

The World Network of Religious Futurists



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Editorial

In this issue we begin a four-part serialisation of a paper on spirituality, religion and peace in the twenty first century. This report was given at the second UNESCO-sponsored conference on the contribution of religions to the culture of peace in Barcelona last year. We also have the first of what I hope will be a series of reflections on the future of various religions from around the world with a letter from Ratna Sahu. Moshe Dror writes about Israel's attempts to reintroduce Jewish children to their religious roots, and Richard Kirby announces the latest winner of the Earl award.

As always I welcome contributions, whether articles or letters. Enjoy the Magazine.

Gordon Arthur

Spirituality, Religion and Peace: Exploring the foundations for inner-outer peace in the Twenty-First Century

by Linda Groff and Paul Smoker

Introduction

“If a man sings of God and hears of Him, and lets love of God sprout within him, all his sorrows shall vanish, and in his mind, God will bestow abiding peace.” – Sikhism

“A Muslim is one who surrenders to the will of Allah and is an establisher of peace (while Islam means establishment of peace, Muslim means one who establishes peace through his actions and conduct).” – Islam

“The Lord lives in the heart of every creature. He turns them round and round upon the wheel of Maya. Take refuge utterly in Him. By his grace you will find supreme peace, and the state which is beyond all change.” – Hinduism

“The whole of the Torah is for the purpose of promoting peace.” – Judaism”

“All things exist for world peace.” – Perfect Liberty Kyodan

“Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God.” – Christianity

“Oh, Great Spirit, let us greet the dawn of each new day, when all can live as one and peace reigns everywhere.” – Native American

This paper is about different spiritual and religious traditions in the world and how they have contributed or could in the future contribute to the creation of a global culture of peace. As the above quotations indicate, almost all of the world's religions, in their own sacred writings and scriptures, say that they support “peace”. Yet it is a known fact that war and violence have often been undertaken historically, as well as at present, in the name of religion (as is discussed further below). Yet religions profess to want peace. So what is “peace”? And how have religions historically helped to promote peace, and how might they help create a more peaceful world in the 21st century? These are a few of the questions that this paper will attempt to explore.

Traditionally many people focus on how wars and conflicts are seemingly undertaken for religious reasons, or at least undertaken in the name of religion. Indeed, it is not difficult to find data and statistics in

support of this hypothesis. Quincy Wright, in his monumental study, *A Study of War*, documents numerous wars and armed conflicts that involve a direct or indirect religious component, (Wright, 1941) as does Lewis Richardson in his statistical treatise, *Statistics of Deadly Quarrels* (Richardson, 1960).

As the Cold War has ended and inter-ethnic conflicts have re-emerged in many parts of the world, it has indeed been a popular thesis of different writers to argue that these inter-ethnic conflicts often have a religious component. A few examples of such recent writing include: Samuel Huntington's, "The Clash of Civilizations?", in the Summer 1993 edition of "Foreign Affairs"; Daniel Patrick Moynihan's "Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics"; and R. Scott Appleby's "Religious Fundamentalisms and Global Conflict".

Following UNESCO's lead in holding two conferences on "The Contributions of Religions to a Culture of Peace" (both held in Barcelona, Spain; in April 1993 and December 1994), and other interfaith dialogues between different religions that are occurring in a serious way around the planet – including the World Parliament of Religions, in Chicago, August 1993; and the ongoing work of the World Council on Religion and Peace – this paper will focus instead on how religious and spiritual traditions can contribute to creating a more peaceful world via an exploration of the foundations for both inner and outer peace

in the twenty-first century. The paper will have four parts:

1. Exoteric/Outer and Esoteric/Inner Aspects of Religions.

Part 1 begins by providing a framework for looking at all the world's religions as having a potential spectrum of perspectives, including: the external, socially-learned, cultural or exoteric part – including different religious organizations, rituals, and beliefs, which are passed down from one generation to the next; and the internal, mystical, directly spiritually experienced or esoteric part. In considering the external aspects of religion, principles from the field of intercultural communication are used to explore the creation of tolerance, understanding and valuing of diversity concerning different aspects of socially learned behavior or culture, including religion. Fundamentalism or religious extremism or fanaticism – when religions claim their version of religion is the only one – are seen as an extreme form of the socially-learned aspect of religion and one not conducive to creating world peace. In considering the internal or esoteric aspects of religion, it is noted that all the world's religions began with someone who had a mystical enlightenment or revelatory experience, which they then tried to share with others, leading often to the formation of new religions – even though this was not the intention of the original founder. Parallels between new scientific paradigms and ancient mystical traditions from the world's re-

ligions are then noted to illustrate how contemporary dynamic, interconnected, whole systems ways of experiencing and viewing reality can be seen as providing necessary conditions "within the individual" for creating an external global culture of peace in the world.

2. Further Explorations of the Esoteric/Inner and Exoteric/Outer Aspects of Religion and Culture.

Part 2 continues the exploration of the inner and outer aspects of religion and culture. Here, three different topical areas are explored: first, the work of Pitirim Sorokin on the alternation historically within Western cultures between ideational/spiritual/inner values and sensate/materialistic/outer values; second, the evolution or change historically from female to mixed to male aspects of divinity within different religions and cultures, as this relates to changing values and worldviews; and third, the work of Joseph Campbell and the universal theme of "the hero's journey" (or search for inner meaning) in the myths of all cultures – even though the outer form of the journey can vary from one culture to the next.

3. Inner and Outer Aspects of Peace, the Cultures of Peace, & Nonviolence (Paralleling Esoteric & Exoteric Aspects of Religion).

