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KARL BARTH'S PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNICATION

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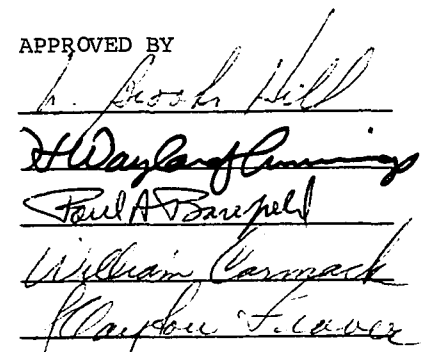

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

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CHAPTER I

BARTH AS A PHILOSOPHER OF COMMUNICATION

Purpose

Karl Barth's impact upon twentieth-century theology has been revolutionary, inspiring a radical redirection of theological thought. Martin Marty, theologian at the University of Chicago, argues that Barth "helped Christian thought take a 180-degree turn, advocating God-centered instead of man-centered theology."[1] Beginning with the revolutionary commentary on The Epistle to the Romans (Romerbrief) in 1918, his influence has been international. Catholic theologian Karl Adam says The Epistle to the Romans fell "like a bombshell on the playground of the theologians."[2] Barth's description of the disturbance he began to create in the theological world compared himself to one groping up the stairs in a dark church tower, thinking he held the nandrail for support. Instead,

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[1] Martin E. Marty, Foreword to The Promise of Barth, by Thomas C. Oden (New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1969), p. 7.

[2] T. H. L. Parker, Karl Barth (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1970), p. 56.

he discovered he held the bell rope and to his surprise the great bell was ringing above him.[3]

The extent of this revolution and Barth's significance is stressed by Thomas Torrance, Professor of Christian Dogmatics at the University of Edinburgh: "Karl Barth is incontestably the greatest figure in modern theology since Schleiermacher, occupying an honored position among the great elite of the church--Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin."[4] Many critics echo Torrance's evaluation. Georges Casalis says: "Not since Luther and Calvin has Protestantism had a single theologian of the stature and importance of Karl Barth."[5] John Godsey calls him a Church Father, a theologian of such creative genius, productivity, and widespread influence that his name is appropriately linked with the outstanding figures in the history of Christian thought.[6] Like many theologians with whom he has been compared, Barth also deserves recognition for his philosophical contributions. This study

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[3]John Bowden, Karl Barth (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1971), p. 38.

[4]Thomas F. Torrance, "Karl Barth," in Ten Makers of Modern Protestant Thought, ed. George L. Hunt (New York: Association Press, 1958), p. 58.

[5]Georges Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1963), p. 34.

[6]John D. Godsey, Introduction to How I Changed My Mind, by Karl Barth (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1966), p. 9.

particularly concerns his philosophical communicology.

Barth's extensive, international publication underscores his importance. His writings possess universal interest, having been published in over one hundred major translations including English, French, Japanese, Hungarian, Czechoslovakian, Danish, Swedish, Korean, Italian, Norwegian and Spanish editions.[7] He has been one of the most prolific theologians in history. His Dogmatics comprises thirteen volumes. This work covers more than eight thousand pages containing nearly six million words, yet represents only half of Barth's output. He wrote many other articles, books, and pamphlets. A bibliography compiled in 1956 for his seventieth birthday credited him with more than four hundred and six items.[8] Barth's extensive writings have been an abundant source for modern theology; he also appears to offer benefits for the philosophy of communication.

Barth's concept of theology is a primary reason for recognizing him as a philosopher of communication. For Barth theology, language, and communicatien are inseparably related. By nature and etymology, "theology is a logia, logic, or language bound to the theos, which both makes it possible and also determines it."[9]

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[7]Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, p. 122.

[8]Bowden, Karl Barth, p. 10.

[9]Karl Barth, Evangelical Theology: An Introduction, trans. by Grover Foley (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1963), pp. 3, 16.

Theology is "responsible reflection on proclamation."[10] Its task is critical appraisal of the content of the church's language about God, which includes the use and criticism of concepts of human communication.

Although Barth never formally articulated a philosophy of communication, as in the case of Paul Tillich and Soren Kierkegaard, he wrote extensively and cogently concerning concepts and problems in communication. The thesis of this study is that a philosophy of communication can be derived from his writings. Thus, the clarification and structuring of the philosophy of communication implicit in Barth's writings and development is the general purpose of this study.

Several central questions guide this study: (1) What principles of communication revealed in Barth's development contribute to a philosophy of communication? (2) How did Barth's conceptualization of existentialism and dialectic impact on his ideas about communication? (3) What is Barth's conceptualization of communication? (4) What principles of communication did Barth believe were conducive to ecumenicity, or cooperation and unity among groups?

Justification

From consideration of intrinsic factors in Barth's writings

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[10]Cf. Gerhard Ebeling, Theology and Proclamation, trans. by John Riches (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), pp. 8, 20.

and development, from extrinsic evaluations of his work, and from the field of communication numerous reasons emerge to justify an analysis of his communicology. Intrinsically, Barth's significance as a theologian recommends his importance as a philosopher of communication, for his work reflects an inherent and reciprocal relation between theology and communication. The ultimate data and questions of his work involve issues of communication. The particular occasion for his theological work--the problem of proclaiming the Word of God--reveals the bearing of communication on his thought. Barth's methods, including his use of existential communication and dialectic, involve important concepts of communication. Many problems in his writings interrelate with communication: problems such as the nature of theology, communication, man, language, listening, and proclamation.

Criticism of Barth provides important extrinsic reasons for deriving a philosophy of communication from his writings. Since he is considered the outstanding Protestant theologian of this century by many critics, it seems appropriate to study Barth's communicative philosophy. His accomplishment of a notable reinterpretation of classical, Reformation, and modern theology merits investigation of his approach to communication--the philosophy, methods, and principles he used in communicating his innovations. His broad humanity and distinctive attitudes about theology contain

values for communication. His impact as an ecumenical theologian suggests the importance of evaluating his communicology for the discovery of principles which make dialogue and community possible.

Beyond the theologically intrinsic and extrinsic factors which justify elaborating a philosophy of communication from Barth, additional justifications for this study derive from the field of communication. The issue of human motives in language is a pivotal theme in the writings of Kenneth Burke. His Rhetoric of Religion provides several theses substantiating the value of rhetorical studies of theological systems. Burke observes that "religion has often been looked upon as a center from which all other forms of human motivation gradually diverged" and addresses itself "in statements of the widest and deepest possible scope, concerning the authorship of men's motives." Burke classifies religious discourse under rhetoric. Specifically, his "book is about something so essentially rhetorical as religious nomenclature. . . ."[11] While Burke's approach is secular, he advocates studying theological systems for their communicological value. In the foreword to the Rhetoric of Religion he argues: "Thus it is our 'logological' thesis that, since the theological use of language is thorough, the close study of theology and its forms will provide us with good

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[11]Kenneth Burke, The Rhetoric of Religion (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1970), pp. v-vi.

insight into the nature of language itself as a motive."[12]

While recognizing the rhetorical nature of religion, the depth of its appeal to human motives, the rhetorical nature of its terminology, and the value of studying theological language for its insights into language in general, Burke also recognizes in the concept of the Logos a "master analogy, the architectonic element from which all the other analogies could be deduced." He states: "What we say about words, in the empirical realm, will bear a notable likeness to what is said about God in theology." Finally, Burke underscores the importance of studying theological language by stating: "It is necessary to consider all the symbolic dimensions involved in the motives of the symbol-using animal. And this text is intended to show why any secular theory of language that ignores the hints provided by theology is bound to be inadequate, whether or not theology is 'true.'"[13]

The primary objective of the National Developmental Project on Rhetoric was "to outline and amplify a theory of rhetoric suitable to twentieth-century concepts and needs."[14] Some question exists whether this objective was accomplished. Marie Nichols contends that the outline of such a theory does not emerge from

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[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid., pp. 13-14.

[14]Lloyd F. Bitzer and Edwin Black, eds., The Prospect of Rhetoric (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), p. v.

the discussion of many topics. She urges that many students of communication are finding more profitable insights into the nature of communication by reading philosophers and theologians like Buber, Kierkegaard (who influenced the early Barth) and Tillich.[15] Rhetoric needs fresh questions and approaches offered by philosophers and theologians.

Richard McKeon argues the significance of rhetoric as "an architectonic art, an art of structuring all principles and products of knowing, doing, and making."[16] Barth's interpreters agree that his work is a unique architectonic production. Otto Weber notes that the size of Barth's Dogmatics justifies "the common expression that it is an evangelical summa of theology."[17] Geoffrey Bromiley and Thomas Torrance, in the "Editors' Preface" to the last volume of the Dogmatics, commended the work as an achievement in which "the exposition is sustained throughout volume after volume with a marvel of architectonic beauty."[18] Therefore, Barth's

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[15]Roger E. Nebergall and Marie H. Nichols, "Two Windows on the Prospect of Rhetoric," Quarterly Journal of Speech 58 (February 1972):88-96.

[16]Richard McKeon, "The Uses of Rhetoric in a Technological Age: Architectonic Productive Arts," Prospect of Rhetoric, p. 45.

[17]Otto Weber, Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics, trans. Arthur Cochrane (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953), p. 15.

[18]G. W. Bromiley and T. F. Torrance, Editors' Preface to The Doctrine of Reconciliation, by Karl Barth in Church Dogmatics, 13 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936-1962), 4/4:vi.

experience in evolving a theological "system" (he personally disdained this term although critics and interpreters apply it to his work) should offer insights for rhetoric as an art of organizing systems of thought.

Barth's architectonic achievement relates well to rhetorical communication's search for more adequate concepts of invention. Lloyd Bitzer urges discovery of concepts of invention which put rhetoric in the service of "the great aspirations of the human community." He argues: "Rhetoric as a study and practice is made vital by its relation to vital subject matter. The question . . . becomes, therefore--what steps must we take to effectively engage rhetoric with this subject-matter?" Bitzer capsulizes the need for this knowledge as follows: "To paraphrase a line in McKeon's essay, in these times all men need an art of invention, judgment, and action enabling them to understand contemporary problems, to formulate and evaluate positions, and to engage in intelligent dialogue and action."[19] Barth's achievement of an international dialogue and enunciation of positions in careful distinction to those of others are inventional accomplishments deserving attention. A study of Barth's communicology and its development should contribute to a better understanding of how rhetorical invention in its broad, philosophic conception, can contribute to community.

