

External – Structural Dynamics

June 30, 1969

Joseph Wesley Mathews

22. What is the Church's role as a revolutionary force in history? The Church never starts a revolution. The intentional and self-conscious Church does not initiate a revolution in the social process. In the midst of the revolution it names the Name and therefore revolutionizes the revolution. Our world's activity illustrates that the Church doesn't initiate the revolution. The revolutions started outside the self-conscious Church, that is, in the latent Church, which needs the Name named so that the revolution may be the Revolution.

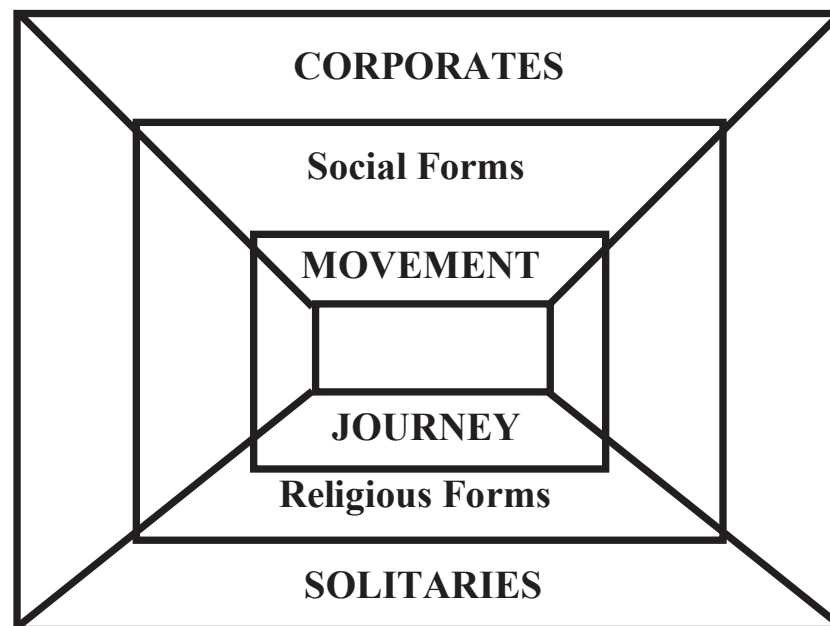
23. How must the self-conscious People of God today go about Naming the Name in this social revolution? We have had to understand that the religious mode and social vehicle cannot be separated. There is a genuine polarity between the two. Religious mode is social vehicle and social vehicle is religious mode. But, Religious mode is religious mode and social vehicle is social vehicle. The way I have to say this to myself now is that the new religious mode is to understand as religious mode and as social vehicle as social vehicle and as religious mode.

24. Years ago a man in politics once said to me, "You fundamentally think in terms of the theological. I think in terms of the political." He was trying to say that as he sensed it, we were talking about the same reality, but one of us was using the theological language to talk about it, and one of us was using political language to talk about it. There'll be a time soon when we can be clear about the language of religious mode and social vehicle. One who begins with an analysis of the human situation in the theological categories has to spend his whole life trying to get that said in the language of politics. He who begins with political language has the reverse struggle. This is another way of saying what I started out with, that we as the self-conscious Church have to name the Name of that reality which is in no way occasioned by that body who names the Name.

25. **We who are self-consciously the Church are after methodology.** We have to become aware of the being aspect of humanness down under

knowing and doing. This is methodology for me in its depth sense. For when you are dealing with methodology, you are dealing with being itself. Methodology never exists except as it exists in relation to that which is un-synonymous with itself. When that is forgotten in our school system, then you have the nonsense of people educating people to educate, without any content.

26. When I use methodology here I not only mean it in that ontological sense, I mean it in a far more superficial sense: you have to have some gimmicks to get started with. The first thing when you are moving in any dimension is to attack the theoretical problem, and the first step of this is to carve out breathing room. This is also true of the new social vehicle. You have to get leverage. The breathing room, the leverage, is nothing in itself. It's just a sheer gimmick to try to get a little acceleration in the direction of the heart of the matter. The first talk, I hope, had some of the ontological aspects of what I meant by methodology. But basically now I am after gimmicks. The key to the gimmicks is attempting to give shape to the new social vehicle; this has come out of two years as a total body grappling head on with the new religious mode.



27. The solitaries deal with one's awareness in the twentieth century that he is sociality, that he is mystery, and that he is freedom (meditation, contemplation, and prayer). We want to be sure that this is always grounded in the secular – by the secular I mean humanness. The corporates are grounded in one's capacity for detachment, his capacity for engagement, and his capacity to transcend himself. In each case, the last category does not exist. When I say that I am the mystery, mystery here only exists in relationship to my awareness of freedom and sociality. In the corporates, chastity does not exist either (if you want to smile at that a bit, go right ahead). It is the nothing, the sheer nothing that is present only when disengagement and engagement exist. This is also true in the large dynamic. This means that there is no such thing as the spirit journey. There are only the solitaries and the corporates. This again represents sheer no-thing.

