if we attend to our speech, we will hear that language functions in a variety of ways, not only to 'mirror nature'; speech is a social activity with many uses. Post-critical thinkers make extensive use of Wittgenstein's notions of 'language games' and 'communal speech'. Knight summarizes his influence on post-critical thinkers with the following three points.

1. He developed the conviction that communal practices are prior to and enable experience.
2. He emphasized the embodied character of human existence.
3. He denied the Cartesian assumption that the greater the precision of language, the greater its accuracy.[67]

Furthermore, Knight takes issue with those who believe that Wittgenstein was an anti-realist and a relativist. Knight views Wittgenstein as an opponent of idealism, uncritical realism, and relativism.

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[66] Particularly his *Philosophical Investigations*. Translated by G. E. M. Anscombe. (Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1953) and *On Certainty*. Translated by G. E. M. Anscombe. Edited by G. E.

> His point [i.e. Wittgenstein's] is not that we cannot know reality, but that we do not know it in an unmediated way. Rather, our experience of the world is mediated through and made possible by the linguistic communities in which we participate ... Wittgenstein does not talk of a given community reaching a consensus on certain beliefs; rather they have a consensus on the use of language which enables them to discuss with understanding their various beliefs.[68]

2.4. From Duality to Holism

Finally, the program developed from the impulse of Descartes has, in general, sought knowledge by the exercise of 'reason' or, even more narrowly, by the 'scientific' method. The general strategy in either case is to initially make various distinctions and divisions (analysis) and then, through either deductive or inductive mind-work reassemble these parts into theoretical explanations of what reality is and how it works (synthesis).

We have undoubtedly benefited a great deal from this program. Much of our success in gaining control over various diseases owes its success to this procedure. However, post-critical thinkers are not convinced that we can remove our biases and values from what we are studying and they are suspicious that the analysis as well as the synthesis is somewhat arbitrary, or at least can be done in more than one way. To return to the example of diseases, the specific human condition that is identified as one with which we ought not to be at ease (i.e. the identification of a dis-ease) is made prior to the application of the

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M. Anscombe & G. H. von Wright. (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1969).

[67] Knight, H. op. cit. p. 62.

[68] Idem.

scientific method and is not itself scientific. Thus we consider the genetic condition of Down syndrome to be a disease worthy of a sustained, expensive effort in search of a cure. However, other human conditions are declared to be 'normal' *because* they are genetically caused (homosexuality, for example) and are not viewed as diseases.

The 'world' is not an objective given that is 'out there' waiting to be discovered. Knowledge, in Polanyi's terms, is personal in the sense that coming to know is participatory, it requires personal involvement and commitment. Furthermore, this personal involvement implies involvement of the whole person, not just the mind. For example, what we know about abortion becomes rather inadequate when we ourselves face the decision for or against having an abortion. For post-critical thinkers, the human mind does not exist in some realm of autonomous freedom separate from the body. The mind, and its unique faculty of reason, does not enjoy an existence separate from the contingencies of life but is inescapably influenced by other human faculties, by communal events and traditions, and by natural forces.

Jürgen Moltmann pursues the relationship between holism and holiness, as well as personal, social, and physical health in *The Source of Life: The Holy Spirit and the Theology of Life.*[69] In his view, the violence he sees being carried out by modern societies against its weak and marginalized members (i.e. the

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[69] Moltmann, J. *The Source of Life: The Holy Spirit and the Theology of Life* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997). pp. 50-52.

poor, the young, the old, the women) as well as the violence he sees being carried out against our physical environment, is in part due to the regimentation of the intellect in a manner that is contrary to the health of the private as well as the public body.

> If modern disciplined human beings and men trained to be efficient performers are to recover their health, the reason which has been split off from the whole into an instrument for mere calculation has to be integrated into the reason that perceives, perceiving reason has to be integrated into the receptive senses, and the consciousness into the experiences of the body.[70]

Moltmann goes on to point out the irony of the fact that the modern struggle of the intellect against the body, with its aim of achieving freedom through self-control and self-command, has led to a deep mis-trust of what we can know and has inhibited us from taking action in the face of this violence. We sense that something is wrong but we are unwilling to make a public claim to know the wrong because we lack the means of justifying our claim to know. We sense that we should do something about the wrong but we are not convinced that we can make a difference.

To be healed from this condition, according to Moltmann, we must be put back together; we must be made whole or, from a theological perspective, we must be sanctified. "Life becomes holy if it has become whole and complete."[71] This sanctification will include a kind of thinking that does not differentiate and divide, as analytical thinking does, but which tries to understand the connections

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[70] Ibid., p. 51.
[71] Ibid., p. 52.

of the whole, what might be called a cognitive ecology. This does not mean that we never need to think analytically, "but the development of the modern sciences has pushed out holistic thinking, putting it down dismissively as romantic poetry. But that is unscientific and wrong. We need holistic thinking in order to understand what we are analysing!"[72]

3. Postmodern Pedagogy

At the conclusion of chapter one, I acknowledged that some constructivist teachers share features of modernity with instructors (i.e. teachers of direct learning). I then suggested that a constructivist pedagogy that was postmodern, the narrower use of the term constructivism that I promote, might emerge from a consideration of some of the philosophers who have undertaken an examination of some of the preoccupations of modernity (i.e. universality, optimistic practicality, foundational certainty and disembodied thinking). In my view, these thinkers have moved beyond the perceived limitations of modernity and may inform a pedagogy that can be distinguished from modern pedagogies, especially from those that may be called constructivist but are as modern as those characterized as directed learning. It remains for me to outline what I think would distinguish postmodern constructivist pedagogy.

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[72] Idem.

To make this distinction, I return to the work of Nancy Murphy and James McClendon.[73] A postmodern mode of thought must, according to Murphy and McClendon, depart from the three axes that contain modern thought as described in chapter one, section four, without reverting to premodern thought. They argue that postmodern thought has been dominated by three alternative philosophical theses. The first is epistemological holism - the view that knowledge is a web or a fabric that impinges on experience only along the edges. The second is the meaning-as-use theory of language - the view that the key to understanding the meaning of language is found by observing the use of language in discourse. And the third thesis is a corporate or organic view of reality - the view that reality consists of interdependent parts. From this outline of postmodern thought, I make the following distinctions for postmodern constructivist pedagogy.

3.1. Knowing as Dialogue

People talking in classrooms are common to schooling. Classroom talk is sometimes encouraged by the teacher and sometimes discouraged. It is sometimes considered to be appropriate and sometimes not. What I am interested in drawing our attention to is that for constructivistist pedagogy, talk must be 'dialogue' and that dialogue is essential to the development of knowledge (i.e. the learning process). By 'dialogue' I mean the shared act of

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[73] Murphy, N. & J. McClendon, "Distinguishing between Modern and Postmodern Theologies." *Modern Theology 5:3* (April 1989), pp. 191-214.

deciding the meaning or the intelligibility of the word (*logos*) through (*dia*) talk. The more standard view has talk as optional to the learning process or at least reduces talk to a mechanism of connecting the knower to the known; appropriate, encouraged classroom talk is understood as a conduit through which knowledge flows to the knower. As Jerry H. Gill puts it, more commonly

> the knower and the known are [viewed] essentially [as] separate entities that exist independently of each other and enter into relationship, whether purposefully or by chance, only after they themselves have come into being. This sort of atomistic assumption about the composite, and thus ultimately reducible, character of the world leads directly to an analytic and reductionistic understanding of the nature of cognitive experience. Moreover, until such an analysis is given, one cannot be said to know in the proper sense of the term.[74]

From a constructivist perspective, classroom dialogue is essential. This of course does not mean that all classroom talk is appropriate in all circumstances but it is always about the *logos,* the reasonable words appropriate to a shared experience.

Gill has developed an extended metaphor that I find very helpful on this point. He describes constructivist learning[75] as a dance in which the knower is the dancer, the acts of knowing are the steps of the dance, and the known is what is declared to be the dance. In this metaphor, each part defines the other and no part makes sense by itself. This is a dynamic educational model that

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[74] Gill, J. H. *Learning to Learn: Toward a Philosophy of Education* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1993), p. 38.

[75] Although Gill is referenced as a postmodern thinker, I have not seen him referenced as a constructivist teacher. However, I think that he certainly fits well into the constructivist mould than the instructivist one.

makes the knower, the knowing and the known interdependent.

Modern models of education tend to degrade the role of process in education. Instead, various products are valued. The empirical approach to learning treats experience as though it was made of pre-packaged bits that have an independent identity and we need only assemble them into meaningful wholes. This approach presupposes what it is trying to explain, *meaningful* parts. The more rational approach to learning errs in the other direction by placing too much confidence in the knower, rather than in the known. The chief problem here is to explain the lack of and the search for knowledge. If the faculties of the knower are so capable of producing knowledge, there should never be a shortage. This approach erases what it tries to explain, meaningful *parts*.

Instead of these standard modern approaches that try to describe experience from the outside, as though we could remove ourselves from the very thing we are trying to explain, we need an approach that seeks to display the structure of our experience while and through engaging it. For example, we need to be musicians making music rather than studying about music in order to know music. The structure of our experience, (i.e. the things, persons, ideas and events of life) take on their reality in and through our meaningful interaction with them; they are encountered in dialogical relationships.

> They can neither be ignored nor studied from a distance, for to do either is to engage in some sort of relationship with them. They are neither completely dependent on, nor completely independent of, us.[76]

Almost fifty years ago, Willard V. O. Quine explicitly rejected modern epistemology and with Donald Davidson, John Searle, Gilbert Harman and Hartry Field began to develop an alternative that has come to be known as semantic holism.[77] In "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" he criticized the modern attempt to connect words with reality (Descartes and Locke) as well as the 20th century attempt by Bertrand Russell Rudolph Carnap and the early Wittgenstein to connect sentences with reality. For Quine, such attempts to draw straight lines between words or sentences and objects of reality do not take into account the way that learning communities actually conduct themselves.

> The totality of our so-called knowledge or beliefs ... is a man-made fabric that impinges on experience only along the edges. Or to change the figure, total science is like a field of force whose boundary conditions are experience. A conflict with experience at the periphery occasions readjustments in the interior of the field. Truth-values have to be readjusted over some statements. Re-evaluation of some statements entails re-evaluation of others, because of their logical interconnections - the logical laws being in turn simply further elements of the field. ... But the total field is so underdetermined by its boundary conditions, experience, that there is much latitude in the light of any single contrary experience. *No particular experiences are linked with any particular statements in the interior of the field*, except indirectly through considerations of equilibrium affecting the field as a whole [emphasis added].[78]

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[76] Gill, J. H. op. cit., p. 41.

[77] LePore, E. "Semantic Holism." In *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. Edited by R. Audi (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). pp. 724-25.

[78] Quine, W. V. O. "Two Dogmas of Empiricism." *Philosophical Review LX* (1951); reprinted in T. Olshewsky, ed., *Problems in the Philosophy of Language* (New York: Rinehart and Winston, 1969), p. 413.

Quine's argument opens the epistemic experience to contributions from the whole of human experience rather than limiting it to the particular experiences so thoroughly explored by modern philosophers. Polanyi, Lonergan and MacIntyre have also argued for the inclusion of a dialogue with tacit knowledge and a tradition within the context of a communal commitment within the fabric that constitutes human knowledge. A holistic or coherentist view of knowledge is not without its own problems as Sosa has pointed out[79] but this view signals a significant shift in epistemology, one that has been called postmodern and one that argues for the essential presence of dialogue in the classroom.

3.2 The Knower as a Community Member

The second postmodern thesis articulated by Murphy and McClendon is the meaning-as-use theory of language. For a postmodern constructivist teacher the knower develops the meaning of language through active, faithful membership in a community. She does not view the student as an isolated individual deducing indubitable truth from first principles in the manner of Descartes. Nor does she view the knower as a blank slate recording the data of sense experience in the manner of Locke, or as a constructor of knowledge who becomes conscious of ideas as they emerge from the categories of perception in the manner of Kant. Rather, the knower proceeds with her cogitation within a

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[79] Sosa, E. op. cit., p. 18ff.

community of knowers and *cannot* come to private knowledge. L. H. Nelson makes these distinctions in the following manner.

> The abstract (context-independent and disembodied) 'individuals' of foundationalist epistemologies are replaced by 'persons', embodied and situated in specific social and historical contexts, who know with both their embodiment and the situations relevant to their knowing ... However singular an experience may be, what we know on the basis of that experience has been made possible and is compatible with the standards and knowledge of one or more communities of which we are members: standards and knowledge that enable us to organize our experiences into coherent accounts, underwrite the specific contributions that we make as individuals, and determine what we and our communities will recognize as knowledge.[80]

Richard Bernstein, building on the ideas of American pragmatists including Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914), William James (1842-1910), Josiah Royce (1855-1916), and John Dewey (1859-1952), as well as the contemporary continental philosophers Hans Georg Gadamer, Jürgen Habermas and Hannah Arendt, urges us to "consider the nature, function, and dynamics of communities of inquirers ... as capable of a definite increase of knowledge."[81] Communities (scientific or otherwise) work toward the resolution of specific problems (and the concomitant work of identifying problems) or the attainment of specific goals (and the concomitant work of identifying goals). During this work, they reference shared or contested values and norms, a tradition. In this sense, they are

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[80] Nelson, L. H. "Epistemological Communities." In *Feminist Epistemologies*. Edited by L. Alcoff & E. Potter. (New York: Routledge, 1993).

[81] Bernstein, R. J. *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), p. 77.

regulated by their commitment to the future of the community. Members of a community, not to be confused with adherents and consumers, cannot, if they expect to remain in community, do as they please. The problems and the goals of the community regulate what can be done or known and it is possible to get it wrong, but by paying attention to the dynamics of community life a solution is acknowledged and arbitrary relativism is avoided.

Ludwig Wittgenstein has done much to draw our attention to the phenomenon of epistemic communities. He begins his *Philosophical Investigations* with a quotation from Augustine's *Confessions* in which Augustine describes how he thinks he learned language.

> When they (my elders) named some object, and accordingly moved toward something, I saw this and I grasped that the thing was called by the sound they uttered when they meant to point it out.... Thus, as I heard words repeatedly used in their proper places in various sentences, I gradually learnt to understand what objects they signified; and after I had trained my mouth to form these signs, I used them to express my own desires.[82]

From influences such as this we have arrived at the modern notion that words get their meaning either from the things in the world to which they *refer,* or sentences get their meaning from the fact or states of affairs they *represent.* We have augmented this view of the meaning of 'meaning' by establishing another type of language used to *express* the emotions, attitudes, or intentions of the speaker. Thus we have referential language that works with 'facts' and

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[82] Augustine, *Confessions* as quoted by L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, Translated by G. E. M. Anscombe. (Oxford: Blackwell Pub. 1953), p. 2[e].

expressive language that works with 'values'.

Wittgenstein, and before him George Herbert Mead, have drawn our attention to the "moved toward something" phrase from Augustine. It is in the moving toward that meaning is already developing. Gill quotes Mead to say

> Meaning arises and lies within the field of the relation between the gesture of a given human organism and the subsequent behaviour of this organism as indicated to another human organism by that gesture.[83]

The possibility of an epistemic community that can engage in and sustain a hermeneutic program cannot be assumed; it demands an effort. Tolerance of differences regarding very important issues, mutual respect for the integrity of participants, submission to acknowledged authorities, loyalty to accepted goals and projects, a willingness to admit to error relative to community standards and a profound sense of interdependency are but a few of the challenges that confront a group of people who decide to form an epistemic community.