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[19]Bitzer and Black, Prospect of Rhetoric, p. 202.

Beyond problems and issues arising from theologically intrinsic and extrinsic considerations of Barth, the following questions from the field of communication guide this study:[20] (1) What does Barth's experience in evolving a theological system teach concerning rhetoric as an architectonic art of organizing systems of thought? (2) What does Barth's development and philosophy of communication contribute to a better conceptualization of invention? (3) What unifying, architectonic principles of human motivation, language, and communication are discernible in Barth? (4) What concepts does Barth provide which may broaden and enrich communication theory?

Survey of Literature

General theological literature strongly urges continued study of Barth. In "A Critical Analysis of Barth's Principal Works," Georges Casalis considered "The Echo" or response to Barth's works. He expressed the need for further research as follows: "Actually, the task of understanding, assimilating and utilizing the riches in Barth's work has scarcely begun. . . ."[21] Thomas C. Oden, author of The Promise of Barth, draws the same conclusion: "It is the conviction and thesis of this book . . . that Barth's

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[20]The questions identified here are specific extensions of the central questions of the study identified above, p. 4.

[21]Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, p. 123.

work is important not only for the past, or for the study of the history of theology, but also for the future. His life began a new epoch which is even yet awaiting fulfillment and full explication."[22]

A complete survey of Masters Abstracts and Dissertation Abstracts from their inception (respectively, 1962 and 1861 to the present) was undertaken to discover relevant research on Barth. The survey attempted to evaluate all related dissertations in philosophy, religion, theology, and communication. This survey revealed that there has been no explication of a philosophy of communication from Barth. Although more than eighty-five dissertations have been reported on Barth, these primarily concern specific issues. Several studies deal with language and proclamation, but none appear to present a comprehensive view of a philosophy of communication.[23] The common limitation of these studies is their

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[22]Oden, Promise of Barth, p. 22.

[23]For example: Sydney Earl Allen, Jr., "A Study of the Idea of Revelation with Special Reference to the Thought of Paul Tillich and Karl Barth" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nebraska, 1964); William Walter Johnson, "Preaching as Ethical Action: A Response to the Concentration on Preaching in Barth and Bultmann from the Viewpoint of Practical Theology" (Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton Theological Seminary, 1969); Morris Jerome Niedenthal, "Preaching the Presence of God: Based on a Critical Study of the Sermons of Paul Tillich, Karl Barth and Herbert H. Farmer" (Th.D. dissertation, Union Theological Seminary, New York, 1969); and James Kenneth Wilkerson, "Transcendence and Language: A Study of the Theology of Karl Barth" (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1967).

restriction to one or two major concepts. The present study is broader in its concern for the interrelations of a number of topics which have bearing on a philosophy of communication.

To illustrate how this study fits in with previous research, it is useful to consider the general plan of two related dissertations in the field of communication.[24] Gary Keith Rayburn explored "Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Communication." He sought to contribute to the field of speech relevant areas of Tillich's thought. "A comprehensive picture of Tillich's philosophy of communication was obtained by utilizing his lectures on communication, the insights growing from Tillich's own personal efforts to communicate, and his underlying methodological assumptions."[25] Rayburn evaluated Tillich's assessment of communication, forms of relationships in communication, the primary aims and ethical imperatives of communication, and considered obstacles to communication which destroy relationships necessary for community. He

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[24]Raymond Eugene Anderson's "Kierkegaard's Theory of Communication," Dissertation Abstracts 20 (1960):4213, is a kindred study. Like the present study, Anderson's discovered a theory of communication in a broad literature including theological writings. His study united ethical, religious, philosophical, psychological, aesthetic, and communicological elements, located a number of problems of communication in the "coreligious sphere" and related them to current issues in the field of communication. This study may be of particular interest since Barth acknowledged his early dependence on Kierkegaard.

[25]Gary Keith Rayburn, "Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Communication," Dissertation Abstracts 30 (March 1970):4048-A.

treated conditions under which communication can best be fulfilled, including "dialogue situations, correlated messages, and an apologetic outlook."[26]

Carolyn Castleberry Deile also investigated "Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Communication." Her study was outlined as follows:

> Paul Tillich never dealt systematically with the philosophy of communication or with any of its constituent elements, although he referred to them obliquely throughout his writings in relation to other major topics. It was the thesis of this study that a philosophy of communication could be constructed from his writings. The purpose of the study was to provide a systematic explication of that philosophy of communication. The materials used in this study consisted primarily of Tillich's writings between 1933 and 1965, plus his posthumously published works to date. The analytical stage of this study involved discovering all those elements deemed relevant for a philosophy of communication from his works, clarifying and interpreting them. The synthetic stage involved organizing them into a meaningful and coherent theoretical framework.[27]

Deile found that the major elements in Tillich's philosophy of communication inhere in his theory of language. Her study considered Tillich's philosophical anthropology with its implications for communication. Tillich's philosophical methods, including dialectic and dialogue, were examined for their bearing on the rational and ethical dimensions of communication. Finally, the social-political dimension of communication was considered in terms of relationships and community.

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[26]Ibid.

[27]Carolyn Castleberry Deile, "Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Communication," Dissertation Abstracts 32 (April 1972):5920-A.

This project compares with the Rayburn and Deile studies as follows: it seeks a comprehensive picture of a philosophy of communication in Barth by deriving insights from his personal efforts to communicate and by analyzing communicative implications of his methodological assumptions; it endeavors to explain the fundamental assumptions which structured his philosophy of communication, to discern his assessment of communication, the primary aims of communication; and it inquires how communication influences relationships and community.

Methodologically, this study appears similar to the Deile study.[28] It shares a similar thesis but stresses the term "derived" rather than "constructed." The reason for this emphasis is that Barth's approach to theology and the approach of this study is largely inductive. The procedure is one of discerning, discovering--observing an unfolding process--more than constructing. The selective use of a broad literature, as in the case of the Anderson and Rayburn studies, is similar. The analytic and synthetic processes in the Deile study are also involved in the present study.

Data for this study divides into four categories: (1) passages in the Church Dogmatics relevant to Barth's communicology,

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[28]The methodology of the present study is elaborated in the following section of this chapter.

(2) other selected writings by Barth, (3) literature interpreting Barth, and (4) literature from communication, philosophy, and theology. The criteria for including these writings is threefold: that they contribute to understanding Barth's development and influence, that they are significant for understanding his philosophy of communication, and that they represent Barth's better interpreters and his mature thought.

Plan of Study

For philosophical and procedural reasons, this study primarily concentrates upon the Church Dogmatics. While other works are used, the basic data for a philosophy of communication is located there. Georges Casalis, summarizing the earlier writings in "A Critical Analysis of Barth's Principal Works," stated: "All the above work . . . prepares for, centers upon and is fulfilled in the Church Dogmatics."[29] Geoffrey Bromiley, co-editor of the Dogmatics with Thomas Torrance, states:

> Barth has expressed the desire that he should be judged theologically by the Church Dogmatics rather than by earlier writings. This does not mean that the latter are unimportant. Nor does it mean that many of the earlier themes are not present in the Dogmatics. It might be argued that the Dogmatics can be understood only in the light of Romans. Yet there is a difference in assumptions, emphases, and basic understanding. Hence one must look to the Dogmatics for a

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[29]Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, p. 104.

proper view of Barth's teaching.[30]

The research for this study proceeded as follows: It derived by an inductive, observational approach, unfolding a philosophy of communication implicit in Barth's development and the Dogmatics. This involved an analytic process isolating parts of Barth's development and writings most relevant to a philosophy of communication and examining these to discover their nature, function, and meaning. Also involved was an interpretative process based on a critical reading of the selected literature which elicited the meaning of this philosophy in terms of concepts in the field of communication. This interpretative process, as each of the processes, combined theoretic concepts from the fields of theology, philosophy, and communication. Next was a synthetic process which unified otherwise disparate elements of a philosophy of communication in Barth. This synthesis was achieved by an inductive derivation of topics from Barth's teaching. The derivation included a complete survey of the Dogmatics to discover concepts related to communication and to put them into a framework constituting a philosophy of communication. The final process was critical evaluation, involving appraisal of strengths and weaknesses of Barth's philosophy of communication. In summary, these four research procedures

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[30]G. W. Bromiley, "Karl Barth," in Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, ed. Philip E. Hughes (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1966), p. 31.

occurred simultaneously and separately. They were not applied as rigid phases, but arose immanently in response to Barth's thought.

Six chapters structure the study's report. The present Chapter One, "Barth As a Philosopher of Communication," introduces the study's design and indicates Barth's potential as a philosopher of communication. Chapter Two, "Principles of Communication in Barth's Development," elaborates elements in his development contributing to a philosophy of communication. Chapter Three, "Existential Communication and Dialectic," examines how Barth's conceptualization of existential and dialectical principles provided a philosophical basis for his ideas about communication. Chapter Four, "Barth's Conceptualization of Communication," clarifies his chief objectives for communication. Chapter Five, "Principles of Ecumenical Communication," focuses on concepts in Barth relevant to the achievement of community. Chapter Six, "Barth's Contributions to a Philosophy of Communication," sums up and assesses some values of Barth's communicology.

CHAPTER II

PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNICATION IN BARTH'S DEVELOPMENT

This chapter examines origins of a philosophy of communication in the work of Karl Barth. The central question addressed is: What principles of communication revealed in Barth's development contribute to a philosophy of communication?[1] To answer this question the chapter first considers Barth's "rhetorical situation," or factors in his environment which influenced his communicology, including his educational development, and, secondly, examines the implications of his "scientific-critical" attitude. A central theme evolves: the primary architectonic principle governing Barth's development and thought, and any philosophy of communication derived therefrom, appears to be a movement toward complete fidelity to the object of inquiry as determining the nature of scientific activity, rationality, and discourse.

