

THE EXTENDED ORDER OF A HISTORICAL ORDER:

PAST HISTORY AND PRESENT TASK

Context of Our Study		History of the Extended Order						Present Task of An Extended Order
The Movement in a Secular Age	Five Areas of Investigation	Roman Catholic Orders	Styles of Relating to the World	Sociological Forms				
1	5 6	12	13	26	27	32	33 39 40 42	

1. Whatever we mean by a historical order in the post-modern sense, it must first of all be contexted in the global spirit movement. Whatever else a historical order is, it is a movement of the spirit that takes place without you and I directly participating. Secondly, the historical order is an extension of a hard core of trained corporate people who thrust themselves into the midst of that spirit movement and begin to give it direction, begin to give it form, and participate intentionally in shaping it. Thirdly and lastly there are a symbolic few who are always the gathered presence. The historical order is all three.

2. We can date our self-conscious articulation of that dynamic back to Summer '70. It is significant, I think, that that awareness was occasioned after that particular summer program. That was the first time that I, at least, was able to see and to talk about all three of those dimensions under the rubric of the historical order. Many of us remember talking about one impact that Summer '70 had on us, a new awareness that we were participating in a phenomenon called a "movement". Now, that's an old category for you and me. Ever since 1966 that awareness, that self-conscious title, has been in our memory. But in 1970, after the summer program, we were aware of the movement in a new way.

3. As we evaluated Summer '70, we saw that there had obviously been those who played the role of symbolic leadership, who had been preparing for the summer program for some time ahead. That ongoing effort was necessary to get ready to do the kind of work that we did in the Summer '70 Research Assembly on the local church. It was in talking about that role, and realizing that it was filled both by "order" members and by those who grasped themselves in a different way, that we began to even raise the question of a third category, which we initially called the extended order. That relationship existed before Summer '70, but in Summer '70 we could point to a dynamic that was self-consciously present. The participation and commitment exhibited by many of our colleagues in Summer '70 was that without which the research assembly and the Local Church Project would not have been what it was. That involvement is what we were pointing to with the term "extended order."

4. The context for even raising the question of a historical order, and therefore of its extended dimension, has to do with the fact that these are the 1970's. For me the 1970's are the decades of the secular revolution. Now, the secular revolution has been going on for a long time, but I think that for the large part of society, it has not happened in a way that they have been able to label it. It's interesting that we should be delving into religious orders at the time in which the secular revolution has reached its red-hot heat. I think we're going to see this happening brought to self-consciousness in the next decade.

5. This is a time of the emergence of the new church. The new forms of the local church, of the pluriform church, of the ecumenical church, and of the movemental church are now at hand. Therefore this is a time of construction, a time of building, a time of laying the foundations once again for what we mean by "the church." It is in this kind of historical context that orders have come into being. This is our context for even raising the question of a historical order today.

6. In our research on the historical order this quarter, we have delved particularly into the mainstream of western Christianity, into the religious orders of the Catholic church. We have come away from that study with a gestalt I want to share with you that seems to characterize all of these orders, and gives us a background over against which to raise the question of what the historical order is in the twentieth century. I think you must go far beyond what has traditionally been a religious order in the Catholic church, but nevertheless that study has been extremely helpful to us.

7. I. CORPORATE DYNAMIC AND SYMBOLS

Every order has to look at its corporateness and its symbolism. The religious orders, as we knew we would discover, maintained themselves in mission with their symbols. And their symbolism always held together and pointed to a corporate dynamic which they birthed into being, whether you are talking about an early cenobitic monastery or about the full-grown Dominican order.

8. II. CONTEMPLATIVE DYNAMIC AND EXERCISES

Our research brought out again and again that the contemplative dimension was always operative in the inception of the orders. Even in the highly active orders like the Jesuits you have the grounding of the spirit dynamic in the exercises. Every order has had to spell out the spirit journey.

9. III. ORDERING DYNAMIC AND SOCIETY

Every one of the orders we studied, at least in its inception and in its vigor, grasped itself in mission to society. Now, they didn't always use that kind of language, but often times they were the pioneers not only in the new religious mode of the era, but also in experiments in the new social vehicle. The orders grasped themselves as doing an ordering job on behalf of society.