Part 3 traces the evolution of the concept of "peace" within Western peace research, including the recent development of more holistic definitions of peace that are consis-

tent with the ideas explored in Part 1 of this paper. The conceptual shift involved in moving from peace as absence of war through peace as absence of large scale physical and structural violence (negative and positive peace respectively) to more holistic definitions of peace that apply across all levels and include both an inner and an outer dimension, represents a substantial broadening of the peace concept in Western peace research. Part 3 then uses the above evolution in the concept of peace as a framework to explore different dimensions of “a culture of peace”, as well as different dimensions of “nonviolence”. Gandhian, spiritually-based nonviolence is seen as a link between inner and outer forms of peace.

4. An Agenda for Future Peace Research – Based on The Need to Focus on Both Inner and Outer Aspects of Peace.

Part 4 argues that Western peace research has focused almost entirely on outer peace, but that in future it needs to deal with both inner and outer aspects of peace in a more balanced way. In order to do this, it is suggested that peace research elaborate on the different dimensions and levels of inner peace just as it has done for outer peace, and that it expand its methodology to include other ways of knowing besides social scientific methods only. Finally, peace research needs to redress the imbalance between negative and positive images of peace by exploring not only what it

wants to eliminate, for example war and starvation, but also what it wants to create in a positive sense.

Please note that this paper is an ongoing project that will become a book. At present, some sections of the paper are developed more than others, but the basic framework is here. Please contact the writers in the future for later elaborations of this writing. We offer this version of the paper with humility, aware that further revisions and elaborations are necessary.

Part 1: Exoteric/Outer and Esoteric/Inner Aspects of Religions

A. Mystical Experience, Organized Religion, and Fundamentalism: A Framework for Looking at all the World’s Religions.

Before considering the external and internal aspects of religion, it is important to note that within any religion, there is a potential spectrum of possible perspectives on the teachings of that particular religion or spiritual tradition, including how those teachings relate to world peace. First, there is religion as socially-learned behavior, i.e., as part of culture – what can be called “organized religion”. Here religious beliefs, rituals, and institutions are learned and passed down from one generation to the next, and religious institutions are an integral part of the social structure and fabric of culture.

When religious beliefs take the form of rigid dogma, and the believers’ beliefs and behavior are known by them to be right, while those of non believers, or other religions – or even different variants within one’s own religion – are known by them to be wrong, this leads into what has been variously called “fundamentalism” or “fanaticism” or “extremism” – a global trend in almost all of the world’s religions today.

At the other extreme are mystical traditions which are based on direct inner spiritual experiences. Here, such mystical, revelatory, or enlightenment experiences (rather than socially learned behavior and beliefs) constitute an important part of one’s spiritual life. Such spiritual experiences have also occurred in mystics from all the world’s religions throughout the ages. Indeed, the founders of the world’s religions were themselves usually mystics, i.e., people who had revelatory or enlightenment experiences which they then tried to share, as best they could, with others – even though they were often not trying to establish a new religion at the time (which was often left to their followers to do).

Given these considerations, it is possible to look at any religion as having a potential spectrum of different forms within it, each discussed separately in the paper, as follows:

<p>Mystical/Spiritual Tradition</p> <p>(Direct inner experience)</p>	<p>Organized Religion and Beliefs</p> <p>(Part of social learning and culture)</p>	<p>Fundamentalism or Extremism</p> <p>(My dogma/beliefs are right and yours are wrong; also social learning and culture)</p>
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Figure 1: Spectrum of Potential Perspectives Within Any Religion

It is interesting that mystics of all religions can usually communicate with each other and appreciate the spiritual or God force operating within each other – no matter what religious tradition the other mystics come from. Organized religion is often tolerant of different religious traditions, as seen in ecumenical movements around the world, but there can be misunderstanding between religions based on differing beliefs and practices. These misunderstandings can be lessened by educational programs focusing on the appreciation and understanding of cultural and religious diversity. But fundamentalism often stresses how one particular interpretation – of religion, scripture, and religious practices – is right and other interpretations are wrong. This difficulty of fundamentalists, from any religion, in dealing with diversity in a tolerant manner presents a major problem for peaceful relations and understanding between religions and cultures and hinders the creation of a global culture of peace.

If the whole world were mystics – who tend to honor the mystical experience in people from all the world’s religions – world peace would be easier to achieve than it is

today. But mystics are a very small percentage of the world’s population and so misunderstandings, conflicts, and wars have often resulted historically, in part at least, over different religious interpretations of what constitutes proper beliefs, practices, rituals, and organizational forms, i.e., over the socially-learned aspects of religion.

B. Exoteric (Outer Forms of Religion)

This section of the paper will look at exoteric or outer forms of religion, i.e., religion as part of our socially-learned behavior or culture – whether it takes the form of traditional organized religion or a more extremist or fundamentalist form, and how principles from intercultural communication and conflict resolution can help people deal constructively with cultural and religious diversity.

1. Religion as Socially-Learned Behavior or Part of Culture.

“Religion is man’s inability to cope with the immensity of God.” – Arnold Toynbee

“Rain falling in different parts of the world flows

through thousands of channels to reach the ocean... and so, too, religions and theologies, which all come from man’s yearning for meaning, they too, flow in a thousand ways, fertilizing many fields, refreshing tired people, and at last reach the ocean.” – Sathya Sai Baba

One way of looking at religion is as part of culture through socially learned behavior. “Culture” can be defined as learned, shared, patterned behavior, as reflected in technology and tools; social organizations, including economic, political, religious, media, educational and family organizations; and ideas. In this way, religion is shared by a group of people, learned and passed down from one generation to the next, and is clearly reflected in both religious organizations and beliefs. “Socialization” is the process through which culture is learned, including our religious beliefs and practices. The agents or institutions of socialization include language, (a factor individuals are often least conscious of), politics, economics, religion, education, family, and media.