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[1]A principle of communication implies here a guiding concept or motivating force influencing the production and/or evaluation of discourse. Particular emphasis is given to Barth's inventional principles, which concern concepts governing the development of ideas in communication.

Barth's "Rhetorical Situation"

An adequate interpretation of Barth's philosophy of communication examines his "rhetorical situation"--i.e., specific stimuli in his environment which influenced his approach to communication--in order to discover implications for a philosophy of communication. Such an examination accords with current philosophical and communicological thought. Michael Polanyi, for example, urges recognition of a personal participation of the knower in all acts of scientific understanding; we inevitably see the universe from a center lying within ourselves and speak about it in terms of a language conditioned by the exigencies of our particular situation.[2] The reason for examining Barth's educational development, then, is to understand his intellectual and "rhetorical situation."[3]

Barth's educational development conditioned his philosophy of communication, for it shaped his intellectual and "rhetorical situation." To locate formative influences in this development, this section first examines his educational goals and experiences as they influenced his thought and were manifested in his concept

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[2]Michael Polanyi, Personal Knowledge (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

[3]The later Wittgenstein, Oxford philosopher R. G. Collingwood, and communicologists such as Bitzer and Wallace emphasize that understanding discourse demands thorough knowledge of source and situation. Interpreting philosophic concepts and language requires taking into full account the contexts and purposes of the "players" of a particular "language-game."

of theology as "faith seeking understanding;" second, explains how Barth's use of educational positions as a communication channel redirected his thought and modes of communication; and third, indicates major characteristics of Barth's "scientific-critical" attitude which were developed within his Swiss-German educational experience and which are necessary for understanding his principles of communication.

"Faith seeking understanding"

Barth viewed learning as a life-long process and vital part of his concept of theology as "faith seeking understanding." Even as a youth, he began to manifest this fundamental concept. John Bowden explains:

> Looking back on his childhood, Karl picked out the time of his confirmation as the real beginning of his own vocation to theology. "On the eve of my confirmation day," he wrote, "I boldly resolved to become a theologian, perhaps not so much with the thought of preaching . . . but rather in the hope of realizing in the course of this study some substantial understanding of a confession of faith of which I had only a vague apprehension."[4]

As a student, pastor, professor, and mature theologian, Barth advanced his education. Throughout his development, he demonstrated his presupposition that understanding is a necessary and inherent goal for faith, not in order to prove it but to complete it. Barth found in his religious experience, in the nature of faith itself,

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[4]Bowden, Karl Barth, p. 30.

incentive for a lifelong pursuit of theological knowledge.[5]

Barth developed in a family which emphasized theological study. His father, Fritz Barth, was a minister in the Swiss Reformed Church at Basel and later Professor of Church History and New Testament at Bern. Karl's grandfathers were ministers and a younger brother, Peter, was a well-known Calvin scholar. His other brother, Heinrich, was professor of philosophy at the University of Basel. Extensive evidence, implicit and explicit, reveals that his father and brothers stimulated his intellectual development. From his father Barth apparently received incentive for academic excellence and the essence of his Reformed theology. Barth dialogued with his brothers formally, discussing their work in his Dogmatics. He drew heavily upon Calvin and upon existential philosophy, major concerns of his brothers. New Testament scholarship and church history, specialties of his father, were evident in his theology. Barth shared substantially with the theological circle of his immediate family, and this personal environment contributed to his theological concepts, his existential interests, and the broad ideational foundation of his communicology.

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[5]The rationale for this pursuit is detailed in Barth's study, Anselm: Fides Quaerens Intellectum (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1960), and includes the reasons that such understanding results in joy for the believer, that faith in God demands knowledge of Him, and that knowledge completes the vision of faith and brings the believer to its limits.

From his early educational experience, Barth showed independence. Although Karl's education began at home and he initially studied under his father in Bern, he then, in keeping with the European tradition of studying at several institutions, pursued studies in Berlin, again at Bern, and at Tuebingen and Marburg in Germany. At first he followed his father's wishes in studying under conservative theologians. Soon, however, he asserted his desire to pursue a more liberal theological education. This balance in his education between liberal and conservative elements apparently contributed to the overall tempered emphasis of his theology and his philosophic openness to a wide gamut of views. This openness in Barth's thought and desire to thoroughly explore positions even antithetical to his own reflects his integrity and fidelity to the Anselmian concept of theology as "faith seeking understanding."

Barth's use of educational positions

A second influence of Barth's experience in Swiss-German education was his use of educational positions as a communication channel. Barth's communicology was shaped by his academic environment. While his initial success came as an obscure Swiss pastor, throughout his life (he died on December 10, 1968, at the age of eighty-two), Barth's work centered in the university. When Romerbrief's dramatic success resulted in his call to a university

post,[6] a marked change followed in his communication: Barth shifted from the role of a Kierkegaardian, existentially-oriented critic to a much more systematic approach.[7] His new constructive emphasis included analysis of his presuppositions and methods with a definite sense of responsibility to integrate his teaching, even with its sharp criticisms and reinterpretations, into the existing structure of theological thought.

The shift from pastor to professor was pivotal, as Barth found the university calling for a very different kind of communication than the pastorate. After World War II, Barth was much in demand as a speaker to aid in German reconstruction. Briefly, he was torn between the possibility of a popular speaking career and the requirements of his academic work and constructive theology, then underway for more than a decade. He chose to devote himself to the latter, while continuing some public speaking, even if, as in later years, this was primarily to inmates at Basel prison.[8]

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[6]Barth taught successively at the universities of Gottingen, Munster, and Bonn in Germany, at Basel, Switzerland, again at Bonn, and finally at Basel.

[7]This shift was relative, not complete. Barth always retained some existential emphasis in content although his method of exposition became more systematic.

[8]Barth lectured occasionally in European conferences throughout his career but apparently turned down far more speaking invitations there and internationally than he accepted. Late in his career, in 1962, Barth traveled briefly as a lecturer and delivered a series of addresses at the University of Chicago and Princeton Theological Seminary, later published as a synopsis of his basic thought. See Barth, Evangelical Theology.

The Dogmatics, with its great architectonic demands, remained his lifetime work. Consequently, Barth's thought was necessarily channeled academically to deal directly with problems of epistemology and communication which received only indirect attention in his early days as a pastor.

Barth's use of educational positions was important, then, in redirecting his thought, changing his mode of communication from a primarily existential to a constructive orientation, reshaping his style, and directing his attention to similar yet qualitatively different issues than he faced as a pastor. As with Luther, the great energy Barth invested in his teaching and research became the driving force expressed in his lectures, dialogues, articles, books, public addresses, and, above all, in the Dogmatics. The stimulus of the academic environment of Swiss-German theology, with the demands of its thorough scientific-critical scholarship, became the nucleus of his communicative efforts.

Barth's "scientific-critical" attitude

A third influence of Barth's education upon his life, work, and concepts of theology and communication was the development by Swiss-German education of his "scientific-critical" attitude. Wilhelm Pauck explains the influence of German education upon the scientific-critical attitude of its theologians:

> German theology has held a peculiar place in public life. Unlike the usual American practice the theological faculties

> have always been members of the universities. They have been engaged in their research under full loyalty to the scientific principles of investigation as these are generally observed in the institutions of higher learning. This loyalty and freedom accounts for the advances made by German Protestant theology. . . .
>
> Generally speaking, German theology is the most academic of all. It has become extraordinarily learned, both in its critical-historical and constructive-philosophical aspects. For this reason it has always been most sensitive to the changes and movements in the scientific and philosophical fields.[9]

Barth received much of his education in Germany, taught there for a considerable period, and developed his "scientific-critical" attitude within this intellectual tradition. Characteristics of this "scientific-critical" attitude Barth developed were: fidelity of attention to a specific object of inquiry, pursuit of knowledge according to a responsible epistemological path, application of scientific canons of thought with accompanying rigor of investigation, integration of knowledge with previous research, and accuracy of reporting. These elements characterized Barth's writing and underwrote the claim he made that his theology was scientific. This conception was succinctly expressed by Barth: "I propose that by science we understand an attempt at comprehension and exposition, at investigation and instruction, which is related to a definite object and sphere of activity." Stated somewhat more particularly: ". . . Christian dogmatics is an attempt--an

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[9]Wilhelm Pauck, Karl Barth: Prophet of a New Christianity? (New York: Harper & Bros., Publishers, 1931), p. 11-12.

attempt to understand and an attempt to expound, an attempt to see, to hear and to state definite facts, to survey and co-ordinate these facts, to present them in the form of a doctrine."[10] For the purpose of considering his "scientific-critical" attitude, then, it can be stated that what Barth means by science at least involves elements of historical-critical research.

In summary, several factors in Barth's "rhetorical situation" conditioned his thought, language, and/or contributed to a philosophy of communication: (1) his immediate theological environment, which contributed to the scope, variety, openness, independence, and balance of his thought, as exemplified in his concept of theology as "faith seeking understanding"; (2) the influence of his Swiss-German academic environment, including his use of university positions as a communication channel, involving redirection of his communication as he shifted from a primarily existential to a systematic orientation; (3) the stimulus provided by these positions which enabled Barth to invest his rigorous and energetic teaching and research into publishable lectures, dialogues, articles, books, public addresses, and, above all, the Dogmatics; and (4) the development by Barth's Swiss-German education of his "scientific-critical" attitude, including elements which influenced

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[10]Karl Barth, Dogmatics in Outline (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1959), p. 9.

his communicological thought.

Implications of Barth's "Scientific-Critical" Attitude

This section analyzes Barth's "scientific-critical" attitude, projecting contributions to a theory of invention, or concepts and methods which guide the production and judgment of discourse.[11] Four aspects of Barth's "scientific-critical" attitude grounded in his situation and development are examined: (1) his concept of fidelity to the object of thought and language, (2) his experimental attitude toward language, (3) his self-criticism and critical discontent, and (4) his view toward argumentation.