3.3 The Known as a Raft

Finally, postmodern thinkers work with metaphysical models that are more organic, dynamic and interdependent that those of modern philosophers; the metaphors of Newtonian mechanics have been replaced with those from quantum theory. In chapter one, I used the image of a pyramid to describe the

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[83] Gill, J.H. op. cit., p. 112.

construction project of modern thinkers such as Descartes and Locke. The images appropriate to constructivist pedagogy are more dynamic. In the first part of this section (3.1) I used Jerry Gill's metaphor of the dance to draw attention to the dynamic and symbiotic quality of constructivist education. Another metaphor that can be used to describe the construction project of postmodern thinkers such as the later Wittgenstein and John L. Austin (1911-60)[84] is that of assembling a raft capable of keeping us afloat as we are swept along the currents of external life forces.

Language still plays a central role in this construction project but the dynamics of the project are different from those of the modern project. The key to understanding the meaning of language according to modern theories has been its referential and expressive qualities, its ability to represent static reality as something like a pyramid. According to postmodern writers, it is the use to which a community puts language that establishes its meaning. We use language primarily to survive rather than to represent reality.

The central categories of philosophical inquiry into the known are frequently said to be a desire to know the real, the true, and the good. Education is also focused on these themes, assuming that by 'education' we mean something other than being trained for a job. The current philosophical debate regarding language (i.e. the search for options other than viewing language as

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[84] For a summary of the work of these two philosophers, see J. O. Urmson, *Philosophical Analysis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956).

referential and expressive) affects our views of these three themes.

3.3.1. The Real

One of the dilemmas we face as human beings is to decide whether reality is one or many. The West has largely decided in favour of versions of dualism while the East is more monistic. In the West we have split in our dualistic views of reality; some of us are idealists and some of us are realists. Into this well-established debate thinkers including Polanyi and Lonergan have injected a third option of 'interpenetrating dimensions'.[85] The various dimensions of reality include the moral, the personal, the social, the aesthetic, and the religious and we need a model for understanding this complex, interactive reality. I will not open another immense area of research and debate but I would like to point out that those of us who are impatient with the scientistic reduction of the real to the measurable, those of us who are artistic or religious, take considerable encouragement from the work of someone like Nelson Goodman who writes

> the worlds of fiction, poetry, painting, music, dance, and other arts are built largely by such nonliteral devices as metaphor, by such nondenotational means as exemplification and expression, and often by use of pictures or sounds or gestures or other symbols of non-linguistic systems. Such worldmaking and such versions are my primary concern here; for a major thesis of this book [*Ways of Worldmaking*] is that the arts must be taken no less seriously than the sciences as modes of discovery, creation, and enlargement of knowledge in the broad sense of advancement of the understanding, and thus that the philosophy of art should be conceived as an integral part of metaphysics and epistemology.[86]

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[85] Gill, J. H. op. cit., p. 184.
[86] Goodman, N. as quoted by J. H. Gill, op. cit., p. 187.

3.3.2. The True

The difficult choices we make regarding the real are closely related to our choices regarding the true. Some of us, the idealists, essentially decide that what is true decides what is real. Others, the realists, want to argue in the reverse in that the real determines the true. Our view of what knowing is bears directly on our efforts to understand truth. If we view knowing as interactive, relational, embodied, and communal and if we acknowledge a role for Polanyi's tacit knowing, this will influence what we think of truth.

Again it was the later Wittgenstein who actively undermined the credibility of the correspondence theory of truth.

> His analysis of how language works in terms of context, purpose, language games, and the human form of life, makes it clear that the notion of truth, like the vast majority of philosophical concepts, is grounded in an everyday linguistic usage which is far more complex and fluid than the more favoured view [correspondence] can possibly encompass.[87]

We use 'true' in the context of science, of interpersonal agreement, in praise of another person's character, and in contrast to lying. The traditional idea that truth means one and only one thing, and that what it designates is immutable, is being completely rethought by philosophers who inform constructivist educators. Of course this once more raises the important debate regarding relativism and I can only once more reiterate that neither Polanyi, Lonergan nor MacIntyre are proposing a philosophy where anything goes. Indeed, they are determined to

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[87] Gill, J. H. op. cit., p. 192.

contribute to a program where such libertarianism is not viewed as sensible. I am sure that they would agree with Gill when he says that

> what grows naturally out of the push-and-pull of the common human form of life, however much it lacks in abstract precision and immutability, can never be characterized as arbitrary human convention. There is a fundamental difference between the relativism of social convention and the fluidity of direction provided by the confluence of human activity and thought.[88]

3.3.3. The Good

The ethical life of the community is the third theme of philosophical discourse and a third focus of the educational enterprise. What is true and what is real are related to how we act. In the absence of a foundationalist justification of 'real', 'true' and 'good', all three come together and appear within the dialogue (i.e. the act of knowing or 'dancing') of communal members (i.e. the knowers or 'dancers') who present a dance that is convincing because it seems to cohere with an independent reality, and because it promotes responsible healthy living.

None of these philosophical themes can be adequately presented briefly. I have done my best to hint at possible new approaches to their resolution because the development of an anastatic option as Christian scaffolding for constructivist pedagogy will need to address these themes. Not only are these themes difficult to explicate, they are even more difficult to live.

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[88] Ibid., p. 194.

Richard H. Niebuhr was an early Christian proponent of an interactive process between knowing, the knower and the known as well as between the three fundamental themes of the known (the real, the true and the good) as they "take place within the temporal and relational reality of a continuing community."[89] In our own time, with so much emphasis on individual freedom and personal fulfilment, this concern for historical continuity and social solidarity may seem anachronistic. Dietrich Bonhoeffer might encourage us to think long and hard at this point. He is often cited as a 20th century Christian who was a 'fool for Christ'. His heroic resistance against the Nazis was deeply rooted in theological and philosophical reflection and in a sense of responsibility for the public practice of the real, the true and the good. He was response-able (i.e. able to respond) in the face of indescribable evil because he had been educated by a *Life Together*.[90] At Finkenwalde, with twenty-five vicars, he came to understand that reality is a series of interpenetrating dimensions arranged into overlapping and evolving worlds constructed out of our interaction with each other and our environment. He could not accept the claim that the world of Adolph Hitler corresponded to reality even though it enjoyed the blessing of scientific judgement. Truth for him began with Jesus' so-called Sermon on the Mount that provided the key concepts he then used to provide bedrock for his claim to know that Hitler could not be right. And then he responded without skepticism or relativism, a response that claimed his life. His theological scaffolding ultimately

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[89] Niebuhr, H. Richard. *The Responsible Self* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 64.

became a gallows because the only 'foundation' for his beliefs was to act in a manner consistent with what he believed to be real, true and good!

Summary of Chapters One and Two

Up to this point my aim has been to encourage a response by teachers to Roberta McKay's challenge: to understand constructivism at the level of beliefs about teaching and learning so that the current focus on constructivism will not be short-lived. Such a response must, in my view, position constructivism within the context of modern philosophy as it has developed from the 17th century as well as within the context of a contemporary impatience with some of the modern preoccupations that have influenced teaching and learning. By studying three 'modern' philosophers (i.e. philosophers who in the 17th and 18th centuries broke with the tradition developed from Socrates to Aquinas) and then three post-critical contemporary philosophers who are impatient with some important aspects of modernity (i.e. who are breaking from the tradition developed from Descartes to at least Kant, but who are refusing to join the ultra-critical tradition that has developed at least in part from Nietzsche), I have outlined an understanding of constructivism that has the philosophical grounding to be more than a passing fad or a version of modern pedagogy. Where the type of constructivism that I am interested in promoting is influencing the activity of the classroom, coming to know demands interpersonal dialogue, the known

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[90] Bonhoeffer, D. *Life Together*. Translated, and with an introduction by John W. Doberstein (San Francisco: Harper & Row Pub. Inc. 1954).

facilitates the resolution of communal and personal problems, and the knowers (both teachers and students) share a sense of community.

Can a teacher with a Christian theological worldview pursue postmodern constructivist pedagogy with integrity? This is a particularly vexing problem for theologically and philosophically sensitive Canadian evangelical teachers. We have been raised and live in a tradition that on the one hand is dismissive of 'religion' and that, on the other hand, acts as though what is most important about its own religion is ideas. George Lindbeck has pointed out, correctly in my view, that we have a cognitivist view of religion and of the role of doctrine; "church doctrines function as informative propositions or truth claims about objective realties."[91] My own specific tradition is that of Baptists who were academically atheological in that they were largely illiterate. When we moved from central Europe to Canada and the United States in the 19th century we gradually assumed the worldview of North American Evangelicalism, a worldview that was developed in direct response to the preoccupations of the British empiricists. How do we move ahead in a world that is impatient with, even dismissive of, these preoccupations? A response to this question is the third chapter of this dissertation.

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[91] Lindbeck, G. *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984), p. 16.

CHAPTER THREE

CONSTRUCTIVISM AND ANASTATIC CHRISTIANITY

Fortunately, for the Christian postmodern constructivist teacher, there are a number of theologians who are engaged with the post-critical work of Polanyi, Lonergan, and MacIntyre.[1] Some of the theologians who are making use of their insights include Hans Frei, George Lindbeck, and Stanley Hauerwas.[2] In part because they come out of the liberal tradition of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), Georg W. F. Hegel (1770-1831), Friedrich Schleiermacher (1786-1834), Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889), and Adolph von Harnack (1851-1930) they refer to themselves as postliberals. Bernard Ramm, James Wm. McLendon Jr., Stanley J. Grenz, and Clark H. Pinnock represent another group of theologians who

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[1] I do not mean to imply that the Christian *modern* constructivist teacher does not have helpful resources. Modern evangelicals have to a large extent been supportive of public education, provided schools restrict themselves to the teaching of 'facts' and leave the teaching of 'values' to the churches or, provided the pubic schools reinforce the values of the churches in religiously homogeneous communities. It is only with the advent of social and cultural pluralism and the increasing confusion of public education regarding what to do about values that more evangelicals have turned to independent schooling.

[2] Seminal post-liberal texts include H. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974) and *The Identity of Jesus Christ* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975); P. Holmer, *The Grammar of Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978); G. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984); S. Hauerwas and W. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: A provocative Christian assessment of culture and ministry for people who know that something is wrong* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1989). Besides these writers, other notable postliberal theologians include George Hunsberger, William Placher, Kathryn Tanner, David Kelsey, Garret Green, Ronald Thiemann and George Stroup.

come out of the conservative tradition of Francis Turretin (1623-87), Thomas Reid (1710-96), the Princeton theological trio of Charles Hodge (1797-1878), his son A. A. Hodge (1823-1886) and B. B. Warfield (1857-1921), as well as the patriarch of mid-century evangelical theology, Carl F. H. Henry (b. 1913). This second group of writers consider themselves to be postconservatives or perhaps even postevangelicals.[3] It is this second group of theologians on whom I rely to develop a theological scaffolding for a postmodern constructivist pedagogy.

The work of Lev Vygotsky informs constructivist approaches to learning theory, particularly his two concepts of 'scaffolding' and the 'zone of proximal development'. According to Vygotsky, the context of 'learning' includes the presence of our personal beliefs and values, the tradition within which we live, and the specific problems with which we are perplexed. The members of this social context (e.g. a classroom) understand various problems in various ways and are intent on resolving these problems using a variety of resources from various traditions. In a typical classroom, the student-novice is at one end of a continuum of understanding and the teacher-expert is at the other. The 'space' or 'gap' in which we work toward the resolution of a problem is referred to as the 'zone of proximal development'. It is the work of schools to help students develop

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[3] The work of Ramm, McClendon, Grenz and Pinnock will be extensively referenced in this chapter. Millard Erickson, a more traditional evangelical theologian has referred to the movement represented by these writers as the evangelical left (cf. *The Evangelical Left: Encountering Postconservative Evangelical Theology*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1997) while Dave Tomlinson, a British evangelical, refers to himself as postevangelical (cf. *The Postevangelical*, London: BPC Paperbacks Ltd., 1995). Other theologians whom I would include as writers who introduce the themes of chapter two into evangelical theology include Roger Olsen, Nancey Murphy, and William Abraham.

their level of understanding and bridge this gap through what he called a 'scaffolding' process. The assistance provided by expert problem solvers in an area of curriculum brings both student and teacher to a common understanding. What Vygotsky wanted to emphasize was the importance of social relations in all forms of complex mental activity. It is important to note that the supervised collaborative learning activities of a constructivist classroom must honour the life experience of both the student and the teacher. Both the student and the teacher are engaged with the same problem; the problem must be a vital problem to both and the teacher must not force or dictate a solution. However, the teacher is acknowledged to have greater experience, insight and skill so is followed even as an apprentice follows a master craftsperson.[4]

In general terms, the zone of proximal development in which I am developing this dissertation is defined by my work as a teacher of instrumental music in one of Alberta's public schools, my desire to understand some of the philosophical questions related to this work and my commitment to live within the tradition of conservative, evangelical, Baptist Christianity. This chapter is devoted to an exploration of some of the scaffolding provided by a selected group of teachers, scaffolding that will assist me in resolving some of my problems. I have selected the work of Bernard Ramm, James Wm. McClendon Jr., Stanley J.

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[4] Davydov, V. "The Influence of L. S. Vygotsky on Education Theory, Research, and Practice." *Educational Researcher 24* (3), pp. 12-21; Prawat, R. "The Value of Ideas: Problems Versus Possibilities in Learning." *Educational Researcher 22* (6), pp. 5-16. Vygotsky, L. S. *Thought and Language* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1962).

Grenz, and Clark H. Pinnock as theological mentors because, in my experience, they can be used to assemble a Baptist, postcritical scaffold for a postmodern philosophy of education and ecclesiology.

1. The Task and Method of Theology

There is no single way to do theology.[5] If I hope to erect theological scaffolding for a constructivist pedagogy as outlined in chapter two, I need to do theology in a particular way. First, I need to take the Enlightenment seriously but I cannot acquiesce to "the Enlightenment dream of a universal standard of rationality, a single method for determining what's true and what's false."[6] I cannot ignore the Enlightenment, pretending that in the 17th and 18th centuries nothing happened that fundamentally informs theological discourse. At the same time, I cannot capitulate to the categories of the Enlightenment. Second, since I am pursuing a theological scaffolding for the particular tradition of evangelical Christianity, I need a theological method that can accommodate themes that are commonly referenced by this tradition. I need to be able to carry on a conversation with other evangelical Christians and with postmodern constructivist educators. What might this theological method be and who can be consulted as theologians engaged in such a task?

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[5] Frei, H. *Types of Christian Theology*. Edited by G. Hunsinger & W. C. Placher. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992).

[6] Placher, W. C. *Unapologetic Theology: A Christian Voice in a Pluralistic Conversation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989), p. 20.