While anthropologists have often studied one culture, in-

cluding its institutions, in depth, others have undertaken cross-cultural, comparative studies. More recently the field of intercultural communication has emerged (Groff, 1992), as witnessed in the emergence of specialist inter-cultural organizations, such as The Society for Intercultural Education, Training, and Research (SIETAR) While cross-cultural studies deal with comparing some aspect of life, such as religious institutions and beliefs, from one culture to another, intercultural communication deals with the dynamic interaction patterns that emerge when peoples from two or more different cultures, including religions, come together to interact, communicate, and dialogue or negotiate with each other. There are general principles of intercultural communication. There are also studies of particular cultures interacting, based on a belief that when persons from any two specific different cultures come together to interact with each other, they will create their own dynamic interaction process, based on the underlying values of both groups, just as any two individuals will also create their own dynamic interaction process.

A significant problem with organized religion and belief, as this relates to peace and conflict, is that individuals and groups often confuse the map (their socially-learned version of reality or culture or religion) with the territory (or ultimate reality), as elaborated below. Thus people believe their personal or subjective version of reality or religion is valid,

while other views are invalid. Instead it can be argued that the many maps are different, but possibly equally valid interpretations and attempts to understand the same underlying reality or territory.

2. Fundamentalism: Taking Organized Religion and Beliefs into Dogma.

Fundamentalism seems to be a trend in almost all the world's religions today. The term "fundamentalism" had its origins in "a late 19th and early 20th century transdenominational Protestant movement that opposed the accommodation of Christian doctrine to modern scientific theory and philosophy. With some differences among themselves, Christian fundamentalists insist on belief in the inerrancy of the Bible, the virgin birth and divinity of Jesus Christ, the vicarious and atoning character of his death, his bodily resurrection, and his second coming as the irreducible minimum of authentic Christianity." More recently the concept has been applied not only to conservative, evangelical Protestants, but also to any Christian group which adopts a literal interpretation of the Bible and to groups from other religious traditions who similarly base their religious views on a particular and exclusive, literal interpretation of their holy book. For example, radical Islamic groups, such as Islamic Jihad, are seen as examples of Islamic fundamentalism, although a different term is preferred. In the Islamic tradition the word "fundamentalism", when translated

into Arabic, has a completely different and positive meaning. In Arab countries the appropriate word for describing literal religious fanaticism is "extremism". (Al-Dajani, 1993) In this paper the term "fundamentalism" is used in the broad sense to portray any religious group or sect from any religious tradition which adopts purely literal, as opposed to metaphorical or mythical, interpretations of their holy book, and which denies the validity of other interpretations or religious traditions, believing truth resides with their perspective only.

Because fundamentalists in any religion turn the beliefs of their religion into dogma, and also tend to interpret the scriptures of their religion in a literal way only, thus missing the many subtle levels of meaning as well as analogies with teachings from other world religions, they can end up stressing primarily how they are different from other world religions, and even from different interpretations within their own religion, rather than stressing any commonalities they might share with other world religions. This more limited interpretation of their scripture can then lead to dogmatic views that their interpretation of religion, and reality, is correct and everyone else's is wrong.

An interesting and important question for peace research and future studies is why there is such an upsurge in fundamentalism in so many of the world's religions in so many different parts of the world today? Of the many pos-

sible explanations for this phenomena, two hypotheses will be explored here. The most obvious hypothesis would argue that people are overwhelmed by the increasing pace of change today, and are desperately seeking something that they can believe in as a mooring to help them through all this change in the outer world which is uprooting their lives and creating great insecurities. In the case of fundamentalism, this can involve returning to some over-idealized vision of their religious roots, which may never have existed in the idealized form that they remember, and trying literally to enforce that interpretation of reality on all the members of their group. In such situations, people may need time to try to go back to a stringently defined earlier way of life and see if they can make it work, and only when they see that the world has changed too much to return to the past will they then be ready to move forward into the future. This hypothesis is consistent with the view that any religious or spiritual tradition needs to be constantly adapted to the world in which it finds itself – if it wishes to remain a living, breathing, spiritual force that people experience in their lives, rather than become an outdated institution based on dogma or rules.

A second related hypothesis, to explain the rise of fundamentalism in the world today, relates to the dual trend towards both globalism and localism. The globalization process of the last 50 years has led to a dramatic increase in

global governance structures, including an expansion of the multi-faceted United Nations (UN) system, an increase in scope of regional economic and political organizations, such as the European Union (EU) and the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA); and the continuing proliferation and development of International Governmental Organizations (IGOs). The growth in IGOs and the increase in size and scope of United Nations activities, such as the expanded scope of United Nations Peace Keeping operations, has had a major impact on international relations.

A similar expansion of activities can be seen in the work of various international scientific, educational and cultural organizations, as indexed by the continued growth in International Non Governmental Organizations (INGOs). Millions of individuals are routinely engaged in the work of INGOs, whose activities span the whole range of human experience, including agriculture, art communications, economics, education, environment, health, music, politics, religion, sport and transportation. Additionally, the world has witnessed the growth of an increasingly integrated global economy, as manifested in interdependent national economies and the evolution of multinational corporations (MNCs) and transnational corporations (TNCs) operating in just about every country worldwide. Many of these companies are economic giants, dwarfing all but a few of

the world's national economies.

An apparently contradictory worldwide trend towards local identity and ethnicity has also emerged as a major factor shaping events in the world today. In the wake of the end of the old East-West Cold War confrontation, we are witnessing a worldwide increase in local ethnic conflict, sometimes nonviolent but too often violent and very bloody, and often involving a religious dimension. These "local conflicts" are often proving to be intense and intractable, embedded in centuries of mistrust and hatred, and too often crystallized around and sanctioned, implicitly or explicitly, by particular religious institutions.

This localization process is every bit as profound as the overarching trend towards globalization, and in fact it is perhaps best conceived as neither in opposition to, nor separate from, that process. Globalization and localization are so interconnected and interdependent that localization is best conceptualized as an essential complement of the globalization process. This view suggests that the integration of the big system, the creation of a new world order, requires a sense of meaning at the local level, requires human beings to experience coherence and balance within the local sociocultural context. The rise of fundamentalism, it can be argued, is associated with this interdependence of the globalization and localization processes and the resulting pressures to achieve coherence at the local level in the face of the

vast scope of the global super-systems.