Fidelity to object

The central movement in Barth's theology and a primary element in his epistemology and communicology appears to be his concept of fidelity to the object of inquiry. This concept appears throughout Barth's thought and, as his arguments suggest, it guided his production and evaluation of discourse. This principle is examined in its impact upon three areas of his thought: (1) his ideas regarding the nature of scientific activity, (2) his

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[11]The preceding section indicated the influence of Swiss-German education in the development of Barth's "scientific-critical" attitude and provided a definition of his concept of theology as a critical science. The present section elaborates particular elements within this attitude as they contribute to a philosophy of communication.

conceptualization of rationality, and (3) his position on the goal of language.

Scientific activity

Barth's conceptualization of the nature of scientific activity was conditioned by his recognition of the importance of strict fidelity to the object of inquiry. As he conceived it, the essence of science is the investigation of a specific object within a particular sphere of activity.[12] The unique object or objects of an inquiry--its given datum and/or data--provide definiteness, substantive content, and direction for that inquiry. To attend to this special object or these objects with the appropriate attitudes, presuppositions, and methods, is to proceed scientifically; to deviate therefrom is to proceed unscientifically.

Barth's thought concerning the crucial importance of fidelity to the object in scientific inquiry is very similar to Francis Bacon's. Bacon held that "our minds are full of 'idols' (false notions or erroneous modes of thinking)" and that we must rid ourselves of these, suspending a priori judgments and opening our

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[12]Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, p. 9. Barth defines an object as "something posited in its own being by another." Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:194. In Barth's discussions the objects of discourse and inquiry are potentially limitless; they include man, God (both of whom are also regarded as subjects), documents, as the Bible, language, which is a special object of theological inquiry, and any other posited existant of the universe.

thought to the object of inquiry to let it speak to us.[13] Bacon argued that "all depends on never letting the eyes of our mind stray from the things themselves, so that it may receive its images plainly."[14] Similarly, Barth held that persistent attention to the object of inquiry determines the validity of scientific theology. "The place of theology," he wrote, ". . . will be determined by the impetus which it receives from within its own domain and from its own object."[15] Barth stressed, as did Bacon, the critical importance of attending to and "receiving" from the special object of inquiry. Barth challenged the theological world as Bacon did the scientific, with a new stress upon the importance of looking phenomenologically at the special object of inquiry. Such an emphasis was responsible for an epistemological revolution in scientific thought under the stimulus of Bacon and of theological thought under Barth.

First, fidelity to the object provides definiteness to scientific inquiry. Barth says, "If theology lets itself be called and calls itself a 'science,' it thereby declares that . . .

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[13]Thomas F. Torrance, Theological Science (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 72, quoting Novum Organum, I. xxiii et seq., xxxix et seq.; II. xv et seq.; De Augmentis Scientarium, V. iv; Valerius Terminus, 15f.

[14]Ibid., p. 74, quoting Distributio Operis; Cogitata et Visa (Works, iii, 611).

[15]Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 16.

like all other so-called sciences, it is a human effort after a definite object of knowledge. . . ."[16] A science without an actual datum or data would be a pseudo-science; such an activity might be mythical or poetical, but true science presupposes the existence of a given object or objects.[17] Such an object becomes the focal point of inquiry within a field of knowledge, ordering thought around itself and prescribing the kinds of activity appropriate to its nature.

Second, fidelity to the object provides substantive content for scientific inquiry. This derives from the phenomenal nature of objects: each object presents its own nature, order, stimulus, and process. To observe, experiment with, or encounter the object affords opportunity for substantive discovery. From the observation and experimental interaction of the theologian and theological community with the object, a record of revelation and witness to revelation arises. This involves not a single theologian but a community of theological inquiry, for science, Barth recognizes, requires collective investigation, interaction, and experience

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[16] Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:7.

[17] Barth emphasizes this presupposition of the definiteness and existence of the supreme object of theology when he says that "the dominant presupposition of its thought and speech is God's own proof of his existence and sovereignty" and that "its object . . . God Himself--is the law which must be the continual starting point of theology." Barth, Evangelical Theology, pp. 8, 16.

related to a special object.[18] The substantive content of theology is thus manifested and generated within the theological circle of experience and inquiry related to this object.

Third, fidelity to the object provides direction for scientific inquiry. The object is not static; it is manifested progressively and in different forms. For example, the object of theology is to be sought in various forms, as in Barth's concept of the Word of God in its three basic modes: as revealed, as written, and as preached.[19] Each form of the object and each special object of inquiry requires varied approaches, presuppositions, and responses. Barth sees each object which man encounters as a kind of "summons" or "claim" which demands a response:

> It can be said of every object in the natural and historical world that it contains and expresses a command to the extent that in its existence and essence it demands our attention, observation, consideration, investigation and understanding--purely for its own sake, because in its special existence and mode of existence it is our object, i.e., it confronts us, and as such asks us a question--perhaps many questions--which await our answer, i.e., our cognition, recognition and acknowledgment of it in its special existence and essence.[20]

The object of inquiry, then, by its special demands, calls the observer to decision, interrogating him, calling for commitment, action, and ultimately movement in its direction. Fidelity to the

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[18] Barth, Dogmatics in Outline, p. 9.

[19] Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:98-124, 136.

[20] Barth, Doctrine of God, 2/2:583-585.

object, becomes, as Barth says, "a way,"[21] that is, the object, by the claim of its special characteristics, dictates, in true scientific activity, the unfolding process which will elucidate its nature.

This claim exerted by objects provides pivotal direction for scientific inquiry. Barth makes this point at the very beginning of Evangelical Theology:

> Theology is one among those human undertakings traditionally described as "sciences." Not only the natural sciences are "sciences." Humanistic sciences also seek to apprehend a specific object and its environment in the manner directed by the phenomenon itself; they seek to understand it on its own terms and to speak of it along with all the implications of its existence.[22]

In the case of theology, the direction provided by the special object is decisive for its methodology. Barth consequently rejects an "arbitrarily chosen basic view" for theology. Although recognizing that presuppositions accompany any inquiry, he insists that in genuine scientific investigation such conceptions "must not usurp the position of the object. . . ." Instead, he contends, "the choice of dogmatic method can be made only with the intention of placing human thinking and speaking on the path of total surrender to the controlling power of its object. . . ."[23]

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[21] Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:856.

[22] Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 3.

[23] Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:866-867.

The implications of this decision are momentous:

> . . . this means that from the human point of view the position which in a system is occupied by the fundamental principle of interpretation can only remain basically open in Church dogmatics, like the opening in the centre of a wheel. It cannot be occupied even hypothetically or provisionally by any a priori decisions. It is ready to receive those decisions with which the object will urgently confront human thinking and speaking. It is ready for new insights which no former store of knowledge can really confront on equal terms or finally withstand. Essentially dogmatic method consists in this openness to receive new truth, and only in this. It consists in unceasing and ready vigilance to see that the object is able to speak for itself, and that its effect on human thinking and speaking is not disturbed. . . . Therefore it presupposes the operation of the object itself. . . .[24]

This openness in method based upon fidelity to the object of inquiry--upon receptivity to its movements and changes--was determinative for the direction of Barth's theology. With such a view, the process of invention--the utilization of concepts and methods guiding the production and evaluation of discourse--can remain open and progressive. With such a view, no central a priori concept is likely to control and perhaps ultimately stultify thought. For this reason, Barth's thought, now rendered from the standpoint of his own production, must remain open and alive to continual interpretation and reinterpretation. Whereas many philosophical and theological systems eventually stagnate and become outdated as their central, controlling presupposition is exhausted, in Barth's case, taking his thought and method on its own terms, an openness

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[24] Ibid.

for new interpretation must always remain. Even Barth himself and his thought as an object of inquiry offers ongoing and varied direction for its observers.

Rationality

A second area of Barth's thought conditioned by his concept of fidelity to the object of inquiry was his conceptualization of rationality. Barth's concept of theology as a rational activity involved the notion that "theology is a logia, logic, or language bound to the theos, which both makes it possible and also determines it."[25] Its rationality derives from its object. This identification of reason with adherence and appropriate response to the object of reflection was a significant part of Barth's concept of rationality. In interpreting Anselm's concept of ratio, or reason, Barth, who closely identified his thought with Anselm's,[26]

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[25]Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 16.

[26]Barth acknowledged Anselm's direct influence upon his thought. In the preface to the second edition of Fides Quaerens Intellectum, he stated concerning this pivotal commentary of 1931: "So far as I was concerned, after finishing this book I went straight into my Church Dogmatics and it has kept me occupied ever since. . . ." Barth noted that, at that time, few commentators "realized how much it has influenced me or been absorbed into my own line of thinking. Most of them have completely failed to see that in this book on Anselm I am working with a vital key, if not the key, to an understanding of that whole process of thought that has impressed me more and more in my Church Dogmatics as the only one proper to theology." Barth, Anselm, p. 11. An understanding of Barth's interpretation of Anselm, particularly at the crucial point of his concept of fidelity to the object of inquiry, is necessary for the comprehension of principles of invention and communication in Barth.

stated that "the right use of the human ratio is determined primarily by its object. . . ."[27] Barth's interpretation strongly emphasizes that "ontic rationality precedes noetic,"[28] that is, the given object is prior to the event of knowing. Ontology precedes epistemology. Rationality, therefore, is, at least in significant part, conformity to the object of reflection; it is appropriate behavior in terms of the particular object of thought.

Barth and Anselm speak of rationality in various senses and contexts.[29] In discussing Anselm's concept of ratio, Barth writes: "Among the many possible meanings of ratio in an author who continually employs the concept subjectively and objectively . . .

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[27] Barth, Anselm, p. 46.

[28] Ibid., p. 50.