1.1. An Advantageous Theological Method

I begin with the observation that theological reflection and discourse is peculiar in at least two ways. The first is that Christian theologians struggle to bring the 'word' against the 'world'. The Biblical story is one that sets itself against other stories, stories that restrict themselves in various ways so that a personal, active God is either denied (e.g. atheism), becomes unemployed (e.g. deism) or is part of an earlier, primitive devotion (e.g. liberalism). Theologians develop a discourse in which, in important ways, human experience is seen to be incomplete and the narration of this experience is understood to be seriously flawed without a revelation, a divine word from beyond the human self-account, a message that corrects and completes whatever can be imagined exclusively by the human mind.

A second peculiarity of theological discourse is that the divine word appears within the diversity of human cultures and societies; there is no single divine word. Since at least the time of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) theologians have recognized the contextual nature of theological reflection. He "argued that any given theology must represent and refer to the doctrine of some particular Christian body at some particular time."[7] Stanley Grenz and Roger Olson have characterized 20th century theology as an attempt to recover a balance between and a sensible presentation of these two peculiarities of theological discourse, theology as an attempt to articulate "the Christian

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[7] McClendon, J. Wm. *Systematic Theology I: Ethics* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986), p.

understanding of the nature of God in a manner that balances, affirms and holds in creative tension the twin truths of the divine transcendence and divine immanence."[8]

Theology undertaken within this tension could be a constructivist project. However, in various ways, at various times, and to various degrees, participants in this theological discourse have been tempted to do theology in a way that mutes the voices of these peculiarities, that resolves the tension either in favour of transcendence or in favour of immanence. Nancey Murphy has argued that conservative, evangelical and fundamentalist theologies represent the former capitulation (i.e. in favour of transcendence) while the 19th century liberalism of Schleiermacher et al. represent the latter resolution (i.e. in favour of immanence). Both programs were forced to make a choice because they were held captive by the categories of modernity; they could not live within the tension.[9] The temptation to deny the "counter, original, spare, strange starting point in Abraham and Jesus and to give instead a self-account or theology that will seem to be true to the world on the world's own present terms"[10] has not been consistently resisted. Ironically, it has been both the inheritors and the resisters of Schleiermacher's program who have denied the diversity and contextualism that he himself articulated.

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[8] Grenz, S. J. and R. E. Olson, *20th Century Theology: God and the World in a Transitional Age* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), p. 310.

[9] Murphy, N. *Beyond Liberalism & Fundamentalism: How Modern and Postmodern Philosophy Set the Theological Agenda* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996).

[10] Ibid., p. 17.

1.2. Four Practitioners of Constructive Evangelical Theology

During the 20th century, various voices have been raised against both the liberalization and the fundamentalization of Christian Protestant theology. Karl Barth spoke out from within the Reformed tradition, Dietrich Bonhoeffer from the Lutheran and more recently, Bernard Ramm, Clark Pinnock, Stanley Grenz, and James Wm. McClendon Jr. from the Baptist.

The distinct voice that Ramm et al. bring to the theological debates of our day is that of the Radical Reformers, the Wiedertäufer or Anabaptists, the 'brethren' of the community named variously as the 'Free Church' or the 'Believers' Church'.[11] This is a tradition with a timeline that parallels that of modernity and is a theological program that developed in its shadow. This is my tradition, the tradition within which I want to develop a constructivist pedagogy. Constructivism has also developed in the midst of modernity. By bringing the thinking of these men into contact with the characteristics of postmodern constructivist pedagogy as developed in chapter two, I propose to show that they provide sturdy scaffolding for my development as a Christian teacher. But first I will provide brief introductions to these men.

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[11] Ibid., p.19.

1.2.1. Bernard Ramm (b. 1916)

Bernard Ramm was one of the first prominent North American evangelical theologians to take a second, very long look at Karl Barth, the 20th century Protestant theologian who proclaimed a loud "No" to both liberal and conservative theology.[12] In the 1950's, Ramm published a number of books that fit comfortably into the 'New Evangelicalism' of Harold J. Ockenga, Carl F. H. Henry and others.[13] His primary focus was apologetic, to argue for a harmony of general revelation (i.e. science) and special revelation (i.e. the Bible). Fulfilled prophecy, miracles, archaeological evidence as well as the popularity and influence of the Bible played their familiar role in the development of this evidentialist (Lockean) apologetic.

However, in 1957 he left Baylor University, a Southern Baptist institution in Texas, to study with Barth in Basel, Switzerland. Although Ramm had completed a Ph.D. in philosophy at the University of Southern California in 1950, it was not until his sabbatical leave in Basel and his exposure to Barthian theology, a theology that is thoroughly rooted in the Bible as well as in centuries of European

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[12] Apparently Ramm actually read all 13 volumes of Barth's *Church Dogmatics* (cf. B. Ramm, *After Fundamentalism: The Future of Evangelical Theology*, San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1983).

[13] Ramm, B. *Protestant Biblical Interpretation: A Textbook of Hermeneutics for Conservative Protestants* (Boston: W. A. Wilde, 1950); *Protestant Christian Evidences: A Textbook of the Evidences of the Truthfulness of the Christian Faith for Conservative Protestants* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1953); *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 1955); *The Pattern of Religious Authority* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 1959); *Special Revelation and the Word of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 1961).

philosophy, that it became clear to him that American evangelical theology had to examine its relationship to the Enlightenment. It was this examination of Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant, and Hegel, that convinced Ramm to look past Schleiermacher and Ritschl, to look farther back in time for an explanation for the theological impasse that he sensed was developing for *both* liberal *and* evangelical theology. Ramm came to the conclusion that evangelicalism needed a response to the Enlightenment that did not capitulate to it.[14] Barth's theological program became attractive to Ramm because Barth

1. Rejected the Neologians' criticism of historic Christian Orthodoxy.[15]
2. Accepted the positive accomplishments of the Enlightenment.
3. Rewrote his Reformed theology in the light of the Enlightenment.[16]

Barth believed that the Enlightenment precipitated a crisis for evangelical theology, and Ramm sensed the same crises for North American Evangelical theology. For those who agree that the events and effects of modernity fundamentally changed Western culture, including theology and pedagogy, Ramm recommends that we learn from Karl Barth.

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[14] Ramm, B. *After Fundamentalism: The Future of Evangelical Theology* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1983), p. 13.
[15] The 'Neologians' were German philosophical theologians of the 18th century (e.g. J. S. Semler) comparable in their thinking to the English 'Latitudinarians' (e.g. John Locke).
[16] Ramm, B. op. cit., p. 14.

1.2.2. Clark Pinnock

Clark Pinnock currently teaches at McMaster Divinity School, a Baptist seminary in Hamilton, Ontario and he has in some important ways accepted Ramm's advice. Regarding Barth, Pinnock declares that "he created space for postmodern orthodoxy."[17] One of the central themes of Barth's theological program is revelation. In the *Church Dogmatics*, Barth developed the concept of the threefold nature of the Word of God - the Word incarnate, written and preached. This in turn leads to a two-dimensional concept of revelation - the objective dimension and the subjective dimension.[18] From these basic concepts, Pinnock is developing an alternative to the more common evangelical view of revelation as proposition, an alternative view that has come to be known as narrative theology. In *Tracking the Maze: Finding Our Way Through Modern Theology from an Evangelical Perspective* Pinnock describes the thought of three precursors of the modernist movement (Descartes, Locke, and Hume) as well as the modernists proper (Kant, Schleiermacher, and Hegel). In his view, these philosophers and theologians set the stage for the many varieties of modern theology including those articulated by Søren Kierkegaard, Rudolph Bultmann, Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, North American Evangelicalism and the

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[17] Pinnock, C. *Tracking the Maze: Finding Our Way Through Modern Theology from an Evangelical Perspective* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990), p. 118.
[18] Grenz, S. and R. Olson, op. cit., p. 275.

'Death of God' theologians.[19]

This brings Pinnock to what he considers to be the essence of Christianity; a eucatastrophe, the Biblically narrated epic story of salvation through Jesus Christ. The heart of the Christian revelation

> is that God himself in grace has broken through into history and human culture. The gospel proclamation is like a newscast, announcing what God has done for the salvation of humankind, how that God has come in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to reveal to us our true condition and to effect our reconciliation.[20]

Revelation is based on local historical events, but it has application and significance for all persons. It is more than fact without being less. It is myth become fact.[21] The argument in favour of the story, its justification, is not primarily through a rational defence of propositional truth claims, however, but by showing its relevance to ordinary human experience, what Jürgen Moltmann calls a theology of life.[22]

1.2.3. Stanley Grenz (b. 1950)

Stanley Grenz has made an important contribution to the depiction of what human experience lived within a eucatastrophe might involve. Grenz is professor of theology at Carey Theological College, the seminary of the Baptist Union of Western Canada in Vancouver, British Columbia. His *Theology for the*

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19 Pinnock, C. op. cit., ch's. 7 and 8.
20 Ibid., p. 158.
21 Ibid., p. 164.
22 Moltmann, J. op. cit., p. 38-42.

Community of God is his most recent statement of how the familiar theological categories of theology (in the narrow sense of the doctrine of God), christology, pneumatology, soteriology, ecclesiology, and eschatology constitute a second order language. The life of the Christian community is the first order language, not propositions provided by God to describe realities beyond the realm of nature.[23] Grenz presents this theology as a revisioned evangelical theology, one that is sensed more than prescribed. According to Grenz, to be evangelical is to share in a particular spirituality that involves a desire to see the Bible come alive in one's personal experience and in the life of a community of Christians.

Like Pinnock, Grenz is critical of the propositional approach to revelation and theology. Doctrines stated as propositions grow out of experience and shape experience but they do not capture what is beyond the capacity of theology (or any –ology) to capture, ultimate truth; they provide the tools or a grammar to enliven the Biblical narrative in the local church. Theology is "the intellectual reflection on the act, and the attempt to articulate the content, of Christian faith, including its expression in beliefs, practices, and institutions"[24] rather than the older evangelical idea of theology as propositional Biblical summation.

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[23] Grenz, S. *Theology for the Community of God* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Pub. 1994).

[24] Grenz, S. *Revisioning Evangelical Theology: A Fresh Agenda for the 21st Century* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), p. 64.

1.2.4. James Wm. McClendon Jr.

The fourth member of this quartet of contemporary Baptist theologians teaches at Fuller Seminary, Pasadena, California, the most prominent institution of postconservative evangelical thinking, according to Millard Erickson.[25] McClendon is writing a proposed three volume systematic theology in a postmodern fashion. The most obvious clue that this is an approach to theology that is different from most previous evangelical theology is that it is only in his yet to be published third volume that he intends to make his comments regarding 'justification'. More usually, as in Erickson's *opus,*[26] arguments regarding the justification of theological discourse are presented first, as a prolegomenon meant to establish the legitimacy of the rest of the volume.

McClendon's definition of theology provides a clue to understanding his strategy. Theology is

> the discovery, understanding, and transformation of the convictions of a convictional community, including the discovery and critical revision of their relation to one another *and to whatever else there is.*[27]

McClendon is still within the trajectory of Barth; it is inappropriate to seek justification of the truth of theological propositions by reference to some other authority such as reason or evidence; therefore, no prolegomena of the

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[25] Erickson, M. J. *The Evangelical Left: Encountering Postconservative Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1997), p. 30.
[26] Erickson, M. J. *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1983).
[27] McClendon, J. op. cit., p. 23.

traditional sort. Theological propositions are statements of convictions and convictions are

> persistent beliefs such that if X (a person or a community) has a conviction, it will not easily be relinquished, and it cannot be relinquished without making X a significantly different person (or community) than before.[28]

It is convictions that must be justified, rather than propositional truth claims. Doctrines "are not so many 'propositions' to be catalogued or juggled like truth-functions in a computer, but are living convictions which give shape to actual lives in actual communities."[29] Therefore it is the ethics of the Christian community that become the focus of McClendon's theological project and the first volume of his systematic theology.

These four participants in evangelical theological discourse are self-consciously responding to Barth's challenge to respond to the Enlightenment without being submerged by it. They are also offering an alternative way to be evangelical. It is with their way of doing theology that an alternative evangelicalism and scaffolding for postmodern constructivist pedagogy can emerge.

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[28] McClendon, J. and J. Smith, *Convictions: Defusing Religious Relativism* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press, 1994), pp. 91-94.

[29] McClendon, J. *Biography as Theology: How Life Stories Can Remake Theology* (Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1990), p. 22.

II. Two Views of Evangelicalism

Millard Erickson has alerted us to the emergence of what he calls *The Evangelical Left.*[30] Henry H. Knight III, in a more optimistic title, has alerted us to *A Future for Truth: Evangelical Theology in a Postmodern World.*[31] They are both scanning more or less the same horizon, evangelical Protestant Christianity in North America, but what they view as properly belonging to evangelicalism is quite different. Depending on which perspective we adopt regarding evangelicalism, the possibility of theological scaffolding for a postmodern constructivist pedagogy from within evangelicalism is more or less likely to develop.

2.1. A Conservative View of Evangelicalism

Millard Erickson's concern that the "new evangelical left" represents a "rather silent and covert" liberalization of evangelicalism develops from a particular view of what an evangelical is. Erickson presents what Stanley Grenz has called the historical understanding of evangelicalism.[32] This is the view that the definition of 'evangelical' is best established by examining the beliefs that a specific heritage developed in three acts.

The first act is focused on the 16th century German Reformation of Luther, Calvin and the other great Reformers and accounts for the continuing presence

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[30] Erickson, M. op. cit.
[31] Knight, H. H. *A Future for Truth: Evangelical Theology in a Postmodern World* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997).
[32] Grenz, S. op. cit., p. 22.

of the great *solas* within evangelicalism: *sola scriptura, solus Christus, sola gratia, sola fide*. Evangelicalism is therefore firmly rooted in Reformed Protestant doctrinal formulations. Donald Dayton has referred to the second act of this view of evangelicalism as 'classical evangelicalism' where the lead actors are English Puritanism, German Lutheran Pietism and American Revivalism as they emerged from the 17th to the 20th centuries.[33] It is this act that developed the 'enthusiasm' of evangelicalism and perhaps its best known phenomenon, the 'new birth'. The third act in the evangelical drama came at the end of about 100 years of established American (mostly Presbyterian) Protestantism. The era that could be viewed as the golden years of evangelicalism ended with the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy of the late 19th and early 20th. Even though the evangelical prosecuting attorney William Jennings Bryan successfully prosecuted the evolutionist teacher John Scopes, the defence lawyer, Clarence Darrow, was able to present evangelicalism as narrow-minded and unable to absorb scientific truth. For many mid-20th century Evangelicals, the doctrines of Reformed theology demanded a rejection of Enlightened self-redemption and submission to God's call for repentance from sin. Evangelicalism was about achieving salvation through correct doctrine, accepting Reformed orthodoxy and rejecting Enlightenment heresy.