The coherence in individuals' lives is, to a greater or lesser degree, associated with culturalization, with what the world means and how meaning in life and death is interpreted. Multicultural interpretations of the globalization-localization interdependency argue, as a consequence, that religion should not be the same in all societies, that it will and must have personal, local and global dimensions that manifest themselves in a rich variety of cultural forms and expressions.

This paper will subsequently further argue that the diversity of organized world religions – if also recognizing a deeper spiritual unity that connects this outer diversity – is a necessary requirement for the creation of a new culture of peace in the 21st century. If, as many believe, the underlying spiritual reality of the world's religions is the same, it can be argued that the cultural expression of that reality in the material world, the world's organized religions, must necessarily be different, in tune with the rich tapestry of our many global cultures, if we are to sustain the dynamic globalization-localization in a nonviolent, multicultural form.

3. Principles From the Fields Of Intercultural Communication and Conflict Resolution: Tools to Help Deal with Cultural and Religious Diversity.

“And the question for today is: “What is reality?” – cartoon caption under a group of aliens or space beings [or

people from different cultures or religions] sitting around a table.

“The message sent is often not the message received.” – Basic tenet from the field of Intercultural Communication.

As noted above, intercultural communication deals with what happens when people from different cultures, including religions, come together to communicate, interact, and even negotiate with each other. Individuals each carry around some different version of “reality” or culture in their heads, based on socialization (or learning) by the different agents or institutions of socialization in their culture, including religion, and based on different individual and collective life experiences. This worldview provides a sense of values and meaning about life. The way that this reality is known is through one's perceptions of it. Unfortunately, perceptions based on evidence from one or more of the five senses are often distorted. Individuals also selectively perceive ideas and information, often accepting information which fits with their preconceived worldview and blocking out information which challenges that worldview – a worldview that they have spent a whole lifetime putting together.

It is often the case that in everyday interactions individuals, even from the same culture, can misperceive each other. When they come from totally different cultures, including different religious tra-

ditions and belief systems, the danger is even greater. It is thus a basic tenet of intercultural communication that “The message sent is often not the message received”. It is understandable that individuals tend to expect others to behave the way they would in a given situation, or say what they would say in that same situation. When they do not, there is a strong tendency to interpret the motivation or meaning behind the behavior of the other person in terms of what that behavior would mean in one's own culture rather than in terms of what that behavior actually means in the other person's culture, since the other's culture is not really understood. The next step can involve taking a mistaken interpretation of the other person's behavior and then evaluating or judging that behavior, often negatively. This process thus involves moving from a simple factual description of the behavior of someone from another culture, to an interpretation of the meaning of that behavior (often a misinterpretation, based on what that behavior would mean in the individual's own culture, not in the other person's culture.) A final step in this model involves a move to evaluation or judgment of that behavior, as good or bad, in turn often based on an incorrect interpretation. This description, interpretation, and evaluation sequence of events, which individuals do quite often without even realizing they are doing it, is often called DIE for short.

A related theory is Attribution Theory, which hypothe-

sizes that individuals attribute meaning to the behavior of someone from another culture, often based on what it would mean in their own culture, rather than in the context of the other person's culture or religion. As long as an individual remains uninformed about another person's culture or religion, that individual remains vulnerable to repeating this problem over and over in their intercultural and interreligious interactions. One important component of a solution to this problem is to become better informed about another person's culture and religion so that it is at least possible to interpret another's behavior and words in the proper cultural and religious context within which they occur. Such a strategy will also contribute to an appreciation of the rich cultural and religious diversity that exists in this world and help to counteract the tendencies to judge other's actions and words incorrectly and negatively.

In terms of conflict resolution, it can be argued that if an individual is not conscious of their own cultural or religious socialization or programming – which influences people to a much greater extent than most individuals realize, then their behavior will in many ways be preconditioned, and on automatic pilot: they will be acting out their cultural or religious programming, without being conscious that there are other cultures or religions or ways of experiencing reality. If an individual begins to become conscious of their own cultural or religious programming, of-

ten by exposing themselves to other cultures or religions, then they can for the first time come back to their own original culture or religion and begin to see it for the first time, since they now have some basis with which to compare it. Such an individual can begin to act consciously in the world and start to appreciate the rich diversity of the human experience, including the many different outward forms, rituals, and beliefs that have emerged in different religions as human beings have sought different paths for bringing a spiritual force into their lives.

A central problem in intercultural communication, including interactions between peoples from different world religions, is confusing the map (one's own particular version of culture or religion) with the territory (an ultimate experience of "Reality" or "God" or "Spirit", as opposed to the relative or limited experiences of daily life). Becoming conscious of being socialized into different religions and cultures, coupled with an awareness that individuals as a consequence carry around different versions or maps of "reality" in their heads, can contribute to becoming more tolerant of the different maps or versions of reality that others also carry around in their heads, while also recognizing that something much more basic and essential underlies all the apparent outer diversity.

In looking at diversity, it should also be noted that it is a basic principle of systems theory that the more complex a system is, the more diversity

there needs to be within the system for it to maintain itself. The discussion of globalization and localization in the first part of this paper suggests the evolution of a more complex global system with increasing diversity within it. It is a thesis of this paper that such diversity is ultimately a strength, not a weakness, but only if it is consciously dealt with. Otherwise, we will expect people from different cultures to think and behave the way we do, and when they do not, we will tend to misinterpret and then judge their beliefs or behavior negatively (the Description, Interpretation, Evaluation problem discussed above), thus creating misunderstanding and conflict between peoples. Nonetheless, cultural diversity in the global system, like ecological diversity within an ecosystem, is ultimately an asset, if it is valued and contributes to openness to learn from other groups and cultures. Another thesis of this paper is that every culture just as every religion (or species), has something important to contribute to the world, and no culture has all the answers. Thus every culture has both strengths and weaknesses. There are thus important things that we can each learn from each other – if we are open (and humble) enough to do so.