28. I want to use this construct as the gimmick by which to try over a period of twelve months, twenty four months, or however long it takes, as a body of people, to clarify the social revolution in our time, or name the Name to the revolution – which has many, many, many faces in our times – and naming the Name to revolutionize the revolution.

29. knowing dimension

SOLITARIES			JOURNEY			CORPORATES		
Meditation Sociality	Contemplation Mystery	Prayer Freedom				Poverty Detach- ment	Chastity Transcendence	Obedience Engagement
being								
RELIGIOUS STRUCTURES			MOVEMENT			CIVIL STRUCTURES		
Educating Process Radical Education	Nurturing Process Spiritual Dimension	Training Process Direct Action	Historical Order		Histor. Party	Econ. All Goods	Cultural All Heritages	Political All Decisions

doing dimension

30. I have to begin on the left hand side of the diagram by saying that we are dealing with the religious forms of relationships. I'm not at the moment interested in how you could relate the solitary in the religious mode to the structure of religious forms in and through which relationships are externalized without which man does not exist. I suppose there is a kind of immediate obviousness about that. But it is important for us to grasp afresh that there isn't any social vehicle without the sociological aspect of religious mode. Once we have that in our mind, it is going to help all along. On the corporate side, I want to use a word like civil pole of human beings relating to one another, or the social form.

31. The middle category corresponds to movement. It has taken me a long time to say that the movement does not exist. It's like the spirit journey. The movement is nothing. If your being in the movement gives you a sense of being somebody, then you are not the movement. By 1972 we should have some understanding of what an historical religious order in the post-modern world would look like. Sometimes I think this is all we are really working with through all of this. We are trying to find out what nothing is. But when you think of it in relationship to the civil side of the diagram, the order is what Fanon in The Wretched of the Earth¹

¹ Translated by Constance Farrington (Grove Press, 1963) or Richard Wilcox, (Grove Press, 2004)

calls the party. Here for those who begin with the political, would be a religious order under the rubric of the civil form. For somebody who was intentionally a part of the self-conscious People of God, it would be a religious order. Those two fundamentally are the same thing in the ontological dimension, in the sense that they are utterly nothing. This goes back to where we started. And it's almost as if there is a third rubric up here that would go in between these two. If you basically grasp yourself within this kind of construct under the rubric of order, or so to speak, emerging out of the religious, (and whether I like it or not, that's my situation), then you are religious, then you are moving to become the party, and you emerge on the civils side. And for my politician friend, whether he likes it or not, his thrust is toward the religious. As a matter of fact, I wish he were here to bear witness of me.

32. We need to remember that the movement is nothing. The movement is only the movement under the social form of the social mode, to go back to that earlier diagram. We come to the white-hot center of this kind of diagram precisely at this point. To follow this kind of methodology, you come to where sheer nothing exists, that is, if you can see this category you need glasses, for this is just sheer nothing. That's the dimension of life where you don't fool, for if you fool, you are burnt to a crisp and become a zombie.

33. Now let's go down to the next level. The next two years will be spent in putting content into the social vehicle categories, which will also alter our work on the new religious mode.

34. If we began with the civil form itself, I suppose we would begin with the economic, the political and the cultural. The first statement is the general one that fits on this level, that is, "All the earth belongs to all the people. All the goods belong to all, all the decisions of history belong to all, and all the heritages of humanness belong to all." Then you are down to the next level of: What are the four classical categories when you are thinking of all of the goods belonging to all the people?

35. Perhaps I'd better pause at this moment to point out that in model building in working on the religious mode, the abstract categories² that have to do with prayer, have to do with confession, gratitude, petition, and intercession, the classical categories of prayer in the Hebrews-Christian tradition. What they point to would be in any self-conscious religious mode that was dealing with the aspect of creativity or freedom, or action in the mist of history. In these rational or classical categories, experience of humanness is stored up. It is simply crucial that we grasp that. You are not operating in the kind of two-story universe in which rationality is eternal, and then existence exists as it participates in this kind of eternality. No, in our post-modern understanding of rationality, the rational categories are vessels, containers, whereby you hold together almost an infinite amount of experience of humanness itself. To me that is the key to the new rationality. So that when you turn to the side categories, you are dealing head-on with phenomenological categories as over-against rational categories. What is in the boxes, then, is the immediate experience of the reality that is stored up in these categories that a particular society has developed over thousands of years.

36. One of the first steps in the midst of this is working out the four classical categories that are going to begin to guide us in the direction of putting concrete content in the sense of structures or social dynamics, into the abstract vision that all the goods of this world belong to all people. That's the first step. When you begin to move down the different levels, you have to get the equivalent of the interior state of being. I'd almost like to call this sociological phenomenology. Yet it may not be. It may be that that's not quite as wild as one thinks. To get those kinds of categories, you study economics. What you study is the development of the awareness of mankind relative to the economic dimension of what it means to be a human being. You don't go to college and take a course in economics. No, this is philosophy. In the West you study Plato. And in our world today you and I also have to begin to study the Plato's of other cultures. This is one of the reasons the youth of today are revolting against an education which has become more and more technological and which has lost the existential dimension. Mark you; you are not going to be studying philosophy in colleges, but in what we call high schools today. But the way philosophy has been taught, in this abstract

² Imagine an X-Y axis. For Joe, the "abstract/rational categories" were on the X axis and the "side categories" were on the vertical or Y axis.