These three grand events, according to Erickson and those who share this view of evangelicalism, set the stage for the emergence of the 'New

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[33] Dayton, D. "The Limits of Evangelicalism." In *The Variety of American Evangelicalism.* Edited

Evangelicalism' of the 1950's. A group of young academics and pastors became impatient with an academically withdrawn and socially marginalized Fundamentalism. Harold J. Ockenga, Carl F. H. Henry, Charles H. Fuller and Edward J. Carnell were central players in a movement against the older Fundamentalism. The revival meetings of Billy Graham, the publication of *Christianity Today,* and the establishment of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California institutionalized this movement. A second golden period of evangelicalism seemed to have arrived accompanied by a social conscience, theological scholarship and thriving churches.

Erickson characterizes as "cracks in the New Evangelicalism" three events of the 1960's and early 1970's: the victory of Daniel Fuller in 1962 in a debate regarding biblical inerrancy, the appointment of David Hubbard to the presidency of Fuller, and the publication of *The Young Evangelicals* by Richard Quebedeaux in 1974. These events tolerated arguments, attitudes and hopes that, from the perspective of 'classical evangelicalism' were 'liberal'. Fuller favoured a view where the inerrancy of the Bible was limited to matters pertaining to salvation, and Hubbard was tolerant of views that had been rejected by the old guard of Henry, Carnell, Harold Lindsell, Wilbur Smith and Gleason Archer. The liberalization of fundamentalism had perhaps gone too far! Contemporary theologians who write within the trajectory propelled by these suspicious events of the turbulent '60's are the evangelical left identified by Millard Erickson.

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by D. W. Dayton and R. K. Johnson. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), p. 48.

From the conservative perspective, then, the most common way of defining evangelicalism is to review this history and then to pull out a set of beliefs. Allister McGrath offers one such list of fundamental convictions:

1. The supreme authority of Scripture as a source of knowledge of God and a guide to Christian living.
2. The majesty of Jesus Christ, both as incarnate God and Lord and as the Saviour of sinful humanity.
3. The lordship of the Holy Spirit.
4. The need for personal conversion.
5. The priority of evangelism for both individual Christians and the church as a whole.
6. The importance of Christian community for spiritual nourishment, fellowship and growth.[34]

Other lists have been offered as checklists to determine who is inside and who is outside the evangelical fold. These are attempts to define evangelicalism by means of historical theology; doctrinal statements are articulated as they are seen to emerge from seminal historical events and these statements form a boundary around the evangelical camp, useful for declaring who is or who is not evangelical.

This approach to evangelicalism does not promise much in the way of scaffolding for my project. Being a Christian is presented primarily as accepting the truth of a small number of propositions. In fact, during the 1960's, Evangelical Christianity was reduced to "Four Spiritual Laws" that, if accepted as true, made

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[34] McGrath, A. *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity

one a Christian. Not only does this tradition reduce Christianity to a few ideas extracted from the Bible, these ideas are presented as universally true ideas, ideas that have been true since the beginning of time for all people and will be true to the end of time for all people. They are the spiritual counterparts of Newtonian-Lockean naturalism. The preoccupations of postmodernists and the themes of a postmodern pedagogy regarding knowing as dialogue, the knower as a community member, and the known as tools and grammar for survival do not seem to be shared with this conservative view of evangelicalism.

2.2. A Revisionist View of Evangelicalism

As might be expected, those placed on a margin of evangelicalism (as in this instance when Erickson has placed some on a left margin) do not willingly remain there. They see themselves to be within the mainstream of evangelicalism because they do not view evangelicalism as a movement defined by propositional boundaries. Without such boundaries, individuals cannot so easily be placed in either the orthodox centre or on either the more conservative right or the more liberal left. For these evangelicals, evangelicalism is not bounded by the systematic theologies of reformed scholastics, by the reduced theological formulations of enthusiastic revivalism, or by a debate framed by the Scottish Enlightenment of the 18th century that came to a head in the Fundamentalist-Modernist schism of the early 20th century.

Press, 1995), pp. 55-56.

Roger E. Olson, a Baptist and outspoken Arminian theologian teaching at Bethel Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota and Pinnock, also an Arminian Baptist, offer their own theological 'magnets' to attract those who are "shedding theological conservatism."[35] On the evidence of these lists, post-conservative evangelical theologians display

1. An eagerness to engage in dialogue with nonevangelical theologians and to encourage greater pluralism within their own ranks. Indeed, they seek opportunities to converse with those whom conservative evangelicals would probably consider enemies.[36]
2. An impatience with theology's domination by white males and Eurocentricism. Recognizing the influence of social location on theological work, postconservatives seek to include women, persons of colour, and Third World Christians in theological scholarship.
3. A broadening of the sources used in theology, as in the use of the Wesleyan quadrilateral of Bible, tradition, culture and experience by Pinnock or Grenz's three source theology (Bible, tradition and culture). There is a new respect for the intrinsic value of tradition and the control it provides Christians in times of great change.
4. A discontent with the traditional ties of evangelical theology to an "evangelical Enlightenment" as developed from the response of Thomas Reid to David Hume and collected into the 19th century protestant scholasticism of Princeton Seminary. This has led to a rejection of triumphalism with respect to theological truth-claims as well as less skepticism and a new willingness to expect miracles even today.

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[35] Olson, R. "Postconservative Evangelicals Greet the Postmodern Age." *Christian Century 112.15* (May 3, 1995):480. C. Pinnock, op. cit., pp. 67-68.

[36] A recent example of this dialogue is T. R. Phillips & D. L. Okholm, eds. *The Nature of Confession: Evangelicals and Postliberals in Conversation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996).

5. The rejection of a "wooden" approach to Scripture that gave rise to the "Battle for the Bible" of the 1970's, in favour of regarding Scripture as a Spirit-inspired realistic narrative. There is more openness to the humanity of the Bible and to critical methods of explaining it. Simultaneously, there is greater flexibility about the meaning of biblical inerrancy and more hesitation about the usefulness of the term itself.
6. An open view of God, in which God limits himself and enters into relationships of genuine response to humans, taking their pain and suffering into himself. God is not the "being" of classical Greek philosophy but is a risk-taker, not one who controls everything so that nothing contrary to his desires can occur.
7. An acceptance, rather than a rejection, of the realm of nature. Nature, though fallen, is never abandoned by grace. Concerning Creation as an event, there is a willingness to go beyond fundamentalism and recover the 19th century evangelical model that accepted evolution as a complementary language for talking about origins.
8. A hope for a near-universal salvation. God has not left himself without a witness in all cultures, sufficient to bring to salvation those who earnestly seek it, either on the basis of their response to the light they have or to a post mortem encounter. Some are reconceptualizing hell in terms of fire that consumes rather than fire that torments.
9. An emphasis in Christology on the humanity of Jesus. While retaining belief in the divinity of Christ, this is thought of more in relational than in the "substance" and "person" categories of Patristic and Reformed theologies.
10. A more synergistic (God and humanity) understanding of salvation, as contrasted with a monergistic (God alone) view. Salvation is understood to include the salvation of nature and social relationships so their is an accompanying shift away from pessimistic premillennialism to a more positive outlook, to the belief that God can transform culture and we ought to work alongside God's redeeming activity. These theologians are as a whole more Arminian than Calvinistic.

These shifts are developing because for these scholars, evangelicalism is about a way of seeing, an exercise of vision, rather than a definitive statement of what is or should be seen. Stanley Grenz states this shift very clearly.

> The primary statement to be made about evangelicalism cannot focus on doctrinal formulations. Rather, 'evangelical' refers first of all to a specific vision of what it means to be a Christian. This vision is, of course, connected to a set of shared convictions but the vision is not reduced to them.[37]

According to this presentation of evangelicalism, the concern is not to set doctrinal and historical boundaries but to strengthen a core. The metaphor is not that of a fenced compound but of a magnetic field. Evangelicals are not so much gathered together by a net as they are drawn together by a common vision. What might this specific vision be?

Clark Pinnock's *Tracking the Maze* and Stanley Grenz's *Revisioning Evangelical Theology* offer extended answers to this question.[38] Grenz is willing to state that evangelicalism "is more sensed than described." He suggests that we must go outside academia and the historical - theological lists produced there, and into the world of the evangelical people where we listen to their prayers and their hymnody, where we observe their behaviour, to gain an understanding of what it means to be evangelical. Even then, this identity will not easily formulate into descriptive statements. From a revisionist perspective, the

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[37] Grenz, S. op. cit., p. 30-31. Grenz's treatment of "doctrine" sounds very much like the "cultural-linguistic" view of doctrine developed in the seminal work of G. Lindbeck in *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984).

[38] Pinnock, C. op. cit. and S. Grenz op. cit.

evangelical way of "eye-balling the world" includes

1. A desire to make the Bible come alive in personal and community life.
2. A desire to bring all of life under the lordship or direction of a present Christ.
3. A desire to bring *koinonia* or fellowship to reality in the life of the local church.
4. A desire to express praise to God and the experience of God through music.
5. An understanding of being a Christian in terms of a life narrative.[39]

Although this list is not the same as McGrath's, there are similarities. If there were none, Grenz's claim that he is defining evangelicalism rather than some other 'ism' would be much more difficult to maintain. The difference between the two approaches is not, however, insignificant. For Grenz, the role of 'life narrative' is what "pierces the foundation of the evangelical ethos." Evangelicals are set apart from other Christians by the importance of and the themes of a personal yet shared testimony.

> Central to each of our stories is a testimony to the reality of a personal, life-changing transformation. Hence we speak of "sin" and "grace," "alienation" and "reconciliation," "helplessness" and "divine power," "having been lost" but "now being saved." And each story narrates a dividing line between an old and a new life, a line the narrator crossed by means of a religious experience through which he or she encountered the God of the Bible revealed in Jesus of Nazareth.[40]

It is a common experience rather than a common set of doctrinal statements that

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[39] Grenz, S. op. cit., pp. 31-33.
[40] Ibid., p. 33.

draws certain Christians together, Christians called evangelicals. "Whether through a sudden conversion experience or by way of a longer process, evangelicals testify to a common experience in which the living God is encountered and their lives changed."[41]

While commenting on this depiction of evangelicalism as shared vision, Henry H. Knight III states that most evangelicals will see themselves in Grenz's depiction, "be they an Episcopalian at Sunday worship or a participant in a Holiness camp meeting."[42] The use of 'evangelical' to identify Christians who share the experience of 'rebirth' is found in a number of denominations. Most of them emerged from the dissenting congregations of 17th and 18th century England and New England including the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and various Baptists. Other denominations that have demonstrated this version of evangelicalism emerged from continental Pietism (e.g. the Moravian Brethren), the radical reformers (e.g. Mennonites) and even some Lutheran and Reformed synods. Those missing from this list of 'evangelicals' are the pre-Reformation Christian churches of Eastern Orthodoxy, elements of eastern as well as western (i.e. Roman) Catholicism and the fastest growing branch of protestantism, Pentecostalism. Can Christians from these congregations not be evangelical? The revisionist depiction of 'evangelical' is more likely to locate evangelicals in these congregations than the depiction that is attached to the trajectory outlined by Erickson. Indeed, prior to his discussion

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[41] Ibid., p. 34.

of evangelical postconservatives, Pinnock presents post-Vatican II Catholicism as an illustration of postconservative theological development.[43] Subsequent to *Tracking the Maze*, Pinnock has written *Flame of God* where he develops a 'Pentecostal' theology within his larger project of articulating a postconservative theology.[44]

From my review of this history of evangelicalism, It seems to me that we would benefit from a term other than 'evangelical' to identify these emerging elements of a scaffold for a postmodern constructivist pedagogy. The modern use of 'evangelical' is tied very closely to the issues that were raised by modernity. Postmodern evangelical theology may be able to reinvest in old familiar terms (in the manner of Stanley Grenz's revisioning project) but perhaps we will also benefit from the introduction of some new terms. Perhaps we need new wineskins for new wine. We may find that we need terms that invite the participation of Christians from premodern as well as postmodern denominations (e.g. Eastern Orthodoxy and Charismatic movements), that can be used to develop responses to emerging issues (e.g. feminism), and that can articulate with social or political programs that are not self-consciously theological (e.g. pedagogy). I am suggesting that 'anastasis' is such a term.

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[42] Knight, H. op. cit. p. 19.
[43] Pinnock, C. op. cit., p. 63-66.
[44] Pinnock, C. H. *Flame of God: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996).

3. The Anastatic Option

The term anastasis first came to my attention in the context of James Wm. McClendon's presentation of theology as ethics. According to McClendon

> the resurrection is central not only for doctrine but also for ethics; it is the *sine qua non* of the Christian life itself. The claim that life is to be lived in *this* way - in the Christian way - depends upon Christ's rightful lordship, his right to the mastery of our lives. According to the New Testament, the divine act in which that claim is established is the αναστασις εκ νεκρων - the resurrection [of Jesus Christ] from the dead (cf. Acts 5:31; 10:40-42; 13:33; 17:31). Jesus Christ has been "designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness *by his resurrection from the dead*" (Rom. 1:4RSV). This designation establishes his rightful rank *vis-a-vis* both God and God's people (Phil. 2:9-11).[45]

McClendon puts 'anastatic' to work in a narrower context than I. For him, the anastatic is the third strand of a three stranded Christian ethic; the body, the community and the anastatic form of the Christian life, life as Christian gospel, life as theological statement.

However, he hints at a broader use of the term. He acknowledges that with reference to the resurrection

> we are touching not on some second order theological reflection, or even *one* New Testament theology, but the common stem of all New Testament conviction. The resurrection is as fundamental to the primitive Jewish Christianity of the book of James (cf. 2:1; 5:8) as it is to the sophisticated meditations of the Fourth Gospel.[46]

The resurrection is the "vindication of justice," it is "a new way of construing the world," and is "a transformation of life." In the death and resurrection of Jesus

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[45] McClendon, J. op. cit., p. 247-48.
[46] Ibid. p. 248.

Christ, a new kind of time, end-time, and a new kind of space, creation, has come to pass. For those who are willing to stake their lives on this event, a new σχημα, a new social structure has been inaugurated. This is not a schema beyond this life only, or confined to the interior life, or only for selected 'saints', but addresses and transforms everyone in the totality of their lives.

By the 'anastatic option' I am referring to the option of living in this world with the belief that the resurrection of Jesus Christ was the beginning of a new era, an era that will eventually witness the transformation of the entire cosmos according to the imagery of the Biblical narrative, a new heaven and a new earth. With the term I am also referring to the option of living with the belief that God is present in this world as Holy Spirit, accomplishing his will throughout the cosmos in general and within the *sanctorum communio*[47] in particular. These two additional themes (the Holy Spirit and the Holy Communion) have been extensively developed by Clark Pinnock and Stanley Grenz,[48] two members of Erickson's evangelical left or whom I would like to refer to as proponents of the anastatic option.

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[47] This is the title of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's doctoral dissertation. Although Bonhoeffer has not been referenced extensively in this discussion of the anastatic option, I know that his work has influenced McClendon (cf. chapter 7 of *Ethics)* and I am beginning to think that he will become increasingly important to postconservative theology.

[48] Pinnock, C. H. *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996) and S. J. Grenz, *Theology for the Community of God* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994).

3.1. The Anastatic and Evangelicalism

There is a tension within the evangelical family. Although 'the anastatic' is not a term commonly used when evangelicals explore this tension, it has a thinly disguised presence. I would like to lift this disguise for the reasons mentioned immediately above.