C. Esoteric/Inner Forms of Religion as Direct Inner Mystical Experience.

1. The Inner, Mystical Path to Spirituality: Many Paths to God.

“There are many paths to God.” – Common mystical view

“Look at every path closely and deliberately... Then ask yourself... one question... Does this path have a heart? If it does, the path is good; if it doesn't it is no use.” – Carlos Castaneda

“The Tao that can be named is not the Tao.” – Lao Tzu

According to mystics, the mystical experience focuses on a direct inner experience of God or spirit, in which a person becomes one with the ultimate, invisible, creative force and divine intelligence at work in the universe or with the infinite void beyond creation, via such an inner experience of enlightenment, God, oneness or spirit, one has an inner “knowing” that cannot be adequately described in words (indeed, “The Tao that can be named is not the Tao”), This experience totally transcends the world of outer beliefs – which we learn from our social and religious institutions. This inner knowing occurs on a much deeper level of one's being and is not vulnerable to all the distortions of our regular five senses, on which we depend for all our learning in the world.

It is interesting that almost every one of the great religions of the world originated with someone who had such a direct, inner revelatory or enlightenment experience. Jesus who became the Christ, Buddha, Moses, Zoroaster, and various other evolved beings -

are obvious examples, After achieving enlightenment, such persons (who usually did not themselves intend to start a new religion) have always returned to society to minister, teach, and share their spiritual experiences and enlightenment as best they could with others. Eventually, the original teacher/master passed on and the followers were left to interpret, and later record, the original founder's teaching. But these followers have often not had the same enlightenment experiences themselves, and so with time the original teachings became codified as beliefs, rituals, even dogmas. In this way, an original esoteric, mystical experience is changed over time into an exoteric form of organized religion. Nonetheless, since most people begin their spiritual path with some exoteric form of religion, it can be hoped that with time, at least some of these people will eventually turn inward to seek and experience the truth of God or spirit within.

While all religions usually began with someone who became enlightened, it is also interesting that mystical traditions continue to be dominant in Eastern religions, but were often overshadowed, though not lost, in Western religions by a focus more on organized religion and learned beliefs and principles to live by in the world. Nonetheless, there has been an interesting recent revival of interest in mystical/spiritual traditions in the West, along ironically with equally strong or stronger fundamentalist movements. Per-

haps this indicates the great desire in people to find some deeper meaning to their lives, amidst all the changes in their external lives and in the world, although by sometimes very different paths. Such a hypothesis would be consistent with the globalization-localization hypothesis discussed earlier.

It is also interesting that while the traditional, exoteric religious path requires learning about different practices and beliefs, the mystical, esoteric path often involves unlearning or using various meditative techniques to clear the mind of thoughts about the external world, so that it is possible to come to a place of inner stillness or emptiness of the external world – what Zen Buddhists call “No Mind”. This still, inner state enables individuals to experience the God force, spirit, or pregnant void within, without the distortions of everyday needs, beliefs, and limited consciousness intervening, and thus to go beyond the limited self or ego so that spirit can make itself manifest in their lives. Thus many mystical traditions focus on ways to quiet the overactive mind in meditation, and thus bring one's inner self to a state of peace.

In such spiritual traditions, only true inner peace within the hearts of people can bring about true outer peace in the world, because if individuals are plagued by inner conflicts, doubts, fears, and insecurities, they will tend to project them outwardly onto others, blaming others for their problems, without even realizing what

they are doing. It is thus necessary for all of us as individuals to “wake up” and become increasingly conscious of our own thoughts and feelings, and how these are creating certain results or consequences in the world, so that we may each become increasingly responsible for the type of world that we are creating – including whether this world is a peaceful one or not.

2. Parallels Between New Scientific Paradigms and the Mystical Experience.

“Religion without science is blind. Science without religion is lame.” – Albert Einstein

“The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and science.” – Albert Einstein

There are a number of new paradigms, or overarching worldviews, under which scientists conduct their research, in science today. These paradigms can be seen as differing versions of a dynamic, interdependent, whole systems worldview, which various writers have suggested parallels the mystical, spiritual experience of mystics from different religions around the world (Capra, 1991; Capra, 1982; Chopra, 1990; Davies, 1992). In effect, mystics experience this dynamic, interdependent, whole systems worldview on the inner planes, while scientists have used scientific methods and analysis of the external world to arrive at related conclusions, It can be

argued that the scientific and the spiritual paths are just two different ways of trying to study or know the same ultimate reality; that one can go infinitely outward scientifically into space and infinitely inward spiritually in meditation, and that ultimately these two paths converge with parallel worldviews. Nonetheless, it needs to be pointed out that physics or science can only study or measure reality within the space-time framework of the created, physical universe. Science itself cannot provide the mystical experience of the mystery or ultimate beyond space & time, which may be one reason why the greatest scientists all eventually became mystics themselves, including De Broglie, Einstein, Eddington, Heisenberg, Jeans, Plank, Pauli and Schrödinger (Watson, 1988; Davies, 1992).

The old, Newtonian paradigm in physics saw reality as a clockwork universe made up of separate parts, existing within a static or equilibrium model of reality, which operated by fixed laws that could in theory predict precisely how A affected B. This paradigm sought the ultimate physical building blocks of matter and was based upon the assumption that science, in principle, could arrive at total truth or understanding of reality within its materialistic, reductionist, mechanistic worldview. In contrast, the New Physics has a totally new worldview, based on Einstein’s Special Theory of Relativity and then later his General Theory of Relativity, followed by Quantum or Subatomic physics. With regard to

quantum physics, however, it is interesting that Einstein himself could not totally accept Heisenberg’s “uncertainty principle”, expressed in Einstein’s famous -saying: “God does not play dice with the universe” or allow unpredictability. Thus Einstein himself only accepted part of what has come to be called “The New Physics”.