10. IV OPERATIONAL DYNAMIC AND POLITY

The religious orders had to wield out an operational dynamic and a polity that would deal with the dispersal. That is- when the order became of any size at all beyond the first small community, there had to be some way of dealing with the larger dimension of what we would even call an order.

STYLE OF  
RELATING TO  
WORLD

THE ORDERS

SOCIOLOGICAL  
FORM

A Way  
of Life

Religious Life  
Injected into  
World

Professional  
Devotion to  
One's Occupation

Secular  
Spirituality

Cloister

Cluny

Citeaux

canons  
regular

secular  
canons

military  
orders

lay  
confraternities

Dominicans

Franciscans

Society of Jesus

nuns

third  
orders  
(ordering experiments)

specialized  
orders

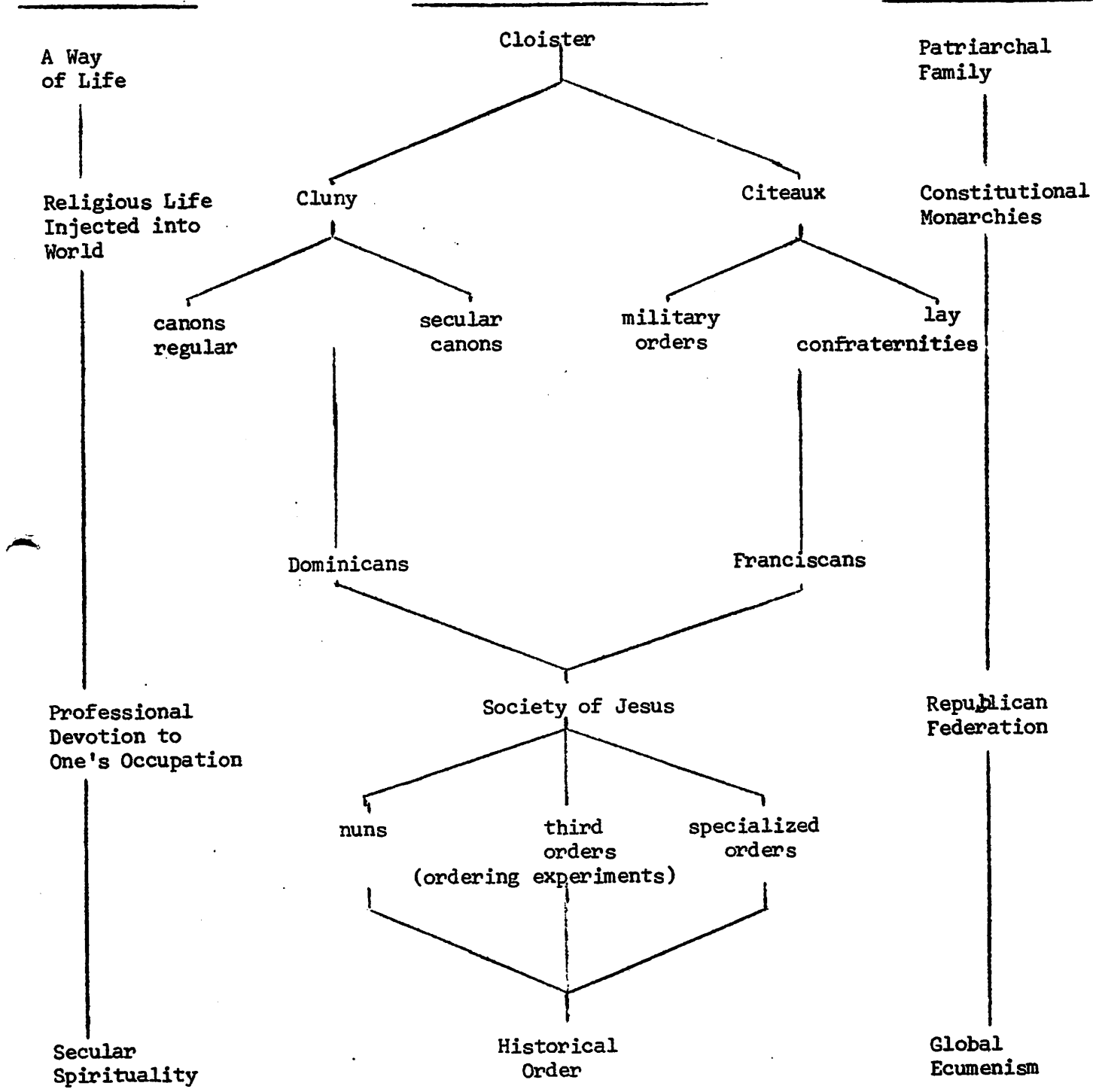
Historical  
Order

Patriarchal  
Family

Constitutional  
Monarchies

Republican  
Federation

Global  
Ecumenism



11. V. SOCIOLOGICAL FORM OF HISTORICAL ORDER

The four preceding areas need to be dealt with further, and would have to be the skeleton from which you would raise the question of what it means to be a historical order. You do not have a historical precedent for this fifth question, but you do have guidelines from the past. When you raise the question of the sociological form of a historical order in the post-modern world, it transforms the other four questions. It re-contextualizes every one of them.

12. When you raise the question of the new sociological form of the order in the 20th century, then your corporate symbols must be radically global. They must go far beyond anything that is identifiable simply with the Christian faith, although that is where you begin, because that is who we are. The contemplative exercises or practices, the practical dimension of the new religious mode has to be welded out towards applicability literally across the planet. The ordering dynamic of society we would talk about as the new social vehicle. We have got to have the kind of battle plan that could be picked up by any group of people who understood themselves self-consciously as performing the ordering role. We've not done much in the area of operational polity, but we are going to have to look at it carefully, because it has to do with operating as an order beyond the national, across the whole globe, in the 20th century context.

13. Thus, it was the question of the sociological form of the historical order that we were trying to hold before us in our study, and yet we discovered that you have to deal with every one of those five questions. Now, we need to turn to the question of the extended order in this context. In one sense we have been working on and participating in the symbolic order dimension for 20 years. We have at least talked about ourselves in that way, and have a great deal of wisdom. The difficulty is that the experiment that we are talking about is us, and therefore it is sometimes difficult to get some distance on it.