During the final decades of this century, the dominant identification of evangelicalism has been more scholastic than anastatic. Both influences are present within the "essentially contested tradition" known as evangelical Christianity.[49] However, not only does the scholastic force currently dominate in this struggle, the countervailing anastatic force has been identified with a variety of terms, further weakening the force of the anastatic option that is available to evangelical teachers who are interested in developing a constructivist pedagogy. To bring the resources of the anastatic option forward, we need to have some familiarity with this struggle and the various presentations of the anastatic option within our tradition.

I will assume that there was a period of relative unity within Reformed Protestantism focused around the great *solas* (i.e. grace alone, faith alone, scripture alone, Christ alone) and that Reformed Protestantism was proto-evangelicalism.[50] However, it was not long after the ascension to positions of influence by the leaders of the Reformation and the establishment of various

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[49] Abraham, W. J. *The Coming Great Revival: Recovering the Full Evangelical Tradition* (San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1984), p. 10.
[50] Knight, H. op. cit. p. 22.

Protestant state churches in the 16th and 17th centuries that this unity began to fragment. One of the early polarizations within evangelicalism in Continental Europe was that between the scholastic Calvinist Francis Turretin (1623-87) and the pietist option associated predominantly with Philip Jacob Spener (1635-1705) and his disciple August Hermann Francke (1663-1727). In England, a similar tension-filled fragmentation developed between the deists of the Church of England and the Puritans collected in various dissenting congregations.

A second significant fragmentation developed in the 18th century during the Anglo-American revivals. The 'enthusiasm' of John and Charles Wesley in England, the dramatic 'antics' of George Whitefield and the 'emotionalism' of Jonathan Edwards in the American colonies during the First Great Awakening (1730-60) were viewed with considerable suspicion by the established Calvinist pastors.[51] The Second Great Awakening at the end of the century "featured a revivalism that emphasized human free will far more than would have been approved by the Calvinist Edwards or even the Arminian Wesley."[52] Within these revivals we witness a second presentation of the scholastic/anastatic tension, this time under the terms of Calvinism and Weslyanism/Arminianism.

A third presentation of this tension is available for study in the alternatives between the evangelical, conservative, highly rationalistic Presbyterianism that developed at Princeton Seminary in the late 18th century, the Dutch Calvinism of

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[51] Stout, H. S. *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1991), ch. 6.
[52] Knight, H. op. cit. p. 25.

Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck, and the Reformed evangelicalism in Scotland which included such theologians as James Orr and James Denney.[53] The Princeton scholastics have had a particularly lasting influence on late 20th century evangelicalism. Charles Hodge and Benjamin Warfield opposed revivalism, the Holiness movement that developed from the Second Great Awakening and much of the social reform agenda of 19th century evangelicalism.[54] Theirs was "an Americanized, post-Enlightenment version of the Reformed scholasticism of Turretin."[55] The option put forward by Kuyper and Bavinck, on the other hand, has much more in common with the anastatic option.

> For Kuyper and Bavinck, the authority of scripture is upheld by an internal testimony of the Holy Spirit rather than a reasoned assessment of factual evidence. Unlike the theologians at Princeton, they denied a common human rational capacity. Rather, like Edwards, they believed the human capacity to reason to be fallen and incapable of discerning truth apart from faith, which was a gift of the Holy Spirit. This meant that instead of reason preparing the way of faith (as in the Princeton theology) faith became the ground of reason.[56]

A fourth presentation of the scholastic/anastatic tension can be discerned within the various struggles of the 20th century between more or less fundamentalistic evangelicals. This struggle may have climaxed in the early part

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[53] Sell, A. P. F. *Defending & Declaring the Faith: Some Scottish Examples 1860-1920* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1987).
[54] Marsden, G. ed. *Evangelicalism and Modern America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 1984).
[55] Knight, H. op. cit. p. 26.
[56] Ibid., p. 27.

of the century during the modernist-fundamentalist controversy of the 1920's, or it may be building to another decisive period following a prolonged truce during the middle of the century.[57] Although the dispensational, often anti-intellectual yet highly rationalistic, militantly separatist fundamentalism of John Nelson Darby, Charles Scofield and Carl MacIntyre is of little significance within current evangelicalism, strong vestiges of fundamentalism remain. The 'New Evangelicalism' of Henry, Carnell et al. may currently be engaged in a schismatic struggle with an as yet untitled countermovement that has been growing from the impetus of Bernard Ramm and that I have associated with the term, anastasis.

Henry H. Knight III summarizes this tension as one between scholastics and pietists.[58] Donald Dayton characterizes this struggle as a tension between those with a preference for a 'Presbyterian' paradigm and those with a preference for a 'Pentecostal' paradigm.[59] Knight points out that this is not a conflict between Calvinism and Arminianism, nor between populism and intellectualism but between contesting views regarding the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

> Both traditions begin with God's action toward humanity; the scholastics emphasize that action as recorded in scripture and expressed in doctrine, while the pietists emphasize that the God who acted redemptively as recorded in scripture *continues to do so today* [emphasis added].[60]

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[57] Olson, R. "The Future of Evangelical Theology." *Christianity Today 42*(2): pp. 40-50.
[58] Knight, H. op. cit. pp. 33-35.
[59] Dayton, D. "'The Search for Historical Evangelicalism': George Marsden's History of Fuller Seminary as a Case Study." *Christian Scholar's Review XXIII:1* (September, 1993), p. 18.
[60] Knight, H. op. cit., p. 34.

3.2. The Anastatic and Postmodernity

Since a fundamental point of tension within evangelicalism might focus on the Holy Spirit and her activity in this world, why not use a term that more transparently carries this focus? Thus I suggest that we view the tension within evangelicalism as one between scholastics and anastatics. I am further recommending the anastatic option as the one with greater promise for the development of Christian scaffolding for a constructivist pedagogy. What resources for pedagogy does the anastatic option suggest? As I continue to develop a response to this question, I will explore three doctrines that can be closely related to this term and that suggest the outline of Christian constructivist pedagogy.

3.2.1. The Anastatic and the Resurrection

The Greek word αναστασις can be translated as "to stand again" or "resurrection". The possibility that Jesus of Nazareth, who lived a particular kind of life and died a particular kind of death was raised from the dead and is presently alive, to die no more, is incomprehensible to those schooled in Enlightenment assumptions. It was also incomprehensible to first century Palestinians! As Lesslie Newbigin has said so well, "the simple truth is that the resurrection cannot be accommodated *in any way* of understanding the world

except one of which it is the starting point" [emphasis added].[61] Christian theology might be more 'sensible' without the resurrection but would no longer be Christian; Christianity stands or falls with the 'reality' of the raising of Jesus from the dead by God. As Paul wrote to the Corinthian church "if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain ... But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead" (I Cor. 15:14,20).

Both evangelical and liberal theologians have attempted to make 'sense' of this event without challenging important assumptions of modernity. The general liberal strategy has been to view the resurrection narratives as expressions of the experience of faith. The general evangelical strategy has been to provide 'evidence' of the resurrection as a pictorial event.[62] In both cases, the strategy has been to "demonstrate the truth of Christianity by reference to something else."[63] That, says Newbigin, "is exactly what we cannot and must not do." Instead, Christians offer an entirely "new starting point for thought," God's own revelation in those events to which the Scriptures testify, and whose centre is in Jesus Christ.[64] The resurrection forces us to choose between Peter Berger's 'plausibility structures',[65] or Thomas Kuhn's shifting paradigms.[66] Thomas F.

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[61] Newbigin, L. *Truth to Tell: The Gospel as Public Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1991). p.11 as well as *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1989). p.11.
[62] Carnley, P. *The Structure of Resurrection Belief* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987).
[63] Newbigin, L. *Truth to Tell: The Gospel as Public Truth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1991). p. 35.
[64] Ibid., p. 28.
[65] Berger, P. L. and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1967).
[66] Kuhn, T. op. cit.

Torrence has summarized the basic features of this new way of understanding reality.

> The heart of its meaning is eschatological. The resurrection of Jesus heralds an entirely new age in which a universal resurrection or transformation of heaven and earth will take place, or rather has already taken place, for with the resurrection of Jesus that new world has already broken into the midst of the old.[67]

The anastatic option rejects both the liberal and conservative evangelical attempts to satisfactorily respond to modern objections to the possibility of resurrection, objections that assume we possess a faculty called 'rationality' that is an independent source of information about what is the case. Rather

> The Christian believer is using the same faculty of reason as his unbelieving neighbour and he is using it in dealing with the same realities, which are those with which every human being has to deal. But he is seeing them in a new light, a new perspective. They fall for him into a different pattern. He cannot justify the new pattern in terms of the old; he can only say to his unbelieving neighbour, stand here with me and see if you don't see the same pattern as I do.[68]

At this point, knowing depends on a prior act of believing, on knowing more than we can say, on making a personal commitment to a particular reality in the manner discussed at length by Michael Polanyi, Bernard Lonergan and Alasdair MacIntyre. The 'truth' of the resurrection, according to the anastatic option, is 'proven' by the existence of Christian communities where the impact of this event is evident, where there are persons for whom faith in it has made a significant

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[67] Torrence, T. *Space, Time & Resurrection* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1976), p. 31.

[68] Newbigin, L. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1989). p.11.

difference in how they live their lives. For many in a postmodern world, the existence of such communities and lives will be the only 'evidence' they will seek!

A sensible question at this point is whether or not this is just another 'foundation'? Is not the declaration of the 'event' of the resurrection an immediate belief, a belief that can be verified as scientific fact by empirical analysis of the scriptures and related historical evidence? John E. Theil makes some helpful distinctions regarding the "trope of 'foundations'."[69] What is it that foundationalists affirm and nonfoundationalists deny so that the 'event' of the resurrection is not necessarily a 'foundation'? What, for these contesting philosophical perspectives, is the figurative use of 'foundation'?

> Nonfoundationalists, after all, do not claim that explanations should or can transcend assumptions, but [they claim] only that no privileged assumption posses the ability to ground the edifice of knowledge. Nor [do they claim that] such a privileged assumption is needed for knowledge to be meaningful.[70]

Nonfoundationalists operate from a set of background beliefs (perhaps the weak or minimal or simple foundations of William Alston[71], the substantive foundations of Ernest Sosa[72] or the soft foundations of Francis Fiorenza[73]) but these 'foundations' do not claim to "reach logical closure in a universally available truth, and that this logical closure is necessary for the truth of the body of knowledge it

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[69] Thiel, J. E. *Nonfoundationalism* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1994), pp. 81-86.
[70] Ibid., p. 82.
[71] Alston, W. P. "Two Types of Foundationalism." *The Journal of Philosophy 73* (1976), p. 166 and "Has Foundationalism Been Refuted?" *Philosophical Studies 29* (1976), p. 290f.
[72] Sosa, E. "The Raft and the Pyramid: Coherence versus Foundations in the Theory of Knowledge." *Midwest Studies in Philosophy 5* (1980), pp. 14f.
[73] Fiorenza, F. S. *Foundational Theology: Jesus and the Church* (New York: Crossroads Publications, 1986), p. 285.

supports."[74] Nonfoundationalists claim to have escaped from the grip of Cartesian anxiety, an epistemic restriction stated by Richard Bernstein as the grand and seductive *Either/Or.*

> *Either* there is some support for our being, a fixed foundation for our knowledge, *or* we cannot escape the forces of darkness that envelop us with madness, with intellectual and moral chaos.[75]

The 'event' of the resurrection has authoritative givenness for an anastatic nonfoundationalist Christian without being the first principle for a rational structure of beliefs and without being the unavoidable conclusion available to anyone who rationally examines the facts.

> Nonfoundationalists would readily admit that knowledge appeals to a host of background beliefs - assumptions we might say - that provide a context for explanation. That context, however, is indeterminate, and ever resistant to the closure that the foundationalist seeks... Nonfoundational philosophers use the term *foundations* as a metaphor to depict epistemic presuppositions imbued with far more authority than can be warranted by the evidence of experience, the exercise of reasoning, or the consistent application of the rules of traditional logic.[76]

The anastatic Christian does not try to offer 'proof' for the 'event' of the resurrection; to do so would be to grant Enlightenment notions of rationality ultimate epistemic authority. Theological discourse that either attempts to prove *in these ways* that the resurrection was a 'scientific fact' or *in these ways* declares that the resurrection is 'nonsense' indulges a "secular audience by

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[74] Idem.

[75] Bernstein, R. J. ***Beyond Objectivism and Relativism: Science, Hermeneutics, and Praxis***

accommodating Christian explanation to non-Christian expectations."[77] Theological discourse that is anastatic takes the narratives of the New Testament at face value (complete with their apparent contradictions in details); death is not the ultimate victor over human life. Furthermore, to live from the 'event' of the resurrection provides a coherent alternative to any appeal to live from a denial of the 'event' of the resurrection. We cannot avoid making a choice; no option is necessarily more 'rational' or 'obvious' since each option has its own internal 'rationality' and there is no extraoptional rationality to which we can appeal for final epistemic adjudication.

3.2.2. The Anastatic and the Holy Spirit

We are not left on our own to make this decision. The New Testament as well as Christian thinkers since then have proposed that God is not removed from this world (and a case can be made that this presence is 'feminine'[78]). God is involved with creation and provides guidance to those who respond. The anastatic option requires a pneumatology that articulates and explicates its own understanding of this traditional doctrine. However, this pneumatology will need to be developed without recourse to categories of esoteric experience and feelings in the manner of much liberal theology and to categories of rationality in the manner of dominant evangelical theology.

(Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), p. 18.
[76] Thiel, J. op. cit., p. 82.
[77] Ibid., p. 99.

Henry Knight has thoughtfully summarized the work of a number of theologians who have been developing such a third option.[79] In brief, we become aware of the presence of God through a 'spiritual sense' and we check the reliability as well as the validity of our 'spiritual data' by placing it against our scriptures, against the insights of those who have gone before us, and against the alternative explanations offered from other plausibility structures. We come to know how to live as Christians by exercising our spirituality within the context of canonical, traditional and cultural authorities.[80]

Henry Knight has called this alternative "an epistemological revolution," an alternative to both modern (i.e. Cartesian, Lockean and Kantian) and ultra-modern (i.e. existentialists and Nietzschean) epistemologies.[81] He suggests that John Wesley and Jonathan Edwards, the former an Arminian and the latter a Calvinist, were already struggling to articulate such an option in the 18th century. For both thinkers, humankind is faced with a choice; we can either attend to or ignore the reality of God's presence. We can choose to be habitually attentive or inattentive to the presence and will of our Creator. For the Arminian Wesley, our choice to be attentive is enabled by a gift of God, a work of the Holy Spirit. For the Calvinist Edwards, God's gift is irresistible. However, they both agree that spiritual sensitivity is established as a gift from God, not from a natural human

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[78] Pinnock, C. *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IN: InterVarsity Press, 1996), p. 16,17; J. Moltmann, op. cit., pp. 27 and 35ff.

[79] Knight, H. op. cit. pp. 79-84.

[80] Grenz, S. *Revisioning Evangelical Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), ch. 4.

[81] See W. J. Abraham's "The Epistemological Significance of the Inner Witness of the Holy

faculty, the reality of which can be established by either deductive reasoning, inductive development of ideas, or from the *a priori* categories.