Before noting further characteristics of the new paradigm view of reality in the New Physics, it should be noted that this new paradigm does not negate the Old Physics paradigm. Instead it says that the old Newtonian worldview works within certain parameters, and is thus still valid within those parameters, but beyond those parameters a new paradigm is necessary. Likewise, with the other new scientific paradigms (discussed further below), there is a tendency at times to conclude that they make the older scientific paradigms totally obsolete, but this is seldom the case and needs to be stressed. The old paradigms still work within certain parameters and under certain conditions, while the new paradigms work beyond those parameters, when the underlying conditions change. - Recognition of this fact is part of creating a balance between different world views, and knowing when each is appropriate. That is a primary thesis of this whole paper. The characteristics of this new paradigm – which in physics exists especially on the very macro level of the whole universe and on the very micro subatomic levels – are as follows.

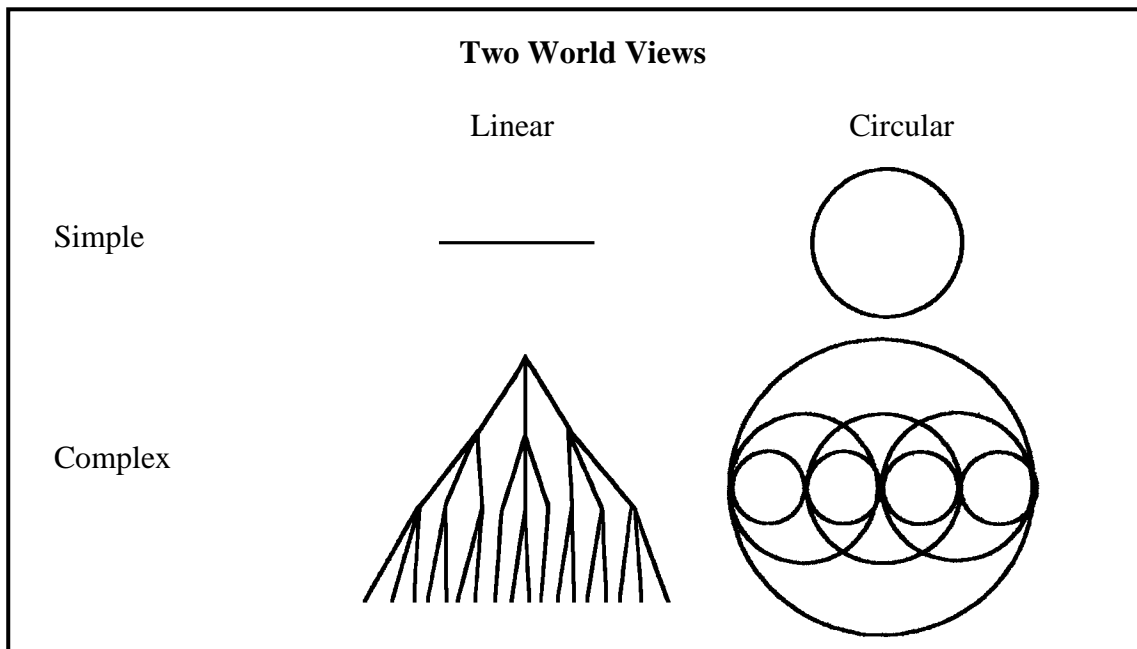


Figure 2: Two World Views: Linear and Circular

The New Physics (according to Capra, Davies and others) includes a dynamic, interdependent, whole systems worldview, where matter is concentrated energy and there are no ultimate building blocks of matter to find. In addition, there are limits to how much information can be gathered about the relationship between A and B, and one cannot always predict whether something will act as a particle or a wave in a particular situation. Unlike the old paradigm where the scientist was a pure, theoretically objective, outside observer, the new paradigm admits that the scientists' presence in the situation, in making a scientific measurement, can affect the outcome of the measurement, and thus there is no such thing as a purely detached objective, scientific observer any more, instead one's mere presence in a situation can affect the outcome. The new paradigm is thus holistic, dynamic, and interdependent;

there are no separate parts, only relationships; and reality is not totally predictable, except in terms of statistical probabilities. The old paradigm focuses on analysis of separate parts and either/or thinking (beginning with Aristotle), while the new paradigm focuses on synthesis and dynamic interrelationships, as well as both/and thinking.

In addition to the New Physics, there are other new paradigms in science that also exhibit this dynamic, interdependent, whole systems worldview, as opposed to the old paradigm view of reality as a static, equilibrium model, which saw reality as made up of separate, unconnected parts, in a mechanistic, reductionist worldview. (See Figure 2) Some of these other new scientific paradigms follow below.

Whole, dynamic systems and living systems paradigms are illustrated in the work of the Society for General Systems Research. Evolutionary

paradigms – such as those of Teilhard de Chardin, Peter Russell, Barbara Marx Hubbard, Erich Jantsch, John Platt, Erwin Laszlo, and Stephen Jay Gould's Punctuated Equilibrium Theory in biology – see change within a system as sometimes taking quantum jumps. Ilya Prigogine's Nobel Prize winning Theory of Dissipative Structures – which reconciles the entropy of physics with the increasing order and complexity of biology – shows how open systems can change via perturbations or new energy of some kind within a system, which can cause that system to break down, releasing the energy of that system to be reorganized at a higher level of order and complexity.

Rupert Sheldrake's Hypothesis of Formative Causation, or Theory of Morphogenetic Fields, hypothesizes that the universe operates more by habits, that build up over time, than by fixed laws. Under this

theory, the first time a member of a species does something new is the hardest, but each successive time this new behavior becomes easier, until finally a critical mass is reached, and then suddenly everyone in the species knows how to do that new behavior. James Gleick's Chaos Theory hypothesizes that everything in the universe is interconnected – a butterfly flapping its wings in one hemisphere can effect the climate in the other hemisphere, for example – and there is always order emerging out of chaos and chaos emerging out of order in the universe.