14. There is some wisdom about the extended order in the tradition of the third orders that have aligned themselves with the various Roman Catholic orders. In most cases, they have been functionally defined in relationships to the mainline celibate religious orders. They have seen themselves as having a three-fold thrust. First, the third orders have talked about themselves as the evangelists. The third order, or extension of the order, often saw itself as the main evangelical arm of the order in the world. It understood itself as the front line in communicating the faith to the common man. Second, the third order has understood itself as the trainer. The way this was often put was that the third order was given the task of training the ignorant and the new in the faith. Third, the third orders talked about themselves as exemplars. They carried the monastic ideal into their secular station, into their worldly occupation.

15. Perhaps it is helpful to talk about the historical development of which the third orders were the fruition. When you look at the development of monasticism in western civilization, as soon as you get beyond the early monasteries, beyond the initial efforts of Augustine and Benedict, you have no significant change taking place until the 11th century. Then you hit a watershed in two reform movements within the monastic tradition, one of which is centered in and around the monastery at Cluny, and one around Citeaux.

16. The Citeaux reform finally developed into a full-fledged order, the Cistercians. The Cluniac reform originally manifested itself in smaller orders. It was initiated by the historical church and concerned itself with bringing the ordained parish clergy back into a communal monastic existence. Those who did associate themselves with an abbey under the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience were called the canons regular. There was a second class of clergymen, the secular canons, who partially associated themselves with the abbey. They were not under vows in regard to private property, which was a big difference if you realize that the 11th century saw a time of affluence compared to the earlier middle ages. Thus with the secular canon you would have a clergyman loosely related to Westminster Abbey while he maintained his job in the neighboring parishes to which he was assigned.

17. Out of the reform effort of Citeaux, besides strong reforms within the Benedictines, there developed a series of military orders. This was the first formal ordering outside of the monastery. The Cistercian order was closely related to the Crusades, and the military orders came into being as a way of enabling the crusaders along the way. This very quickly assumed a highly institutionalized form. The idea of Christian knighthood came out of the military orders, and the role of the knight was transformed in this way. Also, there were other lay associations or confraternities which had particular missions. They came into being to do particular jobs. The Crusades provide a good example of this. If you got sick on the way to the Holy Land, there was an order that took care of you. If you needed money to get to the Holy Land, there was somebody to raise a loan for you. Thus, the lay confraternity had a particular task in relationship to the broad movement that we call the Crusades.