Helmut Thielecke, Thomas F. Torrance, G. C. Berkouwer, and Donald Bloesch are the theologians that Knight looks to for support in developing an alternative to the epistemological 'Copernican revolution' initiated by Descartes.[82] They all agree that, apart from God, we are unable to know God at all. We cannot substitute some theory of knowledge that excludes the possibility of God's presence, for the independent activity of the Spirit. Instead, it is only God who enables us to have knowledge of himself. The Christian metanarrative is acknowledged to be a cultural construct, secondary theological language that expresses as best it can the primary experience of sensing the presence of God through the Holy Spirit. It is not special language that compels faith but experience with divinity that compels special language. Reason rests upon a faith commitment, not faith upon reason.[83]

Spirit." *Faith and Philosophy 7* (October, 1990) for a focused discussion of this issue.

[82] The literature related to this epistemological revolution can be opened with the following resources. On John Wesley see Randy L. Maddox, ed. *Aldersgate Reconsidered* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990). On Jonathon Edwards see Conrad Cherry, *The Theology of Jonathon Edwards* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1990). On the four theologians listed by Knight see Helmut Thielicke, *The Evangelical Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1974); Thomas F. Torrance, *God and Rationality* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971); G. C. Berkouwer, *Towards a Biblically Theo-logical Method* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1980); Donald Bloesch, *A Theology of Word and Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992).

[83] This was the well known observation made by St. Anselm (1033-1109), *fides quaerens intellectum*, the argument that Immanuel Kant 600 years later called the 'ontological argument'. Kant proceeded to show, in a convincing manner to many subsequent readers, that we cannot derive 'being' or *ontos* from 'reasoning' or *logos*. In his *Proslogion*, by pointing out that we are conscious of that-than-which-nothing-greater-can-be-conceived, Anselm may not have been engaging in 'metaphysics' (another term, 'ontology' being the first term, that he would not have recognized since 'metaphysics' became current with Aquinas and the recovery of Aristotle's *Physics* as well as the writings that came before *Physics* or 'metaphysics' ca.100 years after

What the anastatic option pursues is an effort to transcend the subject/object dualism that has dogged modern philosophy since at least the time of Descartes. Bloesch describes his theology as 'objective-subjective' rather than fundamentally 'objective' (as in evangelical rationalism) or predominantly 'subjective' (as in existentialism or mysticism).[84] God is the divine object of human subjectivity (i.e. the exercise of spiritual sensitivity) and human beings are the objects of God's gracious self-revelation, historically in the life of Jesus and experientially through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

3.2.3. The Anastatic and the Holy Communion

Proponents of the anastatic option concede that, according to the prescriptions of modern rationality, the resurrection and the presence of God in this world as Holy Spirit cannot be 'proven' to the satisfaction of the modern mind. However, the prescriptions of modern rationality as mind work of either the deductive variety (i.e. consistently applying the rules of traditional logic from universally true undebatable principles - absolutes - to additional truth) or the inductive variety (i.e. consistently applying the rules of traditional logic from specific facts to universal laws) "has been generally abandoned and its

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Anselm's death). Rather, Anselm may have been pointing out the ambiguity of human conceptualization; an intuitive sense of divinity begins when we have exhausted our epistemological concepts. This is the argument that Karl Barth made in *Anselm: Fides quarens intellectum*. Translated by Sam W. Robertson. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1978). For a presentation of the contemporary importance of Anselm see Jeffrey C. Pugh, "*Fides Quaerens Intellectum:* Anselm as Contemporary." *Theology Today* 55(1), pp. 35-45, or an entire volume recently published by Trevor Hart devoted to this tradition, *Faith Thinking: The Dynamics of Christian Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1995).

advocates put on the defensive by the writings of Wittgenstein, Quine, Sellars, and others."[85] In this sense, the anastatic option benefits from the postmodern impatience with and general dismissal of modern, foundational epistemology.[86] To reiterate Polanyi's dictum, we can without excuse admit that we know more than we can say. Nevertheless, knowledge claims will be adjudicated; we do not and will not believe all claims to knowledge. If the attempt to persuade on the basis of classical foundations as developed from the Enlightenment has been abandoned, how does the inevitable persuasion proceed? The 'proof' of anastatic Christian noetic claims, as with most postmodern noetic claims, cannot avoid some type of coherent, community based, pragmatism or praxis.[87]

Most of the Bible consists of narratives of the lives of people who understood themselves to be people of God. Whether we are focused on the people of the Old Testament or of the New, the general theme is the same; these are the narratives of people who believed that they had been called by God to re-present God on this earth. These people were peculiar in at least three ways: they understood themselves to be forgiven sinners, to be transformed from a more natural state, and to be called to a specific mission. It is the lives of the members of a community called the people of God that can 'prove' the anastatic

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[84] Bloesch, D. op. cit., p. 15.
[85] Sosa, E. op. cit. p. 14.
[86] Thiel, J. op. cit., p. 83.
[87] The most comprehensive treatments of this element of the anastatic option that I have found are by Gerhard Lohfink, *Jesus and Community: The Social Dimensions of Christian Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), the two works by John Milbank *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990) and *The World Made Strange: Theology, Language, Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997) and Miroslav Volf's, *After Our Likeness: The Church*

option. If reality includes the possibility of an event such as the resurrection of Jesus, and if God is present, there should be some 'evidence' such that we can be convincing or convinced. Something must be happening in the lives of these people that can be coherently related to a Christian view of reality so that Christianity becomes rational *in some way.*[88] There may be other 'rational' explanations for these events but an anastatic explanation becomes convincing with reference to the lives of the anastatic community. For the anastatic option, the life of the 'church' understood as a local embodiment of God, a holy congregation or *sanctorum communio,*[89] is essential for Christian conviction to occur; the "congregation is the hermeneutic of the gospel."[90] What might this mean?

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as the Image of the Trinity (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1998).

[88] cf. A. MacIntyre's extended development of how this happens in *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988), particularly chapter 28, "The Rationality of Traditions."

[89] Bonhoeffer, D. "Sanctorum Communio." (1927) In *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Witness to Jesus Christ.* Edited by J. de Gruchy. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), ch. 1.

[90] Newbigin, L. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 1989), ch. 18.

A considerable literature is collecting in response to this question.[91] The program of these writers is to outline an alternative to both the Catholic and Protestant explications of the 'church'.[92] Although both traditions are rich with various explanations of the church,[93] I believe that it is fair to make the generalization that for both Catholics and Protestants, the local church, the congregation of believers collected in a single place, is not *essential* for the effective proclamation of the gospel. For the Catholic tradition, the gospel is protected from the proclivities of the congregation by the magisterium; "the authority to proclaim and teach [the gospel] officially ... belongs to the whole college of bishops who are the successors to the college of apostolic witnesses and to individual bishops united in hierarchical communion with the Bishop of

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[91] The particular collection that I have found helpful begins with Hans Frei's initial turn from the hegemony of modern (both liberal and evangelical) explanations of the Bible in *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), moves to George Lindbeck's theoretical *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1984) and finds much of specific 'practical' value in the prodigious output of Stanley Hauerwas including *The Community of Character* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), *The Peaceable Kingdom* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), *Resident Aliens: A Provocative Christian Assessment of Culture and Ministry for People Who Know that Something is Wrong* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1989), *After Christendom: How the Church is to Behave if Freedom, Justice and a Christian Nation are Bad Ideas* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), *Unleashing the Scripture: Freeing the Bible from Captivity to America* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), and *In Good Company: The Church as Polis* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), of John H. Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1972/94), *The Priestly Kingdom: Social Ethics as Gospel* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), *Body Politics: Five Practices of the Christian Community Before the Watching World* (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1992) and *The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical* Michael G. Cartwright ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1994) and of Lesslie Newbigin's *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1978/95) and *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co. 1989).

[92] Newbigin, L. *The Household of God* (New York: Friendship Press, 1954). p. 95.

[93] Volf, M. op. cit. is particularly helpful on this point.

Rome."[94] The local congregation receives God's revelation through the magisterium and exercises their pronouncements. For the Protestant tradition, the proclamation of the gospel is removed from the pronouncements of the magisterium to either the Word preached and the Sacraments celebrated or, in the case of more fundamentalistic Protestantism, to the Bible. In either case, for Protestants the local congregation provides a place for the gospel to be proclaimed and heard, but the life of the congregation does not define the gospel. It is this marginalization of the congregation from the presence of God in 'word' and 'deed' that proponents of an anastatic option are struggling to overcome. In brief, the words of the congregation become the word of God and the deeds of the congregation become the work of God. In the words of the letter to the Ephesians, it is "through the church" that "the wisdom of God in its rich variety" is "made known to the rulers and authorities" (3:10). Although a complete presentation of this perspective is way beyond the scope of this dissertation, some specificity must be provided in order to make the anastatic option distinct from more familiar ecclesiologies.

Evidence for the resurrection of Jesus and the presence of God through the Holy Spirit includes lives that in some convincing way move from 'death' to 'life', lives that are characterized by what the New Testament calls the fruits of the Spirit (Galations 5:22) and, thirdly, lives that can only accomplish the work of

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[94] O'Collins, G. "Magisterium." In *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*. Edited by A. Richardson & J. Bowden. (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1983) p. 344.

God through what the New Testament calls the gifts of the Spirit (Romans 12; Ephesians 4; I Peter 4). The fundamental self-understanding of anastatic Christians is that they have been forgiven, that they have been remade and that they have a mission to accomplish.[95]

Forgiveness is not primarily absolution from guilt but restoration of communion with God, with the natural world and with all people. This is a difficult understanding of restoration for modern people to grasp. We are more likely to be impressed with complicated restoration programs that are based on instrumental reasoning and therapeutic techniques where we focus on the cause of the rupture and on a remedy that is developed with this cause in mind.[96] Members of an anastatic community believe that they have been forgiven for resisting the ultimate source of life; they are sinners saved by grace through faith and therefore they ought to conduct themselves in specific ways. Second, Christians are those who display God-like-ness. Bonhoeffer uses Jesus' so called Sermon on the Mount (*The Gospel According to Matthew*, chapters 5, 6 and 7) to outline the character of the Christian that should be developed through

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[95] John Howard Yoder devoted a great deal of his volumnous writing to the discussion of anastatic social practices, even though as far as I know he did not use the term 'anastatic'. For a summary of his most important essays on this topic see *The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical.* Edited by Michael G. Cartwright (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1994), p. 12.

[96] In my view, a powerful and contemporary example of the Biblical 'forgiveness for restoration' model is the activity of the Commission for Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa under the leadership of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Another hint of the attraction of forgiveness to law makers is found in the emerging institutionalization of 'sentencing circles' in Canada.

a *Life Together.*[97] Members of anastatic congregations acquire what Jonathon Edwards referred to as 'the affections'[98] and act according to what Alasdair MacIntyre calls 'virtue ethics' through a process of re-characterization. Don E. Saliers offers one summary of the holy habits that characterize Christians:

> gratitude to God for creation and redemption, awe and holy fear of the divine majesty, repentant sorrow over sins, joy in God's steadfast love and mercy, and love of God and neighbour.[99]

The Christian way of being in the world is evidenced by attitudes and patterns of behaviour such as displaying gentleness in relation to others and to nature, nurturing the poor and the abandoned, forgiveness, mercy, long-suffering, and kindness to enemies.

Third, Christians are aware of the frequency with which they have failed to be people who live as those who for no good reason have been forgiven, the frequency with which they act out of character. Therefore they rely on the leading of the Holy Spirit to be faithful to their calling, to be the people of God. Christians are aware of the ambiguity of their witness and of the conflict that emerges as they struggle to be faithful to the Spirit's leading. Gregory L. Jones, drawing on Alasdair MacIntyre refers to this process as the development of a craft.

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[97] Bonhoeffer, D. *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: MacMillan Publishing Co. 1949/59), part II and *Life Together* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954).
[98] Edwards, J. *A Treatise on Religious Affections* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1982).
[99] Saliers, D. *The Soul in Paraphrase: Prayer and the Religious Affections* (New York: Seabury, 1980), p. 11.

> On the one hand, we are learning what it is about ourselves that needs to be transformed if we are to become holy people; on the other hand, we are learning how to diagnose and discern the craft of forgiveness in the situations and contexts that we and others face in the world around us.[100]

The craftsmanship of being a holy communion requires a holistic epistemology, one that recognizes the inadequacy of an individual mind working alone to establish the truth. It is through membership in a narrative shaped community, and according to the anastatic option, aided by a vigorous doctrine of the Holy Spirit, that the gospel is proclaimed.

> For in a postmodern world, the persuasiveness of the truth claims of Christianity will depend on communities of persons whose characters reflect and who struggle to enact the love which was revealed in Christ... the *only* hermeneutic of the gospel is a congregation of men and women who believe it and live by it [emphasis added].[101]

4. The Anastatic Option for Postmodern Constructivism

The anastatic option as outlined above can be particularly helpful for a teacher who is struggling to develop a constructivist pedagogy that is of the postmodern type. An open ended type of constructivist pedagogy, one that diligently honours the problems posed by the student, the community dynamics within which the student lives, and that does not privilege the teacher's knowledge or a particular method for determining knowledge could be developed with the scaffolding of the anastatic option. This is what Paulo Freire calls

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[100] Jones, G. L. *Embodying Forgiveness:: A Theological Analysis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1995), p. 227.
[101] Knight, H. op. cit. p. 202.

"problem-posing education"[102] and it can benefit from and be informed by a theological discourse that I have termed the anastatic. What might some of the links be between an anastatic theology and the three pedagogical concerns of this dissertation: knowing, the knower, and the known?

4.1. The Resurrection and Knowing

The resurrection of Jesus cannot be 'proven' in the sense of establishing it as an indisputable scientific 'fact'. Any attempt to do so makes the resurrection a mediated belief and privileges some other belief as basic, immediate or foundational. For example, the belief that 'proof' is established by a process that includes a number of observations, the induction and formulation of an hypothesis, followed by the deduction of expected phenomena, the development and administration of various tests designed to expose the presence of such phenomena, ending in a conclusion regarding 'the facts of the case' (i.e. the scientific method) might be used to either 'prove' or 'disprove' the claim that the resurrection is a 'fact'. The argument regarding whether or not the resurrection is a 'fact' remains a penultimate argument, regardless of which side wins the argument. The ultimate argument is about the ground of proof, the foundation on which the argument rests and from an anastatic perspective, no foundation can be more basic than the resurrection itself. Of course, the resurrection could itself be suggested as 'foundational' in the sense of the term proposed by foundationalist epistemologies. However, since I am exploring the potential of the

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[102] Freire P. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1970/93), p. 53.

resurrection for a non-foundational pedagogy, (i.e. since I am assuming that the attempt to establish foundationalist epistemologies *of any kind* is futile) this suggestion will be ignored. If the resurrection cannot be 'proven' and if I am not interested in pursuing an anastatic foundationalism, what is the significance of the resurrection to a non-foundational anastatic constructivist pedagogy?