[29] For example, Barth sees in Anselm three main uses of ratio: "the primary capacity of dealing with experience, of formulating conceptions and judgments;" "the ratio of the words and acts of God . . . their necessity and possibility;" and "a third and ultimate ratio . . . that is with the divine Word consubstantial with the Father." Barth stresses the objective ratio in Anselm and finds "only one passage in Anselm where the human side of ratio is emphasized and therefore its contrast to the objective ratio to a certain extent made prominent." Barth, Anselm, pp. 44-45. In Evangelical Theology, Barth briefly speaks of "reason" as "the capacity for perception, judgment, and language common to believers as well as to all men," identifying this as one of the "subordinate presuppositions with which evangelical theology works." Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 7. In the Dogmatics, Barth refers to rationality as "meaningful order" and relates its meaning to recognition, receptivity, action, and encounter with the Logos as the ground of rationality. Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:419-426.

the one that is most highly recommended as a general guide is conformity to law."[30] Barth's conceptualization of law in the context of rationality seems to involve recognition and proper response to the inherent order of phenomena. This is consistent with his view of man as a "'rational being' (Vernunftwesen)." Barth uses this term comprehensively, identifying it with the Latin ratio and Greek logos. In an important anthropological discussion in which man is considered as the special object of theological knowledge,[31] he writes:

> . . . we understand by it a "meaningful order," so that when we say that man is a rational being, what we mean is that it is proper to his nature to be in rational order. . . . That man is a rational being we also understand as an event. . . . Man lives as man in a meaningful order. He recognises it and subjects himself to it. He himself establishes and observes it. He is man as it is valid; and he makes use of its validity in human perception and activity. As this happens, i.e., as he himself brings it about, he is a rational being.[32]

Rationality, then, is ordered activity according to the law of an object's being.

Barth's concept of reason provides a solid foundation for invention, correlating objectivity and subjectivity in a purposeful order. By emphasizing rationality as conformity to law, i.e.,

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[30] Barth, Anselm, p. 49.

[31] Barth identifies man as "the central object of the theological doctrine of creation." Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:3.

[32] Ibid., 3/2:419.

as adherence to the order and process of an object's being, a scientific orientation may be given to the production and evaluation of discourse. Significant potential thus resides in Barth's concept of rationality for a modern theory of invention. His scientific concept of reason contributes to a twentieth-century theory of rhetoric. This contribution, grounded in Barth's notion of fidelity to the object of inquiry, the primary conditioning factor in his concept of rationality, contains the following elements observed in the preceding discussion: (1) that definiteness, substantive content, and direction are provided for discourse by fidelity to a specific object of inquiry; (2) that scientific inventional judgments must be based upon observation of the laws and characteristic actions of an object's being; (3) that a priori judgments need suspension in order that, as Bacon and Barth agree, proper, inductively-formed conclusions may be drawn; (4) that collective experience and experimentation with respect to an object is required for sound inventional judgments; that individual judgments must contribute within a community of scholarship, research, and/or experience; (5) that because of the uniqueness and vitality of most objects, a variety of approaches and methods of analysis are required; (6) that fidelity to an object requires continual openness to its movements; that, consequently, room must always remain for changed perceptions and new interpretations of any

object; (7) that fidelity to the object provides an objective starting point and boundaries for rational and scientific thought and discourse; and (8) that rationality is a continuing, active process and event: a dynamic response of a knower to a thing known.

The goal of language

A third area of Barth's thought conditioned by his concept of fidelity to the object of inquiry was his view that such fidelity determines the goal of language. Barth held that "the goal of thought and language must be determined entirely by the unique object in question."[33] This conclusion follows primarily from the relation of scientific inquiry and rationality to a special object of inquiry, from the demands of the nature of such inquiry and from that of its own inherent order. Essentially, the demand is phenomenological: the special object of inquiry requires thought and language which accurately represent its unique characteristics. As in modern semantics, language, as Barth conceived it, must scientifically and rationally represent the realities to which it refers, although its limitation in representing these objects must be clearly recognized. Therefore, the goal of language must be to adequately apprehend and to speak faithfully of the object of thought and inquiry, following its movements and co-responding

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[33]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:125.

with it. Fidelity to object provides a crucial orientation for language. The special object may be irreplaceable. Particularly is this true in Barth's theology: the object is original, unique, and authoritative. The object is a kind of telos, an ultimate end, turning point, and boundary. No substitute will serve in the object's place: it must be given its archetypal position as the central model, foundation, reference point, and goal of thought and language.

In summary, the central movement in Barth's theology and in his epistemology and communicology, appears to be his concept of fidelity to the object of inquiry. This concept was examined in its impact upon three areas of his thought: the nature of scientific activity, the concept of rationality, and his position on the goal of language.

Barth's experimental attitude toward language

A second element of Barth's "scientific-critical" attitude, exhibited in his development and contributing to a theory of invention, was his experimental attitude toward language. This attitude was a direct consequence of Barth's concept of fidelity to the object. Concerning the theologian's attitude toward thought and language, Barth said: "It is summoned and commissioned by its object for a sight, thought, and speech that are open and flexible

on all sides. It is unconditionally bound to its object alone." Thus, "it must inquire into the logic, dialectic, and rhetoric that stem from its object, the divine Logos."[34] A dual "summons" is given for language which is faithful and flexible in view of its object. Fidelity is required if language represents its object; flexibility is required if it responds to the object and situation in which it arises.

Barth's experimental attitude toward language contributes in three significant ways to a theory of invention. First, Barth held that the teaching of any discipline, particularly theology, is not to be received or communicated as a static body of theory but requires continual testing of ideas within the boundaries of the discipline (within the limits of revelation in Christian theology) and the adaptation and testing of language. He held that "as a theological discipline, dogmatics is the scientific test to which the Christian Church puts herself regarding the language about God which is peculiar to her."[35] Such testing inheres in theology as a "logia, logic, or language bound to the theos."[36] If such an obligatory relation to the object of inquiry is accepted, then it follows that testing the fidelity of language to this object is

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[34]Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 91.

[35]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:1.

[36]Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 16.

required. Since language is a response to objects, the ontology of these objects must precede and exert a controlling influence over the language which is evoked by them; language must be tested against its objects and thus must remain experimental. Barth explains:

> According to the rule of Hilary, Non Sermoni res, sed rei sermo subjectus est (The thing is not subject to the word, but the word is subject to the thing). Or, as the same idea is expressed in Anselm's terms, the ratio and the necessitas of theological knowledge must be directed by the ratio and the necessitas of its object.[37]

Thus, "language about God has the proper content, when it conforms to the essence of the Church, i.e., to Jesus Christ."[38] This involves application of the various forms of revelation: the Logos as revealed, the written Word of God, and the Word of God as preached. But the conformity of language to its object is seen indirectly: the language which seeks to interpret the conformity of given discourse with its object "is itself in need of criticism and revision, of repeated and ever closer re-testing."[39] The language of critical science itself becomes a further "object of, fresh human effort."[40] Criticism itself needs criticism.

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[37]Ibid., p. 90.

[38]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:11.

[39]Ibid., 1/1:14.

[40]Ibid., 1/1:15.

Consequently, the results of earlier inquiries within a discipline, and those of the present as well, are never final. Therefore, the task and language of dogmatics as a critical science can never be "merely the combination, repetition, and transcription of a number of already present 'truths of revelation,' once for all expressed and authentically defined as to wording and meaning."[41] Received concepts and language must be investigated anew; the fidelity of contemporary language to original and current meanings must be re-explored.[42] Language must be tested and retested to validate its fidelity to its objects.

Second, Barth held that language must be regarded as in process, as fluid, mobile, tentative, and always subject to revision; that language must reflect movement, change, energy, and life. Barth believed that human language behavior reflects man's state of knowledge at a given time. Consequently, language must be regarded as experimental and subject to revision. This experimental attitude toward language was exhibited as early as September 4, 1914, when Barth wrote his life-long colleague, Swiss pastor Eduard Thurneysen: "Here are two sermons from me. . . . You will look at them not as though they were finished products but only as

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[41]Ibid.

[42]Karl Barth, The Heidelberg Catechism for Today, trans. by Shirley C. Guthrie, Jr. (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1964), p. 19.

experiments. We are really all of us experimenting now, each in his own way and every Sunday in a different way, in order to become to some degree masters of the limitless problem. . . ."[43]

This process and experimental view of language entailed use of new approaches, emphases, and symbolic variety from week to week in Barth's preaching. This experimentation was quite effective, as Barth's sermons and lectures commanded unusual attention from his early career. Barth's language, especially in his early sermons and lectures, was marked by sharp images and contrasts, by a prophetic tenor and sense of urgency and crisis. It was a language suited to the mood and aftermath of World War I. As a professor, Barth's language moved in new directions and, throughout his career, he experimented with new language. This experimentation is evident, for example, in the great amount of revision Barth made of his own work as in Romerbrief's six editions; in the Christian Dogmatics of 1927, predecessor to the Church Dogmatics; and in his published lectures and sermons. Barth's theology was often described as "a bird in flight"; his formulations reflected movement, change, energy, and life. Barth regarded the language of theology and proclamation as a living response to a living object, and as an ongoing response to an ever-new revelation. Part of

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[43]Karl Barth and Eduard Thurneysen, Revolutionary Theology in the Making: Barth-Thurneysen Correspondence, 1914-1925, trans. by James D. Smart (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1964), p. 26.

theology's purpose, as Barth conceived it, is to trace the work of God "in the history of his deeds." This impetus does not derive from its own efforts, but from that of its object. In recounting this history theology employs "human perceptions, concepts, and formulations of human language." But it does this properly only when it "follows" this movement of its object. "Therefore, in its perception, meditation, and discussion, theology must have the character of a living procession."[44]

Barth's process view of language and thought guided his production and evaluation of discourse. Barth held that "there can be no completed work. All human achievements are no more than prolegomena; and this is especially the case in the field of theology."[45] Barth's process orientation greatly influenced his sermons, lectures, and writing; it meant that he regarded his rhetorical productions as ongoing, dynamic, and evolving. Barth confessed that he did not fully know the specific direction that each volume of the Dogmatics would take, even though its overall plan was laid early in his career, by 1932. He wrote for more than thirty years on this architectonic work, yet it was never completed; the last

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[44]Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 9.