18. Out of the Cluniac reform and the tradition of the canons regular and secular came the Dominican order. Dominic comes out of the effort to bring a high degree of training and education to the clergy, to create priests highly skilled in evangelism. With the Dominicans, the monk moved out of the monastery into the world (in this case into the universities) and began to make a direct contribution beyond simply the cloistered existence. In terms of development, the Dominicans are the first that sociologists would point to as a full-fledged order. The genius of the Dominican constitution is something to behold. They incorporated literally the entire past wisdom of monasticism, and put it into a self-conscious articulation of the ordering dynamic in what we found was the most complete constitution of the major religious orders.

19. St. Francis, who came from the Citeaux tradition, was a layman. He represented a shift in the lay tradition in moving out from the monastery and becoming a mendicant, with the intention of taking the gospel to the common man. His original intention was to make participation in the monastic life style a possibility for literally everybody, no matter what his station was. St. Francis pushed over and over again to keep his followers from moving in and consolidating into a monastery. What success there has been (and it is very meager) with third orders has for the most part been associated with the Franciscans.

20. Therefore in one of our PSU's we tried to address ourselves to the question of this kind of participation. We raised the question of how, as the symbolic order we were related to by those outside of the symbolic order. we were related to be those outside of the symbolic order. Using the Dominican tradition in which the training of the clergy is a high value, and the Franciscan tradition which emphasizes the lay relationship, we talked about at least three forms of the extended order which seem to be present and viable in the life of our order.

22. You will have to pardon the language with which we referred to the first one of these forms, but the term "directorship of program consultants" points to the fact that our board of directors is related to us in a way that goes far beyond the traditional image of that function. When we use the word 'directorship', we do not mean anything detached or uninvolved. Perhaps the image of the "program consultant" is more helpful. The role that the North Shore cadre played in the initiation of the Local Church Project as a consultant body in the initial efforts is the kind of relationship to which we are pointing. But the relationship has to be understood in an expanded sense; it goes beyond anything that has to do with any one project.

23. Second, we talked about the extended order as a confraternity of social permeators. We used the word "permeator" to point to a broad role, that of social catalyst. In the Roman Catholic Church, the word "confraternity" refers to a group of third orders, rather than just one. Thus a confraternity of social permeators might look like a series of professional guilds.

24/ The third form of the extended order which we discerned might be held by the term "Auxiliary of International Missioners." The relationship with our international colleagues, that has already begun to grow, needs to be spelled out. Their function is as self-conscious and as intentional as anything that we are about, yet their relationship to us is different than that of those who have participated through order base structures. These people might be assigned to their own countries, yet they would understand themselves as auxiliaries, available for international assignment anywhere.

25. What would be the mission of the extended order in our time, or what would be the particular scope in which it would pioneer? In order to answer that question, we must first refer again to the history of monastic development.

26. When you push further on in the historical development, you see that the Dominican and Franciscan traditions come to a confluence in the Jesuits (Society of Jesus). Sociologically, the Jesuits represent the fullest expression of the monastic tradition (though they refer to themselves as a "society" rather than an "order"). The Jesuits attempted to bring an expert professionalism to the role of the clergy as totally thrown open to involvement in the secular world. With the Jesuits you have coming into being a loyalty to the Society. In the earlier monastic development you had a loyalty primarily to the founder of the order or to the house that you were in; it was loyalty in a very small context. The Jesuits practiced professional expertise in a context of loyalty to a global order. Now, the loyalty of the Jesuits was always in relationship to the historical church. These were the troops that the Pope used--although at certain times he had difficulty keeping up with them.

27. Let us then look at the flow of the development of monasticism in two different ways that may help us answer the question of the mission of the extended order in our time. (See diagram on page 3a)

28. In the earliest monastic communities (I am using the cloister as an example of this form), a way of life is welded out. In the ancient period of monastic development, the breakthrough that the Christian gospel is, is embodied in a way of living. (You may call this way of life "religious" but remember that during this period there was not a real distinction, between religious and secular so we need to see this as a genuine secular effort in its time.) Now, they chose the tactic of the cloister, the tactic of pulling away from society, to do that. But the cloister was always a tactic, I would submit, for moving back into society. The Benedictines are a good example of that (whether that was their intention or not).