Although the resurrection may not be a 'provable fact', it can be shown to be a 'reasonable belief'. However, to be 'reasonable', it needs to be placed in a web of related beliefs including a belief in a God who not only exists but who is active within inanimate as well as animate nature.[103] It is at least imaginable that such a God might use something like a resurrection from the dead to establish "a decisive bridgehead into this present world."[104] If we resist making a resurrection such as the one described in the New Testament regarding Jesus of Nazareth *ultra vires*, and instead consider it as a starting point for an educational pedagogy (and in such a non-foundationalist sense, 'foundational' or 'fundamental' or 'basic'), how might the resurrection be related to knowing?

The New Testament is unequivocal regarding the importance of the resurrection of Jesus. It is not an exaggeration to say that for the Apostle Paul, at least, the resurrection is at the centre of Christianity; "If Christ is not raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins" (I Corinthians 15:17). From the various

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[103] The work of Nancey Murphy and Arthur Peacocke is recommended as an introduction to a developing literature on this topic, a literature that supports the anastatic option being pursued in this dissertation. (cf. N. Murphy, *Beyond Liberalism and Fundamentalism: How Modern and Postmodern Philosophy Set the Theological Agenda,* Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996, especially chapter six, "Metaphysical Holism and Divine Action").

appearance narratives of the New Testament, it is also clear that the resurrection was not a resuscitation, a journey back into this present life; the resurrection was a victory over death and the emergence of a new mode of physicality, the beginning of God's new creation. (I Corinthians 15:20; James 1:18).

However, the meaning of the resurrection and an understanding of its significance was not at all obvious to the early Christians and we should not be surprised if we too are engaged in a life-long journey toward understanding a veiled future. The first point I want to make regarding the resurrection and knowing within the anastatic option is that we rely on appearances of Jesus to gradually pull back the veil of a future that we cannot know without his explanations. Stanley Hauerwas has transcribed a helpful sermon on this point.[105] We are sometimes tempted to think that we would not have been as un-knowing if we had been favoured with the physical presence of the resurrected Jesus. We would not have been as slow to recognize the 'fact' of the resurrection as the two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). In fact, we (i.e. Christians) sometimes claim that we can know by simply picking up the Bible and reading it. Some of us even go further and, as exemplar Enlightenment liberal educators, claim that anyone with reasonable intelligence can do so. Hauerwas and educators working within the anastatic option would deny such a claim.

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[104] Wright, N. T. "Grave Matters." *Christianity Today 42*(4), April 6, 1998, p. 53.

[105] Hauerwas, S. "The Insufficiency of Scripture: Why Discipleship is Required." *Unleashing the Scripture: Freeing the Bible from Captivity to America* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993), ch. 5.

> The story of the Emmaus road makes clear that knowing the Scripture does little good unless we know it as part of a people constituted by the practices of a resurrected Lord. So Scripture will not be self-interpreting or plain in its meaning unless we have been transformed in order to be capable of reading it.[106]

It was not until the disciples regained the context of "the table [where] he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them [that] their eyes were opened and they recognized him" (Luke 24:30,31). Knowing, within the anastatic option, depends on the presence of Jesus and his presence is made manifest in the practices that were central to his life here on earth. We will be provided with new constructions of the meaning of familiar knowledge (even as the Emmaus disciples were re-taught the meaning Scripture "beginning with Moses and all the Prophets" - Luke 24:27) but not without his intervention, our transformation and the context of an epistemic community practising Christ-like living.

Nancey Murphy provides additional guidance as to how this might proceed. Although she works from Imre Lakatos' model of scientific research programs[107] and does not directly reference Alasdair MacIntyre's suggestions regarding the rationality of traditions[108] or Bernard Lonergan's explications of the role of heuristic structures,[109] she does address the question of how the

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[106] Ibid., p. 49.
[107] Lakatos, I. "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes." In *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*. Edited by I. Lakatos and A. Musgrove. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 91-196.
[108] MacIntyre, A. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1988, ch. 18).
[109] Lonergan, B. *Insight, A Study of Human Understanding* (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1956), ch's 2 and 4.

resurrection might act as a 'foundation' for anastatic knowing.[110] To know anything or anyone, according to Murphy, requires the identification of what she calls the 'core' of a research program, plus the explication of auxiliary hypotheses that enfold this core, and empirical data that might be used to test the hypotheses and core theory.[111] She suggests that "a Christocentric theology's core ... might begin with a minimal doctrine of God, God's holiness, and God's revelation in Jesus."[112] I suggest that an anastatic core would begin with the resurrection. What might some of the auxiliary hypotheses and empirical data be that would advance such a heuristic structure?

N. T. Wright and Charles Colson provide two examples, even though I have no reason to believe that they would want to be allied with an anastatic pedagogy (although they might be so inclined). Wright is dean of Lichfield Cathedral, Staffordshire, England and a New Testament scholar whose work is often referenced approvingly by Grenz and others whom Erickson identifies as the Evangelical Left. Colson is a former Richard Nixon associate who was sent to prison for his part in the so-called Watergate Scandal of the 1970's and is now a contributing editor to *Christianity Today*. As far as I know, neither has written explicitly on pedagogical topics. However, they do write about the way a core belief in the resurrection suggests auxiliary hypotheses that can be tested by empirical data and thus contribute to anastatic knowing. For Wright, an important

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[110] Murphy, N. *Theology in the Age of Scientific Reasoning* (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990).
[111] Ibid., pp. 184-186.

hypothesis that is suggested by the resurrection is that Christians who embrace the resurrection as a core belief will be promoters of a kingdom-on-earth-as-it-is-in-heaven religion.

> If Jesus Christ is truly risen from the dead, Christianity becomes what the New Testament insists that it is: good news for the whole world, news that warms our hearts *precisely because it isn't about warming hearts.* The living God has in principle dealt with evil once and for all, and is now at work, by his own Spirit, to do for us and the whole world what he did for Jesus on that first Easter Day.[113]

Accordingly, the empirical data should substantiate the hypothesis that Christians are engaged in re-creation in a manner that can best be explained by the resurrection.[114]

Colson suggests a second example, one that Hauerwas independently also suggests.[115] From the core belief regarding the resurrection as articulated in the Apostles' Creed ("I believe ... in the resurrection of the body") auxiliary hypotheses regarding Christian marriage and sex can be articulated. The anastatic core belief denies the mind-body dualism that was given a profound boost into modern consciousness by Descartes.

> Since the apostles, the church has opposed dualist heresies. We believe that God created each individual as a unity - body, soul and spirit. At the end of time, our bodies will be raised to life eternal.

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[112] Ibid., p. 186.
[113] Wright, N. T. op. cit. p. 53.
[114] The issue of anastatic re-creation is an intriguing one. It seems to me that we are in desperate need of re-creation that is more profound than supporting the Edmonton Oilers or even the Calgary Flames.
[115] Hauerwas, S. "Lust for Peace" in *Unleashing the Scripture: Freeing the Bible from Captivity to America* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1993) and *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), pp. 191-193.

> What we do with our bodies expresses who we are as full persons. We utterly reject any dualism that breaks up the individual and relegates the body to a merely instrumental role.[116]

Colson then continues to argue that premarital sex, guilt-free adultery, homosexual acts, abortion, fetal experimentation, euthanasia, assisted suicide and disregard for human rights are all non-Christian behaviours because in various ways they dis-integrate the human being. They all violate the integrity of the body and soul pronounced by the speech-act of the resurrection in that what the body does or is done unto is assumed to be independent of the mind. For example, adultery indulges the sexual urges of the body without the act of willing commitment and abortion disposes of a body because it apparently cannot think. Not only did the resurrection say that holism will prevail, it inaugurated such holism and Christians, "as a kind of first fruits of all he created" (James 1:18), have been elected to demonstrate such integrity.

Of course the data may not appear to support these auxiliary hypotheses and perhaps the specific hypotheses have been inappropriately explicated from the core belief. These debates will need to be undertaken by the Christian community in order to establish knowledge but these examples demonstrate anastatic knowing.

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[116] Colson, C. "Why Fidelity Matters." *Christianity Today* 42(5), p. 104.

4.2. The Holy Spirit and the Knower

Throughout the history of Christian theological discourse, there is agreement that humankind is in need of salvation. However, there has been a very important debate regarding whether or not, or at least to what degree, unregenerate human beings can have knowledge of this salvation without divine intervention. If humans are born in sin, would not such sin put all knowledge of God beyond the noetic faculties of natural humankind? This is the traditional debate regarding the extent of the depravity of man and was answered affirmatively by Thomas Aquinas (1226-1274) and emphatically so by John Calvin (1509-1564); humans are totally depraved. Eamon Duffy writes about the doctrine of total depravity that, as far as Calvin was concerned

> the mind cannot come to know God by nature, though God is revealed in the natural order. Nevertheless, human beings may excel in the arts and sciences, which are natural gifts, though this excellence is the work of the Holy Spirit displaying God's special grace in 'common nature'.[117]

Others, such as Jacob Arminius (1560-1609) and John Wesley (1703-1791) argued that salvation is not possible without some type of natural theology; humankind is not totally depraved. Somehow, the human mind must be receptive to the salvific overtures of God and somehow, humans must be able to exercise some degree of freewill. Salvation cannot be imposed on anyone, although "no

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[117] Duffy, E. "Total Depravity." In *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology*. Edited by A. Richardson & J. Bowden, p. 153.

one can believe *without the help* of God's grace".[118]

It is important to notice that the Calvinist - Arminian debate, one that is still current particularly in evangelical Christianity,[119] is encouraged if correct thinking is the starting point of salvation. Calvin argued that the natural mind could not think correctly regarding the supernatural (although he inserted the availability of 'common grace'), whereas Aquinas and Arminius allowed for some degree of natural perception of the divine (although Arminius at least inserted the necessity of God's help).

An anastatic soteriology might avoid this continuing, apparently irresolvable debate. Here, the resurrection itself becomes the event that is independent of human, natural, and free choice. It provides the means whereby sinful, natural humans can choose to be knowers of God (Arminius' concern) without making God into their own image or relying on their own natural faculties for salvation (Calvin's fear). It is God's independent act of the resurrection of Jesus that is at the root of the transformation of natural humankind so that we become knowers of that which is most fundamental to our existence.

We can develop this initial insight into the relationship between the

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[118] O'Neill, J. C. "Arminianism." In *The Westminster Dictionary of Christian Theology.* Edited by A. Richardson & J. Bowden., p. 43.

[119] The 'open view of God' debate between Pinnock et al. and more 'reformed' evangelicals such as Timothy George, John Piper and William Horton can be understood as an Arminian - Calvinist debate. This debate was given a substantial nudge with the publication by C. Pinnock, R. Rice, J. Sanders, W. Hasker and D. Basinger of *The Openness of God* (Downers Grove, IN: InterVarsity Press, 1994). Some commentators have viewed the theology presented by the authors of this book as evangelical process theology. I will be paying attention to this debate because, in my opinion, the 'open view of God' makes an important contribution to my program.

resurrection and the knower by attending to the role of the Holy Spirit within the anastatic event. Paul says he was "declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:4) Furthermore, through the resurrection, Jesus "became a life-giving spirit" (I Corinthians 15:45).

The work of the Spirit did not begin with Jesus. There was, and where the Gospel has not been effectively preached, there still is a period of universal preparation. God has never left himself without witness (Acts 14:17). From the earliest passages of the Bible he worked with a variety of people: Melchizedek, a King of Salem (Genesis 14:18), Abram the Chaldean (Genesis 12 - 25), Philistines as well as Israelites (Amos 9:7), and the Biblical narrative is clear that this pattern of interacting with apparent unbelievers continued. "The Spirit is ever working to orient people, wherever they are, to the mystery of divine love."[120] As a further step in recovering a fallen world, he called a special people into existence, the Israelites. It was ancient Israel that first experienced the Spirit as a shaper of a nation.

> The Old Testament often refers to spiritual gifts that sustain community: gifts of courage for leaders, wisdom for teachers, creativity for poets, inspiration for prophets. In Israel's early history, the nation experienced the power of the Spirit over and over again, delivering it from danger and distress. The Spirit rescued Israel and held it together as a people.[121]

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[120] Pinnock, C. *The Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), p. 83.

Finally, the one who could inaugurated the new age appeared and by the power of the Spirit set the stage whereby everyone can be restored to fellowship with God; the Christ, the Messiah, the one anointed by the Spirit, was born. His birth, baptism, temptation, preaching, healing, exorcisms, death and resurrection are all dependent on the Spirit and it is the resurrection that marks the beginning of a new creation, the commencement of the age to come, the establishment of the Kingdom of God, the new heaven and the new earth to which all humankind is eventually invited.

It is to this context, extraordinarily brief in its presentation,[122] that the anastatic knower is drawn; humans become knowledge-able (able to know the good news of salvation) by the work of the Spirit.

4.3. The Holy Communion and the Known

In the beginning of this section of the dissertation,[123] I lamented the absence of a systematic, fully articulated anastatic theology. To this point, I have suggested that the prolegomena to such a theology would develop the significance of the event of the resurrection for all acts of knowing. Second, I have suggested that the pneumatology of an anastatic theology would inform our understanding of the knower. My final suggestion is that the ecclesiology of an anastatic theology would help us understand the known.[124]

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[122] A much more comprehensive presentation can be accessed through Pinnock and the various theologians upon whom he draws.

[123] cf. p. 153.

[124] One of the traditional elements of theological discourse that I have not placed in this outline is

The intrusion of God into the life of the believer is at the core of the Christian identity, the first order speech or language of the Christian community. Christ has come. Through the Son, the Father inaugurated the re-creation of the world, and the Holy Spirit is involving humankind in this new creation that will ultimately come to a conclusion. This is the grounding of the Christian's life. Doctrine, or text, is second order language. The intrusion of God is prior to the revelatory function of the Bible or the magisterium.

> The source of our knowledge of divine truth is neither the Scriptures expounded according to our private interpretation alone not any private individual 'word from the Spirit'. Rather, it consists in an external principle — inspired Scripture, combined with an internal principle — the witness of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures are the vehicle or instrumentality of the Holy Spirit through which he chooses to speak to the people of God.[125]

It is the record of the Spirit led life of the people of God that becomes doctrine or the known. The record of this 'Spirit work' is Scripture that also acts as an external referent for judging the authenticity of present 'Spirit work'. The Bible, from an anastatic perspective, is the living book of the Church. From an anastatic perspective, the fundamental issue is not that Christians are people of the Holy Bible, but that the Bible is the book of the holy people.

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eschatology. It seems to me that the birth, resurrection, assumption, and return of Christ are one type of event for the purposes of this dissertation; together they provide the starting point of a comprehensive anastatic as well as constructivist pedagogy. See J. Moltmann (op. cit.) p. 15.

[125] Grenz, S. *Revisioning Evangelical Theology: A Fresh Agenda for the 21st Century* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993). p. 114.