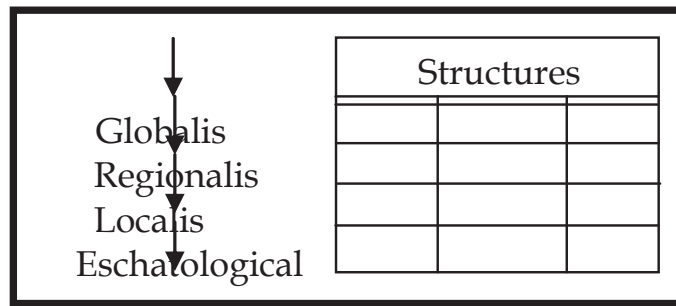
technological sense, it has become just as crummy as any other kind of course. That's what you and I are going to have to do; we are going to have to blast ourselves loose. You want to know what in the next few years we have to be studying? I want to insist that what we put in these categories up here relative to social vehicle tells you exactly what you have to be studying: details of economics, culture, and politics.

37. Now let's move to the side categories – and this is to me the most difficult problem on this board; what I call “sociological phenomenology.” It includes the concretion of that awareness and then the engagement of the total person with that concretion, and then what I call the transparency, or the ecstatic, where you be your engagement in the concrete awareness. For me, that describes the phenomenological descent of man relative to anything.

38. When you put that out into the sociological, what are the guiding master categories? I have real problems here, but I have two kinds of help. One is the lecture in CS-I³, which tries to tell how you get the up and down sociological categories in building a social model. That begins with the awareness of the I-Thou, the I within society. But this is always a society of the immediate community that is family. By family, I meant the immediate community, not the Victorian concept that you grew up in, something far broader than that. Then comes the immediate community of that family, which is always made up of the dichotomy that throws you over into the universal aspect of existence itself. When I take that and use it, I have a kind of problem, which perhaps you can have some appreciation for. What I am doing now I am not at all clear about – that is to take this and transpose it into the terminology that some in our group created – the globalis, the regionalis, and the localis. I also want to hold – although you can't call it this – the eschatological, which is both and at the same time the high abstraction of sociality itself and the intensification in the awareness of the radical individual. Perhaps I can put it this way: I'm trying to say it in such a way that we are dealing with our guts rather than our abstracting capacities of the mind. So this is the ecstatic aspect of the sociological presence in the midst of life.

³ Cultural Studies One, a course of the Institute.

39.



40. If you move in this direction, you have to be sure that this is in no way whatsoever talking about geography in any of these rubrics. I've never known how to do it. But it's almost that the globalis has to do with the master model with which you are operating, and the localis has to do with any particularity which only exists in relationship to this globalis. The regionalis is that dimension of our experience of relatedness which ministers in both directions. When you hit the ecstatic – I don't know how to get this said – it's almost the white-hot center, which is the utter explosion on the global and the utter explosion on the local, which means finally that self-hood is to be the total world plus one. Kierkegaard is extremely clear about this. You do not finally know what it means to be a self until you become all of creation plus one, which means just the bottom is blown out of being all of creation. That's what I mean to communicate by that. Those two things are together. If you are an authentic person, you are the universe plus one.

41. Those of you who have studied the religious charts carefully, know you have to have abstract master categories, and then you have a master category for this whole construct that is subsumed under it, and then you have master categories that cover each area that are subsumed under that. This abstraction is translated into concretion as you move down to the particular in order for you to get a highly refined insight into these boxes, which you are out to do.

42. I'm not sure how you talk about religious structure, but I'd like for you to think about the model of the local congregation, if you haven't already done so. That has to do with a certain kind of educating process, radical education. The religious dimension of the new social vehicle is always a kind of radical education process. If that is not going on, you do not have what I mean by the social manifestation of a new religious

mode. What was going on there was radical education. Therefore that is a manifestation of what I mean in the new social vehicle by the external manifestation of the religious mode, without which you do not have a social vehicle. There is also a nurturing process that has to do with the spirit dimension of humankind, and a training process, which has to do with direct action in the world – in that you do not have a religious mode if that does not go on.

43. What then is the concretion in terms of the classical categories, and what is the concretion of those phenomenological categories as they relate to the sociological going-on-ness, without which you have never had a social construct no matter how sick this process was? That's where we need to move. Suppose that everything I've said (except the insistence that we have to have a gimmick to begin to get clear in a comprehensive, futuric and intentional sense upon the social revolution) suppose everything except this one gimmick, stands ahead of us. The next two years we fill in these blocks.

44. A construct is necessary before you even think about sociological religious forms. This is what the movement is for the next 20 years. The Name won't get named and the revolution will not be broken loose, if this job is not done.