29. With the further development of the order in the traditions of Cluny and Citeaux comes the attempt to inject the religious life directly into the world. I suppose it is not until the late middle ages and the Enlightenment, that the dichotomy between the "religious" and the "secular", or "world", begins to be a pattern in people's minds. But the effort in this period of monasticism is to take the religious life and express it in terms of whatever your everyday life was.

30. The efforts of both the Dominicans and Franciscans are embodied in a professional devotion to one's occupation. Here occupation is to be understood in its broader and perhaps more original sense of one's station in life. This comes to a more complete fruition in the Jesuits. Whatever your occupation, or station, you were to bring religious zeal to it. Your Christian duty was to participate there with every bit of religious or Christian context you had.

31. The bankruptcy of this effort, through the political and economic over-emphasis is obvious, but I think you can see that originally it was a gift, and a mutation in monastic development. The Jesuit was the supreme example of the complete priest. When you apply their stance to your station, you see that if you are a physician, your job is to be the most fantastic Christian physician the world has ever seen. If you are a tinker, your job is to be the most fantastic Christian tinker the world has ever seen. In the first instance that is a gift, though it lost itself in the Protestant work ethic--"work hard and save your money" is simply ascetism put into New England.

32. What will be the step beyond that? What is next? Another mutation must occur, but it has to embody all the gifts of previous efforts. We have said that now is the time for secular spirituality. Finally, "religious" and "secular" are not a dichotomy, and that is what we mean by the secular revolution. Whatever is coming into being, it is the construction of a fabric of secular spirituality that will tie it together. The extended order, because of its particular stations in life, because of its particular roles across the globe, will be the front line of experimentation in this area. They are the ones who have to be on the firing line. They are the ones who have to be in "the secular world" and still be spirit men.

33. Let us follow another aspect of the development of monasticism, the sociological form, through the history of the religious orders to discern the light that that sheds on the extended order.(see diagram on page 3a).

34. Monasticism starts off with a sociological community that is basically a patriarchal family, whether the patriarch is Pachomius, Augustine or Benedict. There you have the forerunner of the feudal system, but it is in a Christian

context. That is, you are absolutely obedient to the abbot as if the abbot were a representative of God. In other words, the obedience has a transparency to it. Nevertheless, in terms of sociological form you simply have the patriarchal family in most cases.

35. This moves, especially with the Cistercians and the Dominicans, to a constitutional monarchy. You still have the one ruler, the monarch, because of the sheer value of that sociological form, but the monarchy is invested and constituted, its beginnings written down.

36. Particularly with the Dominicans this developed into a republican federation. This was necessitated by the enlargement of the order. In the federation, the general chapter is the decision-making body to whose judgment the order is finally obedient. You have priors and superiors, and in certain situations their word represents the general chapter, but you have an expanded context for talking about the sociological form, the obedience, and the mission of the order.

37. But in our time we must move far beyond the republican federation in terms of sociological form. How do you talk about what that would look like?

38. Since Vatican II, there has come into being the possibility of a new kind of ecumenism across the globe. At least in terms of the Roman Catholic tradition, the doors have been thrown open at that point. The problem is that in most cases what you have is still Roman ecumenism, or Roman Catholicism.

39. Take the word "catholic" and put it into its original context, meaning 'ecumenical'; what has to be welded out now is the global ecumenism in which every pluriform expression of the historical church may participate. We are called to form a historical order that goes beyond any one religion, beyond any one nationality, beyond any one religious tradition. The question is what that new sociological form will look like.

40. We, particularly through the extended order, have begun to weld out for our time what it means to have a Christian vocation. When you see that there is no dichotomy between the new social vehicle and the new religious mode, that the style built on secular spirituality is a possibility for any station in life, you are thrown once again to the cruciality of what we've been calling secular evangelism. It goes far beyond professional loyalty to one's occupation. That's a religious effort in one sense, but we are not talking about being a fantastic lawyer or a fantastic construction engineer. We are talking about operating as the radical servant of the historical church in the first instance. Whatever else the movemental expression of the church understands itself to be, it is always obedient to, and at the assignment of, the historical church.

41. The job goes far beyond simply articulating the gospel in a secular way. That is RS-1--we already have a way of expressing the New Testament faith with great clarity in the post-modern world.

42. The task now is building the practical bridge for dialogue with all men of faith around the world. In this experiment, in this possibility, the extended order is the front line. It is the extended order which will be the front line as we move in the dimensions of secular spirituality and global ecumenism.