> The Bible is seen, then, not as a finished and static fact or collection of facts to be analyzed by increasingly sophisticated methods, but as a potentiality of meaning which is actualized by succeeding generations in light of their needs and by means of approaches supplied and authenticated by their worldviews.[126]

The anastatic view of the known, of doctrine and the Bible, must acknowledge this dynamic relationship between truth, authority and propositions on the one hand and the historical as well as the present life of the Christian community on the other hand, while producing authoritative propositions of the known. "Our Bible is the product of the community of faith that cradled it."[127]

John Yoder's work is, in my view, one of the richest veins to be mined by anyone pursuing a research project such as this one. In his extraordinary essay on Matthew 18, he shows how it is practices of the congregation and specifically the acts of "binding and loosing" that establish knowledge. It is not the Bible as an object to be studied that yields Christian doctrine. He writes that

> to speak of the Bible apart from the people reading it and apart from the specific questions that those people reading need to answer is to do violence to the very purpose for which we have been given the Holy Scriptures. There is no such thing as an isolated word of the Bible carrying meaning in itself. It has meaning only when it is read by someone and then only when that reader and the society in which he or she lives can understand the issue to which it speaks.[128]

This approach to the known is quite different from the more common

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[126] Ibid., p. 120.
[127] Ibid., p. 121.
[128] Yoder, J. 'Binding and Loosing." *The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co,, 1994), p. 353.

perspective found among most of the Christians with whom I worship. The more common view of the known and the relationship of the Christian community to the known are represented by this quotation from Charles Hodge's *Systematic Theology*.

> If natural science be concerned with facts and laws of nature, theology is concerned with the facts and principles of the Bible. If the object of one be to arrange and systematize the facts of the external world, and to ascertain the laws by which they are determined; the object of the other is to systematize the facts of the Bible, and to ascertain the principles or general truths which these facts involve.[129]

This view of the known, scientific as well as theological, places it outside the individual and certainly beyond the life of a community. The known is something to be discovered and systematized.

It will not be easy to bring an anastatic view of knowledge against the well established propositionalism represented by Hodge. However, a number of Baptist theologians are engaged in this project and I wish them well because, in my view, they are important voices in the development of an anastatic theological scaffolding for a constructivist pedagogy. Stanley Grenz, Clark Pinnock, Roger Olson, James McClendon, Doug Harink and John Howard Yoder (though technically an anabaptist) are doing important constructive theology that addresses this issue of the known. As a conclusion to this part of the dissertation, I will reference the work of two of these authors to substantiate my expectation regarding their potential value to my continuing project.

Doug Harink, a Baptist theologian teaching at The King's University College, Edmonton (a college established primarily by Dutch Reformed congregations) urges us to pursue a view of the know that is compatible with what I have called an anastatic view.

> The new messianic movement is in the end constituted not by Jesus' difference from (or similarity to) any particular form of Judaism, or by his embodiment of a previously discernible metanarrative, *but by Jesus' resurrection from the dead and his exaltation to Lordship* [emphasis added].[130]

Harink goes on to argue that the resurrection established a new and decisive revelation of God, a revelation that calls for a people, created by Christ and the Spirit, to form a concrete socio-political reality. He outlines seven qualities of these people that I think mark an anastatic Church as a community of Christians who

1. Consider their beliefs and practices to be of utmost importance.
2. Include in its membership only those who are prepared seriously to take up these beliefs and practices and live by them.
3. Exclude, at least temporarily and for disciplinary purposes, those members who contravene those beliefs and practices.
4. Have as their purpose to bear faithful witness to the revelation they have received.
5. Establish an attractive power by being a peaceable and reconciling social reality.

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[129] As cited in H. Knight III, *A Future for Truth: Evangelical Theology in a Postmodern World* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1997), p. 26.

[130] Harink, D. "Back to Modernity? A Critical Engagement with Middleton and Walsh." *Canadian Evangelical Review 13* (Fall, 1996), p. 5.

6. Sustain a witness not simply through doctrines and rituals, canons and prescriptions, boundaries and exclusions, but by living lives that are dependent on one another.

7. Receive a new 'social construction of reality' through active and regular participation in the community, in its doctrines, practices, rituals, and policies.[131]

For anastatic Christians, metanarratives and worldviews are not enough; in fact they may be the problem preventing effective Christian witness. The truth of the Gospel (i.e. the known) is not a claim about the superiority of a particular worldview or metanarrative, but the effectiveness of the Spirit at work in a particular, historic community to conform the members of the community to the life of Jesus; "The concrete, non-totalizing life of actual Christians, the body of Christ is ultimately the only answer [i.e. known] that counts."[132]

John Yoder provides more specific advice to Christian communities who have abandoned an essentially logocentric apology for the Gospel in favour of a policentric one.[133] He suggests that congregations who want to base their witness on the message delivered by the lives of the members of the congregation will need to recover five New Testament practices that can sustain a Christian community as a hermeneutic of the Gospel.[134] These five practices are binding and loosing, baptism, eucharist, multiplicity of gifts, and the open meeting. Through these practices, though not only through these practices, the church becomes a self-conscious *polis*, a structured social body. Yoder is clear

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131 Ibid., p. 6.
132 Ibid. p. 8.
133 These are my distinctions, not Yoder's.
134 Yoder, J. *Body Politics: Five Practices of the Christian Community before the Watching*

that this *polis* is established by virtue of Jesus and the resurrection[135] and that it is their practices that lead to the known. The people are called and established first as a Church and theology, the known, comes later.

> The theology to explain the rightness of the ingathering [reported in the Acts of the Apostles] was imposed by the events, which it explained after the fact. The Twelve did not set out to obey the Great Commission [of Matthew 28:19,20]; they talked about the risen Lord and they broke bread together in their homes and thus they found themselves together first with Hellenized Jews and then even with Gentiles. *Then* a theology had to be unfolded to make sense of the ingathering, and adjustments in church order had to be made to affirm and guide it. *The action of mission was prior to theory about it* [emphasis added].[136]

Yoder is urging us to follow an anastatic view of the known. First we experience the guidance of the Spirit to some form of human existence, a *polis*, based on the intervention of God in this world, as demonstrated by the resurrection, and then we formulate doctrine that explains what we have seen and heard and orders our lives.

World (Nashville, TN: Discipleship Resources, 1992).

[135] Ibid., p. 31.

[136] Ibid., p. 38.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation brings to a conclusion six years of intensive reading, thinking, debating and writing. It also brings some relief to the anxiety that initially motivated me to pursue this research, an anxiety brought on in the early 1990's by specific events in two institutions that play a central role in my life, church and school. At school (Harry Collinge High School, Hinton, Alberta) many of us were enduring what seemed to be an unrelenting barrage of innovations including integration of special needs students, program continuity, continuous progress, authentic assessment, performance-based assessment, and outcome-based education. At church (Bethany Baptist Church, Hinton, Alberta) a series of events transpired that led me to have serious doubts about our ability to practice atonement, the practice that I believe to be at the very core of the gospel. It was from these two seemingly unrelated anxieties that I took my first faltering steps toward this dissertation.

For me, the barrage of innovations at school were not things to be endured; they seemed to be interesting alternatives to elements of traditional pedagogy, elements that as a music teacher I had early in my career struggled against. I began to suspect that these innovations were not unrelated but were appearing from a submerged philosophical rhizome. I became anxious to

uncover a philosophical shift that I suspected was feeding innovations that many of my colleagues viewed as little more than a series of fads imported from down south, American experiments in education uncritically accepted one after the other by gullible Canadians. The anxiety of school was thus one of excitement; perhaps a profound shift in public school education was developing, a shift that would be more agreeable to music education in particular and to my pedagogical instincts in general. At school it was the hyperactivity of our leadership that motivated me to do some (!) reading and writing.

The anxiety from church was due to anything but excitement. Here it was the hypoactivity of the leadership that contributed to a mood of profound dis-couragement and de-moralization. It seemed to me that the leaders of my church were unable to respond with effective and efficient intervention in the face of a progressive fragmentation of relationships. Rather than the anxiety caused by a barrage of innovations to be endured or welcomed, I was experiencing the anxiety caused by a silent and paralyzed leadership, unsure of what to do in the face of what I considered to be sinful behaviour. I began to suspect that our inability to effect a positive response to what I viewed as a communal crisis might have a submerged theological antibiosis. I became suspicious that elements of popular evangelical theology were detrimental to the communal health for which I hoped.

Michael J. Gross, in a review of Robert Funk's *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium,* quotes Funk as saying that "real learning is agony, a struggle,

a contest with ourselves, with superficial, entrenched ideas, and with the lore we absorb from the surrounding cultural atmosphere. Learning the truth about the Christian tradition can be the most agonizing of all exercises."[1] For me, the most amazing, impressive and motivating conclusion of this dissertation is that the hyperactivity of my school division's leadership and the hypoactivity of my church's leadership have some common ground; understanding the one has helped me understand the other. Even as the hyperactivity of the school division's leadership came to be understood as a rejection of Enlightenment preoccupations, the hypoactivity of the church's leadership came to be understood as a paralysis inflicted by these same preoccupations,

The agony and the struggle I have gone through during the past six years has been a contest with myself and with ideas entrenched in my school as well as in my church. In the case of the school, the leadership en-couraged me to challenge entrenched ideas (i.e. the ideas of Enlightenment, liberal, public education). In the case of the church, the leadership dis-couraged me from challenging our cultural lore (i.e. the culture of late 20th century evangelicalism). The school pulled me away from the preoccupations of the Enlightenment while the church refused to acknowledge our need to escape these preoccupations. My attempt to overcome some of this tension has led me to the conclusion that a

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[1] Gross, M.J. "The Life of Jesus: True of False?" a review of R. W. Funk's *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millenium* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1997) written for judeo-christian-editors-subscribers@amazon.com April 29, 1998. http://www.amazon.com/judeo-christian-199804. Robert W. Funk is a member of the Jesus Seminar, a collection of mostly Christian scholars concerned to establish the 'authentic' words of Jesus in the collected gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Thomas.

constructivist reformation of our schools will have some elements in common with an anastatic reformation of our churches.

In this dissertation I have presented an outline of how Christian teachers who are impatient with Enlightenment preoccupations might proceed with some of the philosophical and theological elements of this bilateral reformation. Of course mine is only a suggestion; to claim that this suggestion is a universal prescription for healing all the ills of contemporary education and ecclesiology would contradict post-Enlightenment preoccupations. Secondly, this is only an outline of how we might proceed. As I have worked on this project, I have become painfully aware of the limitations of a singular effort in addressing these extremely complex issues. I have been able to convince myself, at any rate, that the way forward involves at least two steps; (1) a reconsideration of the preoccupations of Enlightenment thinkers on our notions of the knower, the known and the act of knowing, and (2) a sustained effort to uncover a theological option that places the resurrection of Jesus Christ at its centre. From the first step we will be led to consider alternative notions of the knower, the known and the act of knowing, alternatives that I have described as constructivist. From the second step we will be led to consider alternative notions of what it means to be a Christ follower, alternatives that I have described as anastatic. From both we may gain the hope that can sustain us as Christian teachers.

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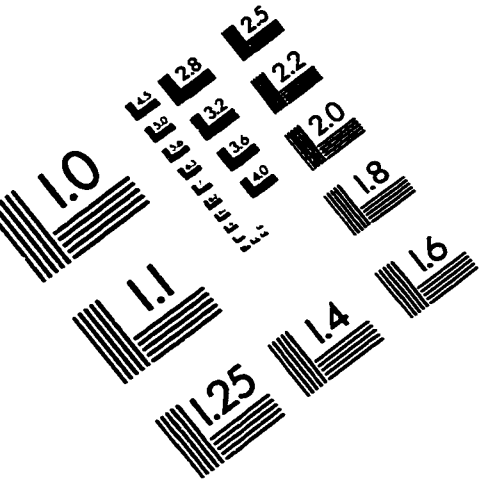

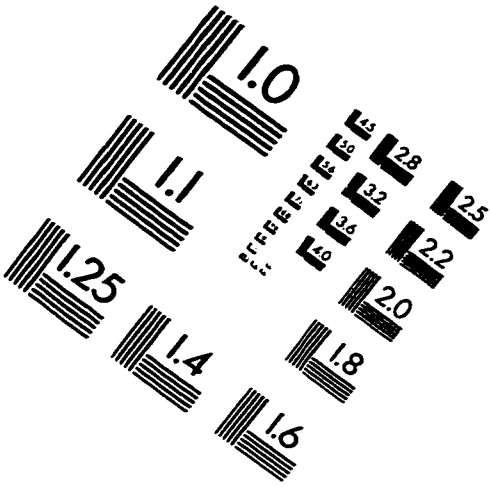

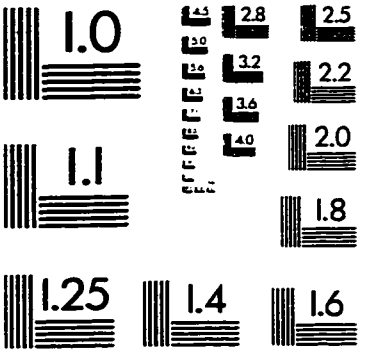

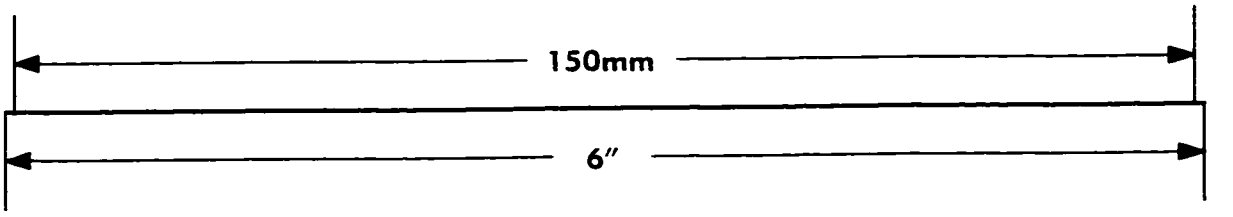

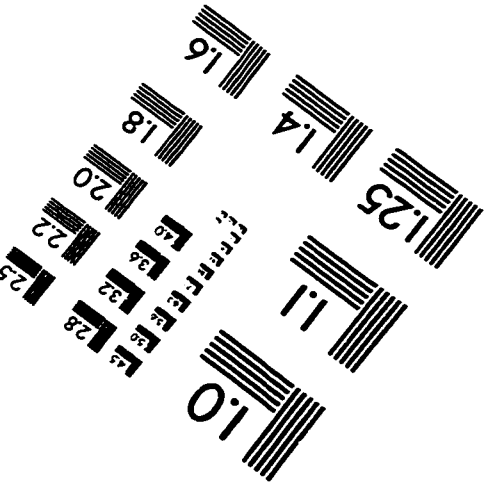

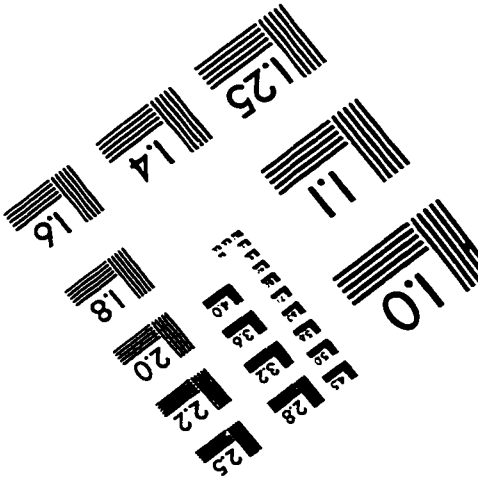

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