[45]Karl Barth, The Epistle to the Romans, 6th ed., trans. by Edwyn C. Hoskyns (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), pp. 2-3.

volume is called a "Fragment."[46] Nowhere in Barth is this process orientation, with its great impact upon invention and language, more evident than in his preface to the third edition of Romans:

> A time may come when it will be necessary for me once again to rewrite the whole. I hardly know whether I ought to fear or to desire this. Our modern life is subject to strange and rapid changes. Whether this is a symptom of decay, or whether it is a sign that we are moving towards momentous spiritual decisions, who can say? At all events, the situation alters from day to day, conference succeeds conference, men instruct and are instructed, a man says something, and then, finding it echoed in the mouths of others, fears to say it again lest its meaning be altogether lost in the noise of its echo, and yet, side by side with all this dangerous applause, fresh, valuable criticism makes itself heard, and requires most careful consideration. "We can never plunge a second time into the same river, for now it narrows, now it broadens out, but always it flows on and on." How then can such a living and responsible undertaking as a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans ever remain stationary?[47]

It appears, then, that a process orientation to language and responsiveness to changing situations was evident in Barth and that this viewpoint was basic to his inventional theory.

Third, Barth held that the theologian is free to use various terminologies but is not bound to them; that language is free in its concepts and speech so long as it maintains fidelity to its special

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[46]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/4. Perhaps prophetically, several years before his death, Barth wrote: "With every step that the theologian ventures, he has occasion to comprehend once more and unambiguously the fragmentary character of his questions and answers, his research and speech, his discoveries and formulations." Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 150.

[47]Barth, Epistle to the Romans, pp. 15-16.

object. The issue here is recognition of the sources of both content and form. Barth explains that "theological speech is taught its content by exegesis and dogmatics, and it is given its form through the experiences of whatever psychology, sociology, or linguistics may be most trustworthy at a given moment." Thus, the theologian simultaneously employs sacred and secular terminologies. The reason for this is that theological speech "must point to the Word that goes forth from God and goes to man."[48] Therefore, both kinds of language are indispensable and can be mutually supportive, for one cannot be received without the other.

Barth held that all human languages are potentially usable and lawful for the theologian; his ultimate criterion, however, for their usability must be whether they can be used in ways appropriate to the special object of inquiry. Barth claims that "as a human science, theology constantly and universally employs the viewpoints, concepts, images, and linguistic media that have been handed down or have newly arisen in its time and situation." Theology shares this utilization of current languages with other sciences. But Barth warns that it must not allow itself to be bound to the laws of any of them. It must follow the law of its own being and object. Thus, theology as a "free science . . . preserves its freedom by making use of every human capacity for

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[48]Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 183.

perception, judgment, and speech, without being bound to any presupposed epistemology."[49]

Barth believed in the renewal of language; that is, that terms come into being to meet the needs of a particular situation, and when that situation changes so must the language. He thus emphasized conceptual and terminological freedom for the theologian. He warned against the danger of becoming bound for too long to any terminology, of permitting "certain ruts to appear, ruts in which our thoughts run and in so doing acquire a dead weight which in theology they must never have." Barth noted that some of his students complained that "I no longer used the language of the 'Epistle to the Romans.'" Barth's response was:

> On the contrary, you should be thankful that I no longer burden you with "void" (Hohlraum) and "deathline" (Todeslinie)! That served its day. To-day it would be confusing and wearisome if I were to continue with it. I profoundly hope that in five or ten years I shall be able to speak yet another language than I do to-day, and that then also I shall be compelled to speak it. . . .[50]

Barth stressed he was then "at liberty" to use Kantian-Platonic concepts and language but that "if I were to be told to-day that I had to use them, I should say with decision, No."[51] He urged that

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[49]Ibid., pp. 90-92.

[50]Karl Barth, Credo, trans. by J. S. McNab (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1962), p. 185.

[51]Ibid.

terminologies must change with changed situations, that the "language-game" of a community must be renewed in its concepts and vocabulary in the light of evolving needs and conditions.

In summary, Barth's experimental attitude toward language resulted from his concept of fidelity to the object of inquiry. This experimental attitude contributes at least the following elements to a theory of invention: First, the teaching of any discipline, particularly theology, is not to be received or communicated as a static body of theory but involves continual testing of ideas within the boundaries of the discipline and the adaptation and testing of language. Second, language must be regarded as in process, as fluid, mobile, tentative, and always subject to revision; linguistic formulations must be kept open and developing; language must reflect movement, change, energy, and life. Third, the theologian is free to use various terminologies but is not bound to them; language is free in its concepts and speech so long as it maintains fidelity to its special object.

Barth's self-criticism and critical discontent

A third element of Barth's "scientific-critical" attitude contributing to a theory of invention was his self-criticism and critical discontent. Several manifestations of this orientation are observed: (1) his determination to build a comprehensive and

durable theoretical and architectonic structure for his theology, demonstrated in the comprehensiveness and concentration of his thought, (2) his willingness to re-examine his assumptions and thoroughly recast his communications in the light of criticism, and (3) his recognition of the importance of provocative and relentless questioning in order to remove subjective hindrances to objective reality and to see each object of knowledge from different perspectives.

Barth's self-criticism and critical discontent was first exhibited in the extraordinary comprehensiveness and concentration of his thought, for example, in his determination to pursue "renewed philosophical and theological studies."[52] He wrote Thurneysen:

> The monologue with myself and the little bit of dialogue with the congregation that I happen to have, and also our common discussions--profitable as they are--do not satisfy me in the long run. The area must be widened and deepened from which I draw resources for inner concentration and strengthening and upon which I would gladly rely in working and speaking. . . .[53]

This critical discontent was exhibited not only in Barth's attitude toward his sermons and writings but in his unwillingness as a professor and theologian to content himself with lectures,

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[52]Barth and Thurneysen, Revolutionary Theology in the Making, p. 37.

[53]Ibid.

courses, or books which lacked completeness. Barth lectured from fully written manuscripts sometimes completed scarcely before the beginning of a particular class session. He noted that "more than once what I presented at 7 a.m. was not ready until between 3 and 5 a.m."[54] He was determined not to offer a course unless he had comprehensively investigated the subject. Occasionally he deferred to present some courses (as he did some lectures and books) until he could meet his own exacting demands for thorough scientific and critical analysis. The fruitfulness of Barth's comprehensiveness and concentration is evidenced by the international success of his teaching, by his great productivity in writing, by the many students who flocked to Basel to pursue graduate theological studies under his direction, by the many scholarly studies which have analyzed his thought, and by the continuing interest of his work.

Barth's self-criticism and critical discontent was further manifested in the independence of his thought, which led to his determination to build a comprehensive and durable theoretical structure for his theology. He wrote: ". . . . I say to myself that such a daring position as we so greatly desire to establish must have a solid foundation simply for the sake of order, and that is not to be achieved by an occasional bit of metaphysical

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[54]Bowden, Karl Barth, p. 48.

construction sandwiched between administration and teaching."[55] Barth expressed this determination to build a solid theoretical structure as a pastor; he continued the effort as a teacher. Young professor Barth wrote:

> And at the same time, apart from the daily requirements, I have to build my own scholarly structure, achieve a "thorough mastery" as they say, in something. How is one to do that? Will they ever be able to say that of me?" Or shall I always be this wandering gypsy among all the honorable scholars by whom I am surrounded, one who has only a couple of leaky kettles to call his own and in compensation occasionally sets a house on fire? . . .[56]

By this time (December 11, 1921), Romans had landed on the European theological scene with its bombshell effect. Barth secured his first professorship as a result. His early success, with its revolutionary impact, stimulated him to seek broader and deeper foundations, a more comprehensive and durable theoretical and architectonic structure for his theology.

Barth's comprehensive and architectonic efforts were further evidenced by a lifelong survey of the literature of his discipline. He pursued vast reading through the entire philosophical and theological heritage at his disposal. He constantly explored sources and topic areas: for example, Kant, Schleiermacher, Kierkegaard, Anselm, Aquinas, Augustine, Luther; the scholastics, the

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[55]Barth and Thurneysen, Revolutionary Theology in the Making, p. 37.

[56]Ibid., pp. 79-80.

Reformation, Calvin; Hebrews, Romans; Doestoevsky, Schweitzer--entire regions surveyed in breadth and depth. Barth was in the process, early in his pastoral and professorial career, of completing a comprehensive survey of his entire philosophical-theological tradition. His survey involved careful analysis of the positions of major figures and grappling with questions raised by each. The vastness of this undertaking was at times almost overwhelming, especially since Barth aimed at great thoroughness in his current courses while striving tirelessly to advance his overall theoretical structure. An early letter by Barth expresses the tension produced by attempting to balance these concerns:

> I am not yet by any means as deep in Calvin as Eduard imagines, but rather I am still occupied with the scholastics whose essential ideas on all essential points, at least of dogmatics, I have now gathered together on some hundred cards as the one part of the foundation which I need urgently for the course on Calvin. The other part is Luther and Zwingli with whom for the time being I must make myself acquainted in the same way. . . . Oh! If only someone would give me time, time, time, to do everything properly, to read everything at my own tempo, to take it apart and put it together again.[57]

Out of this continual survey of the literature of his discipline, conducted "in order to get some kind of a picture concerning what really is to be done,"[58] Barth steadily located and wrestled with problems, principles, theses, and antitheses within

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[57]Ibid., p. 93.

[58]Ibid., p. 176.

this literature. For example, he listed several pages of theses and antitheses derived from a dialogue with another theologian, Hirsch, "after we had talked the day before yesterday from nine in the evening until four in the morning."[59] Barth constantly summarized and criticized lectures, sermons, articles, books, and discussions. Often he made parallel columns, comparing positions of theologians, including his own.[60] Barth's approach to this wealth of data which he uncovered was penetrating. He wrote Thurneysen: ". . . In the letter to the Romans I wrestle just now with the granite block of 3:20 ff. How much there is that is hidden in it! I will hardly discover and gather all of it in this first attempt."[61] To assimilate and conserve this voluminous data, Barth made detailed extracts from different sources, for example, Kant. These resumes were often an "improved new edition of old studies," an exercise Barth found "very refreshing." He also noted that "a copy-book with 'comments' is coming into being in which I summarize everything in my own language."[62] Later, he noted in connection with his study of the Reformation that "a voluminous card-index is coming into being in which everything of

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[59]Ibid., p. 83.

[60]Ibid., p. 31, 83.

[61]Ibid., p. 38.