It is significant is that all of these new paradigms and scientific theories are versions of a dynamic, interdependent, whole systems worldview. In medicine and health care, new notions of health, healing and treating the whole person are fast gaining ground (Chopra, 1990). In environmental science, the Gaia hypothesis presents a new paradigm where the Earth as a whole is seen as a living entity, a self-regulating system of which we humans are a part (Lovelock, 1991). In the life sciences, new thinking is challenging traditional notions of biological evolution and developing new interdependent conceptions of what constitutes a person and a society (Watson, 1988). In each of these cases, as well as in many other examples of the development of new thinking in areas such as management and economics (Wheatley, 1992; Hawley, 1993), the relationship and interaction between parts and the whole has been

reconceptualized. Holistic paradigms, where the overall pattern of interaction between the parts is as important as the parts themselves have emerged across a broad spectrum of disciplines and issues.

3. How a dynamic, interdependent, whole systems worldview (of the mystic or scientist) can help contribute to a global culture of peace.

“Everything has changed except our way of thinking.” – Einstein

“Oh Great Spirit, let us greet the dawn of each new day, when all can live as one and peace reigns everywhere.” – Native American Quote

The relevance of “new thinking” or a shift in consciousness – as seen in the dynamic interdependent, whole systems views in the new scientific paradigms and experiences of mystics from different religious traditions – to world peace can be seen as follows. Once our consciousness shifts from seeing the world as divided up into separate, unrelated parts (whether individuals, groups, nation-states or whatever), where the goal is to win for one's own self or group or nation without adequate concern for others, to a new more dynamic interdependent whole systems worldview where everything is interconnected, and whatever happens in any part of the system affects all the other parts of the system – it becomes apparent that the only way that individuals or separate parts of

the whole can “win” is if other peoples and parts of the whole also win. A fundamental shift from win-lose to win-win thinking then ensues, which seems a fundamental prerequisite and framework for creating a global culture of peace.

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Reflections on the future of Christianity in India

by Ratna Sahu

In India things are quite different from the west and also most other eastern countries. I perceive the entire Christian community and the church from a family perspective. Church is literally the building where Christians gather for worship together, and there is hardly any contact between Christians outside church. In India, family is the only primary institution which is instrumental in shaping the personality of an individual. Family alone imparts religious values and teachings to the community. No other institution in India has replaced all these functions to date, in spite of all the changes that have beset this world. Family acts as the sole agency for socialising, and instils changes within an individual for better or for worse. The ethos of a family set up can be felt every moment and through this institution alone, religion is preserved and protected. This is not merely for the sake of propagation and protection but in a true Christian sense "to produce better human beings". Hence the greatest requirement of the day is to strengthen the ties between family and church, develop better coordination between them, and use the re-

sources of the family to improve Christian community as a whole. This has to be done deliberately, consciously, and in a properly managed way.

The following changes are happening in Christian communities today, because each family, as a nucleus, and society in general, are in a process of rapid transition. The change agents are producing harmful effects most, but not all, of the time. A society which was under the stupor of conservative, orthodox and rather hypocritical traditions, customs and beliefs for centuries, is now suddenly exposed to freedom. This leaves people feeling displaced, in a vacuum, trying to find the meaning of life while struggling to survive, to compete, and to hold the best of the old while adapting to the changes of the present and the future.

There is change in each individual - in his/her social, psychological and intellectual perceptions and reactions.

There is change in each family - in human relationships, in managing resources, in equipping future generations for economic gains. There is constant striving for material prosperity and a highly individualistic society is gradually developing.

There is change in the community and society at large - a highly competitive and complex society in India appears very unhealthy, where there is so much corruption and such large economic differences between people.

Consequently the Church and Christians are changing

too. There are many causes for these changes:-

1. Modernisation, industrialisation, urbanisation.
2. The decline in the patriarchal system; the increasing rôle, emancipation, empowerment and education of women.
3. The decline in the control, influence and culture of religion in the community as a whole and in the family in particular.
4. Changing economic trends; more purchasing power in the hands of some members, less for others.
5. The declining importance of the family, and of religion.
6. The emergence of the nuclear (as opposed to extended) family, along with greater geographic mobility.
7. Increasing secularism.
8. The media explosion.
9. Emerging hostility and intolerance towards minority communities in a mainly Hindu society.
10. Emerging militant Hinduism.
11. Political change, for example the fall of secular government and the rise of fundamentalism.
12. Lack of legal protection for minorities.

13. The increasing participation of the younger generation in decision-making: most of the older generations in India are illiterate and ignorant.

Consequences:-

- 1, Readaptation of values; compromising with secular values for better security.
2. Trend toward underground Christian activity, and also loss of motivation.
3. Decline in Christian values, belief and practice at all levels of life.
4. Increasing secularism in faith and practice.
5. Less attendance at church; increasing reluctance (particularly within high income groups) to be identified with the Christian community.
6. Increasing trend for mixed marriages.
7. Struggle for academic achievement for financial gain.
8. Formal secular education has taken so much priority that Christian education in both the family and the church has virtually disappeared.
9. Involvement or participation in, and organising of, religious and community activities has become minimal.
10. Strife, politics, corruption in the church.
11. Lack of Christian commitment and goals.

12. Lack of any futuristic Christian activities.

13. Vanishing leadership

What needs to be done? The message of Nehemiah has to be worked out anew:-

1. Raise awareness of the social changes in Christians through lectures, seminars and revival meetings.
2. Develop new strategies to build up Biblical responses to the changes in society, community, family and each individual.
3. Equip the Church and the Christian community to act as change agents for the better, by protecting, preserving and practicing Christian values and lifestyles.
4. Set clear goals and objectives for Christian activities among children, young people and women.
5. Improve and emphasise character building activities.
6. Place stress on commitment and personal holiness.
7. Develop integrity
8. Work to improve family relationships, and solve marital and other problems.
9. Save Christian marriage.
10. Share, care and bear the burdens of the community together.