[62]Ibid., pp. 37-38.

importance finds its place."[63]

Barth's self-criticism and critical discontent was first manifested, then, in his determination to build a comprehensive and durable theoretical and architectonic structure for his theology. Extending from this effort, a second manifestation of this attitude was a willingness to re-examine his assumptions and thoroughly recast his communications in the light of criticism. Early evidence of his desire for constructive criticism appears in the following request to Thurneysen for evaluation of a segment of Romerbrief:

> It has cost me ten days of concentrated labor, and I am happy that I have this couloir behind me. Look carefully, however, to see whether everything is in order, somewhat like the car-inspectors at the railway stations who tap each wheel with a long hammer to see whether there is not a crack in it! I am very happy about your remarks. Only do not hesitate to tell me if anything is wrong; it is easy in the heat of battle to overlook a crack that has appeared somewhere. I often ask myself if it will all have to be done again. . . .[64]

Barth not only received criticism from his close friend; he responded to others' criticism. Striking evidence of this attitude appears in the dramatic revisions of some of his major works, Romerbrief, the earlier Christian Dogmatics, recast as part of the Prolegomena to the Church Dogmatics; and in his articles for

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[63]Ibid., p. 81.

[64]Ibid., p. 57.

Christian Century, concerning the periods of his development, in which he explained "How I Changed My Mind."[65] Much of the interest, success, and provocativeness of Barth's theology may be traced to this willingness to reexamine and revise. Part of Barth's greatness was that he not only articulated telling criticisms of historical and contemporary theology but that he equally critized his own thought, submitted his work for critical judgment, and responded to such criticism. Barth learned from friends and protagonists alike.

A third manifestation of Barth's self-criticism and critical discontent was his skillfulness in posing provocative questions. Torrance observes that Barth's self-criticism is manifested in relentless questioning. Such questioning has an existential basis in theology:

> This questioning is forced upon us because face to face with God's Word we know ourselves to be questioned down to the very roots of our being, and therefore in response to the impact of the Word we are thrown back upon self-criticism, upon a . . . questioning and rethinking of all that we have and are and claim to know. Hence questioning is the movement in which we seek to clear away all the unreality with which we confront the objective Reality of God in his revelation, in order that we may let God's Truth declare itself to us positively and clearly.[66]

Barth's attitude toward questioning has a distinct bearing

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[65]Barth, How I Changed.

[66]Thomas F. Torrance, Karl Barth: An Introduction to His Early Theology, 1910-1931 (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1962), p. 19.

on his epistemology and communicology. Barth, like Tillich, employed questioning not simply for apologetic or persuasive effectiveness but because of noetic humility in view of the limitations of human knowledge. Barth asks thousands of questions in the Dogmatics in order to see each object of knowledge from different perspectives and to express its reality as objectively as possible. Barth's theology, while constituting a great systematic construction, was not a system in any closed or final sense but was a processive, inquiring response to the object, data, and situation of theology. Barth held that we not only question the objects, data, and situations in our environment, but that they question us. Hence, open-ended questioning and response to questioning is a necessary element in scientific investigation. Barth's success in pursuing significant questions was evidenced as early as January 31, 1922, when the young professor wrote: "The courier has just brought me the sensational news that I have received the D. Theol. from Munster on account of 'essential contributions to the deepening of the formulation of religious and theological questions.'"[67] Such an emphasis upon questioning was decidedly important in Barth's philosophy of communication and inventional theory.

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[67]Barth and Thurneysen, Revolutionary Theology in the Making, pp. 60-61.

Barth's view toward argumentation

The final aspect of Barth's "scientific-critical" attitude emerging from his situation and development is his view toward argumentation. Casalis, in analyzing the background of Barth's life, observes:

> From Basel . . . Barth received his critical clarity and his feeling for polemics. He illustrates perfectly the language of the Baselers, which is razor-sharp and rapid, with a penchant for irony and sharp repartee. The innumerable flashes of wit, the whimsy and the jokes that enliven his conversation, correspondence and teaching, all witness to this. For this reason he is both a remarkable teacher and a formidable speaker. The theological debates in which he has been involved have given him an opportunity to put these natural gifts, which he clearly regards as assets, to use. . . .[68]

Barth's view toward argumentation was manifested in numerous ways including: (1) his poignant personal dialogues, (2) his debates with colleagues, and (3) his arguing of theses in his constructive theology.

Although noted for his sympathetic listening attitude, Barth was straightforward in personal dialogue. His commitment to dialectic, to the clear exchange, clash, and cross-examination of ideas, as in debate, is evident throughout his communications. Records of his dialogues indicate a poignancy of expression which seldom left his position or that of a respondent in doubt. The following record illustrates this clash of ideas well:

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[68]Casalis, Portrait of Karl Barth, pp. 39-40.

> The next question (by an Englishman) claims that the address tears God apart into a Creator God and a Redeemer God. The charge is made that the first is in truth not a good God; for he has created man as an evil creature since we are compelled to flee from him. It urges further, that, in the law suit between God and man, man ought to be appreciated not merely as an object but as a subject. The Bible calls us not only servants but also friends of God.
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> Barth answers:--The objection which we have just heard is the exact antithesis of what I said this morning. The speaker would have done better not to introduce his objection with a word of acknowledgment and gratitude to follow it up with a "but." He ought to have said, You are wrong! For then he would have understood me. We should have squarely faced each other. But if a man feels obliged to add to his endorsement a small "but" and a tiny "it seems to me," he has understood nothing at all. My friends, let me tell you that in the many discussions which I have had in nigh unto twenty years, I have heard over and over, first a friendly assent and then a "but." A small back door was opened through which everything that was to be eliminated was invited in again. If we are to face each other squarely, you must not meet me with such a "Yes, but--"; you must answer with a complete and unequivocal No![69]

Barth's conviction was that if communication is to serve the ends of community and understanding an unambiguous exchange of views must occur. He believed that ideological reconciliation does not come by a retreat from the full force of divergent views but from direct confrontation complemented by sympathetic listening. The effectiveness of Barth's forthright argumentation is evident in his success in stimulating an international ecumenical dialogue, particularly between Roman Catholics and Protestants. Significantly, this dialogue was not achieved by offering insipid theological

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[69]Karl Barth, God in Action, trans. by E. G. Homrighausen and Karl J. Ernst (New York: Round Table Press, Inc., 1936), pp. 120-121.

compromises but by full and explicit presentation of views, often in direct conflict with other partners to the dialogue. Barth was convinced that genuine address to and exploration of the root issues of disagreement must occur if community among divided groups is attained.

Barth was as frank with his faculty colleagues as with public inquirers. The Barth-Thurneysen correspondence documents several disputes with fellow professors and some versus the entire theological faculty. Barth was not afraid to "swim against the stream" of current opinion. He manifested generally an ability to maintain good dialogue and relations with colleagues while engaging in lively debate with them on other occasions. Commenting on his interaction with an early faculty colleague, he wrote:

> Relations with Hirsch are really good. Lively battles alternate with appointments for further meetings but the feeling remains intimate and stimulating. It is hard enough for me to swallow his eccentricities, his Berlin ways and academic airs, his Wingolfisms, and all the other ingredients whatever their names, but my varied ingredients are no less difficult to him.[70]

On several occasions Barth tilted with the entire theological faculty when he felt an important principle was at stake. He engaged in some spirited debates with former teachers, notably church historian Adolf von Harnack and, throughout his career,

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[70]Barth and Thurneysen, Revolutionary Theology in the Making, pp. 99-100.

sharply distinguished his positions from relevant discussants in the field of his inquiry. He placed himself in clear distinction to great philosophical and theological figures of the past (e.g., Calvin, Luther, Aquinas) and carefully positioned himself with respect to his contemporaries (e.g., Brunner, Tillich, Bultmann). Such clear placing of his views--such lively engagement in dialogue, argumentation and debate with first-rate theological and philosophical figures--was an important key to Barth's inventional theory and appears to account for much of his great interest and influence.

Regarding Barth's use of argumentation, his systematic or constructive theology is strongly asserted and argued carefully. This is true for many reasons: examples are his bold statement of theses at the heads of chapters in his Dogmatics, his broad base of historical and contemporary documentation out of a vast dialogue and literature, his explicit analysis of positions, and his probing questions, along with all of the other characteristics of his "scientific-critical" attitude.

Summary

This chapter examined origins of a philosophy of communication in the work of Karl Barth. The central question addressed was: What principles of communication revealed in Barth's development contribute to a philosophy of communication? To answer this question the chapter first considered Barth's "rhetorical

situation" and, secondly, examined the implications of his "scientific-critical" attitude. A central theme emerged: the primary architectonic principle governing Barth's development, thought, and any philosophy of communication derived therefrom, appears to be a movement toward complete fidelity to the object of inquiry as determining the nature of scientific activity, rationality, and discourse.

Several factors in Barth's "rhetorical situation" contributed to his inventional theory and philosophy of communication: (1) his immediate theological environment, which contributed to the scope, openness, and independence of his thought, exemplified in his concept of "faith seeking understanding"; (2) the influence of his Swiss-German academic environment, including his use of university positions as a communication channel, involving redirection of his thought and style; (3) the stimulus of these positions which enabled Barth to invest his rigorous teaching and research into publications; and (4) the development by Barth's Swiss-German education of his "scientific-critical" attitude, including elements influencing his communicology.

In analyzing the implications of Barth's "scientific-critical" attitude which contribute to a theory of invention, four aspects of this attitude were elaborated: his concept of fidelity to the object of thought and language, his experimental attitude toward

language, his self-criticism and critical discontent, and his view toward argumentation. Barth's concept of fidelity to the object of inquiry was examined in three areas: (1) his understanding of the nature of scientific activity, (2) his concept of rationality, and (3) his position on the goal of language. Examination of these areas revealed that fidelity to the object can contribute to great openness in the process of invention. With such a view, no a priori concept is likely to control and perhaps stultify thought. This openness derives from the phenomenal nature of objects: each object presents its own nature, order, stimulus, and process. Observation, experimentation, or encounter with an object provides opportunity for inquiry, discovery of substantive content, and dynamic direction according to the process of the object. According to Barth and Anselm's interpretation of reason, rationality is primarily ordered activity according to the law of an object's being. The scientific element in this interpretation of rationality involves recognition and proper response to the inherent order of phenomena. Barth's scientific concept of reason may well contribute to a twentieth-century theory of invention. Eight elements of such a theory based on Barth's concept of reason were outlined. Further, the goal of language must be to adequately apprehend and speak faithfully of the object of inquiry.