11. Provide for better education, theological training and growth of Christian culture, particularly for those who cannot afford to pay.

12. Develop leadership from within the community.

13. Establish, build and improve relationships and coordination between family and community through church activities.

WNRF - Notes From Israel

by Moshe Dror

A strange thing has happened in Israel on its way to the 21st. century. In order to educate the last two generations of Israeli youth in the ways of the Western world that has made Israel such a powerful outpost of Western culture in the Middle East, most Israelis have lost any real meaningful contact with their sacred roots. Since nearly 75% of Israel's Jewish children are educated in the government school system, these same kids have little awareness or interest in what has been the bedrock of Jewish consciousness for a few millennia. We as futurists always focus on the next millennium, but what about the past millennia. The last generations had their own memories and practices, but this generation has little of that to rely on.

This has become such an issue that the Ministry of Education set up a commission to study the matter and come up with specific recommendations to re-educate Jewish Israeli

youth in the sancta of Judaism, apart from the official religious establishment with its own religious educational system.

The Minister of Education, in 1991, asked Professor Aliza Shenhar, the then Rector of the University of Haifa, and the current Israeli ambassador to Russia, to chair the commission. This appointment of such a distinguished person with a very high powered team and staff indicates the seriousness that it relates to the perceived problem, and this has been called the Shenhar commission ever since. Moreover, the Ministry has also allocated some serious finances to see it through. It may be that this is one of those rare occasions where a government bureaucracy has not killed an idea by setting up a committee to investigate an issue.

The official title is an interesting one, it is called, in rough, translation – a People and the World: Jewish Cultural values in a Changing World. Through an interesting set of events, I am now on the implementation team. The thing that intrigued me is the really high caliber of people on this team, the money invested and its critical need in Contemporary Israel. When I just got started in it the thought came to me that this is nearly a direct working out of John Naisbitt new book on “The Global Paradox”. How can you be both Tribal and Global at the same time, and do justice and honor to both.

So, I am now the resident Futurist; coordinating a system of 20 PCs (486s, each with CD-ROM) with a SLIP/POP

Internet connection and a lot of state-of-the-art electronic information technology hardware and software.

We now run five day intensive workshops for about 2,000 teachers a year and eventually will offer training to all of the elementary and high school teachers in the Government school system in the entire country.

Many of the basic issues and prime questions that are so well articulated in Richard Kirby's “Temples of Tomorrow” are the focus of what an entire country's governmental educational system is trying to relate to here in Israel.

In order to keep this piece within reasonable size for GV, I would like to write of our work problems, successes, questions, what we need to figure out, how to teach issues of the sacred In a decidedly non-religious educational environment, etc., etc. in next installment of this series.

The Presentation of the 1994 Earl Award

by Richard Kirby

On July the 20th at Atlanta, Georgia at the World Future Society annual meeting, WNRF chairperson Richard Kirby presented the Earl award for 1994 to Barbara Marx Hubbard. In presenting the award, he made a speech in honor of the recipient, and gave her a framed award citation and a Moonflower crystal ball. This trophy is given annually to leaders in the field of religious future studies and action.

Following is an extract from the tribute.

One of the main functions of the WNRF is to promote outstanding achievement in the field of religious futures studies. Annually our search committee seeks achievement of this kind. When it identifies such achievement, and names the individual or group responsible, it prepares to present to him, her or them the Earl award, named for the late Professor Earl D. C. Brewer. It is a happy coincidence that Earl Brewer spent many years of his ministry as a professor of the sociology of religion, and coauthored our textbook, *The Temples of Tomorrow*, in this city.

Barbara Marx Hubbard has been described as “a world-renowned futurist, speaker, citizen diplomat, social architect, and prophetic politician.” It is well known that she carried the nomination for the vice presidency of the United States on the democratic ticket in 1984. A founder of the Foundation for Conscious Evolution, she is a leader of religion at the frontier of social and spiritual change. In such books as *The Hunger of Eve: One Woman’s Odyssey Towards the Future*; *The Evolutionary Journey: Your Guide to a Positive Future*; *The Book of Co-Creation: the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles*; and *The Revelation: Our Crisis Is A Birth*; Barbara has presented a universal message that is exceptionally important for our times. In books, lectures and in organizational development for futurist societies, such as the

World Future Society, she has labored tirelessly for the maturation of world religion. An heiress to the legacy of Teilhard de Chardin, she has galvanized the evolution of species.

Arguing for the cause of the universal humanity, she has greatly contributed to the harmony of theology and cosmology. She is one of those who has laid the foundations for a true religion of the Space Age. She is a prophet for science and politics and an inspirational role model for lonely thinkers everywhere. She has helped us see, to accept, to design and to delight in our collective future. She has given humanity a larger heart and a wiser head.

Barbara, it is my pleasure and privilege in presenting this award to you, to invite you to take your place in this select company, our slowly growing ‘Hall of Fame’ of religious visionaries. May the transcendental inspiration of the spiritual seer continue to illumine your mind so that you can continue to lead us with your heavenly visions.

Barbara Marx Hubbard, you are the winner of the Earl award for Religious Futurist of the Year, 1994. Congratulations!

Biographical Note:

Barbara Hubbard was born in New York, NY, on Dec. 22, 1929. She earned a B.A. in political science at Bryn Mawr College, studied history at Ecole des Sciences Politiques, and philosophy at the Sorbonne

She is the President of the Foundation for Conscious Evolution. She is also the Director of the School for Conscious Evolution, an evolutionary consultant, and a speaker on the subject of positive future. She specializes in long-range futures, education for co-creation, evolutionary spirituality, and social architecture for greater cooperation and creativity.