Barth's experimental attitude toward language derives from

his concept of fidelity to the object. This experimental attitude contributes at least the following elements to a theory of invention: (1) that the teaching of any discipline is not to be received or communicated as a static body of theory but involves continual testing of ideas within the discipline and the adaptation and testing of language; (2) that language must be regarded as in process, as fluid, mobile, tentative, and always subject to revision; that linguistic formulations must be kept open and developing; that language must reflect movement, change, energy, and life; and (3) that the theologian is free to use various terminologies but is not bound to them; that language is free in its concepts and speech so long as it maintains fidelity to its special object. Barth thus believed in the renewal of language; i.e., that terms come into being to meet the needs of a particular situation but when that situation changes so must the language.

Barth's self-criticism and critical discontent contributed to a theory of invention in several ways: (1) his determination to build a comprehensive and durable theoretical and architectonic structure for his theology, demonstrated in the comprehensiveness and concentration of his thought, (2) his willingness to re-examine his assumptions and thoroughly recast his communications in the light of criticism, and (3) his recognition of the importance of provocative and relentless questioning in order to

remove subjective hindrances to objective reality and to see each object of knowledge from different perspectives.

Barth's view toward argumentation also contributed to a theory of invention in distinct ways: (1) the value of direct, dialectical confrontation of views in dialogue and debate, (2) the importance of clear placing and contradistinction of views with respect to first-rate historical and contemporary figures in a discipline, and (3) the value of a broad base of historical and contemporary documentation, the explicit analysis of positions, and the use of probing questions. If communication is to serve the ends of community and understanding, Barth believed, an unambiguous exchange of views must occur. Direct but sympathetic confrontation of ideas was a significant part of his inventional thought and contribution.

CHAPTER III

EXISTENTIAL COMMUNICATION AND DIALECTIC

This chapter examines some philosophical bases of Barth's communicology. The central question addressed is: How did Barth's conceptualization of existentialism and dialectic impact on his ideas about communication? Barth's ideas about communication derive from his theory of existence and find their motivation and necessity in the nature of reality and knowledge. Consequently, his view of existentialism and dialectic contributes to communication. Three philosophical bases for communication are examined: Barth's concepts of (1) existence, (2) knowledge, and (3) experience.[1]

Barth was strongly influenced by developments in existentialism and dialectic. Like Plato, who sharply criticized but constructively contributed to rhetoric, Barth criticized, used, and theorized about existentialism and dialectic. His attitudes toward existentialism and dialectic were themselves dialectical in

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[1]These concepts are not examined exhaustively as philosophical problems but are sketched in their consequences for communication.

that he asserted and denied the value of these "movements" and alternated his positions toward both.[2] For example, the early Barth was existentially oriented; in fact, he is acknowledged as a founder of modern dialectical theology. Beginning with the Dogmatics of 1932, however, Barth renounced existentialism as a basis for theology, although he did not reject its important instrumental use, and he criticized dialectics.[3] Despite these criticisms, the later Barth, after 1932, integrated a balanced conception of existential and dialectical notions, maintaining an equilibrium between objectivity and subjectivity while holding that the former ultimately determines the latter.[4] Barth drew from Kierkegaard, Hegel, and others in formulating his existential and dialectical views but established his own unique position. This chapter examines some implications of Barth's conceptualization of existential communication and dialectic.

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[2]Cf., for example, Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:ix, 21-22, 379, 387, 399, 429, 431, 462; Doctrine of Creation, 3/3:305; Ibid., 3/4:xii-xiii; Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:644, 741, 755, 757; Ibid., 4/2:8; Barth, Word of God and Man, pp. 206-212; Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 91.

[3]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:ix; Doctrine of Creation, 3/4:xii-xiii.

[4]Cf., for example, Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:141-142, 226.

Barth's Concept of Existence

Barth's view of existence is grounded in the object-subject relation.[5] This relation provides an inner motive and necessity for communication, grounding it in the structure of reality and knowledge. Reality in both its objective (phenomenal) and subjective (existential) aspects inherently communicates and summons communication. The phenomenal universe presents myriads of objects which confront us, claim our attention, energy, time, and demand interpretation, assimilation, ordering, and decision.[6] The ontic world provides stimuli demanding response. Being, therefore, is inherently interactional; existence is actualized in encounter with our phenomenal environment.[7] This order provides an objective framework for subjective response and conditions it. The recurrent meeting of object (thing known) and subject (knower) provides a basic ontological structure for interaction and thus for communication.

As a consequence of the object-subject relation, the structure of knowledge based on this relation necessitates a process of

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[5]Barth's position concerning this relation is stated generally here and is detailed in the following sections. Concerning man's determination by objects, cf. Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:214-216, 226; Doctrine of God, 2/2:583-584.

[6]Barth, Doctrine of God, 2/2:583-585.

[7]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:226.

communication. The object requires knowledge of the subject it confronts and this knowing in turn requires communication to other subjects. Barth says that "the world has its distinctive being. It belongs to this distinctiveness, however, that it is not merely in re but also in intellectu . . . it is being which is known and knows, is seen and sees, is apprehended and apprehends."[8] Essence--the nature of the universe--communicates through existence, the nature of individual being. World being is unitary. Universal being communicates through individual being: objective ontology expresses itself through subjective epistemology. Ontological reality "is being which is known, contemplated and apprehended by man, and therefore knows, contemplates and apprehends in man."[9] This relationship--the communication of essence through existence--is an ontological and epistemological foundation for communication. Since existence is grounded in and shaped by essence--i.e., in the phenomenological structure of the universe--it partakes of that structure. Barth says that it is as man "comes in contact with a definite external thing in a definite manner, he is what he is, he exists as a man, and not otherwise."[10] These interdependent structures of reality, the objective and subjective, with their

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[8]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:140.

[9]Ibid., p. 141.

[10]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:226.

interpenetrating movements, provide a dynamic structure for communication.

Three implications emerging from the object-subject relation merit further consideration: (1) the order of the object universe manifests itself even in defective human communication; (2) normativeness and individuality unite when communication combines the phenomenal and existential; and (3) a "rhythm of existence" or dialectic provides ontological movement for communication. These concepts are examined as they structure Barth's philosophy of communication.

Phenomenal-existential communication

First, an important implication of the object-subject relation is that the order of the object universe manifests itself even in defective human communication. Barth says of the "words" or communication of the phenomenal to and through the existential world that "the fact that they do not cease to be spoken and heard means that it can never be altogether without voice or reason, that even the worst communication does not completely fail to be communication and may perhaps become better."[11] Since humanity participates in the order of the phenomenal environment, its regularity and rationality are necessarily, if partially, manifested in human

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[11]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:141.

communication. The connection between the ontic and existential orders defends man against the chaos and entropy which might prevail if nature's order did not impel him toward rational and coherent existence. As a product of and element in this phenomenological order, humanity cannot altogether fail to reflect its regularity.[12] Barth says that the "intelligible cosmos" expresses itself through the "intelligent cosmos" in the form of "continuities," "constants," "models," and "orientations."[13] He says: "Declaring these, creaturely being displays its steadfastness; receiving them, it strengthens itself."[14] Barth thus grounds communication in the structure of reality and provides it with a cogent orientation and future in an ongoing world process.

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[12]Social sciences are based upon presuppositions like Barth's: that similarities exist between regularities of nature and those of human behavior, that the natural and humane processes of the universe share a common orderliness. What is perhaps unique about Barth is that he grounds elements of an existential philosophy of communication in this ontological regularity. He founds scientific and rational coherence in the unity of being, establishing communication in a singular, dynamic ontology.

[13]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:142. Communicologists have located models for speech and other forms of symbolic behavior in the spectrum of the phenomenal world, as in biological and physical processes, in operations of physics, and in communication systems of lower orders. Barth's communicology strengthens these efforts at their ontological base, recognizing the world of subjects and of physical models and processes in their inherent unity.

[14]Ibid.

Normativeness and individuality

Second, another implication of the object-subject relation is the normativeness and individuality derived when communication combines the phenomenological and existential. As the "intelligible cosmos" speaks through the "intelligent cosmos" a blend of objectivity and subjectivity occurs, uniting normative patterns and individual variations. Subjectivity is preserved within the framework of objective regularity. "The one order at stake is not just uniform but multiform. It does not exclude the many, the particular, the change, the alteration, the diversity."[15] Unlike Kierkegaard, Barth saw no ultimate disjunction between objective and subjective reality.[16] Kierkegaard seemed to elevate existence, or the experience of the knower, over essence, or the world of objective processes, fearing loss of individuality to philosophic or scientific norms. Conversely, Hegel, whom Kierkegaard persistently criticized, seemed to elevate essence over existence, absorbing individual experience in a total world process. Barth reconciles both positions. His emphasis in the object-subject relation was neither existence over essence (Kierkegaard) or essence over existence (Hegel) but essence through existence.[17]

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[15]Ibid.

[16]Cf. Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:438; 1/2:238-239.

[17]Cf. Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:142.

Hegel and Kierkegaard worked from subjective epistemological centers, one ethical, the other rational. Unlike these thinkers, Barth's focus is not upon self-contained ethical or logical processes independently considered, but upon these processes as united in objectivity. Unlike Hegel and Kierkegaard, Barth does not attempt to encompass reality within human cognition or within ethical decision-making; he rather sees the subject within a rational phenomenological order. Subjectivity is oriented by encounter with the object world. This encounter exerts normative influence within and through the individual. All participate in the laws, rhythms, and constants of the phenomenal world and hence blend normativeness and individuality in their speech and existence.

Grounding individual existence in the rational, phenomenological order does not suppress but strengthens subjectivity. Individuality develops within the objective-subjective encounter. The individual receives normativeness from the phenomenal order and his individuality contributes to this order. Man exists as he accepts the summons of the cosmos as "his cosmos and therefore a task set for his own life, not merely for his contemplation and apprehension, but for his choice and volition, his decisions and actions. . . ."[18] The intelligible cosmos requires ordering by the intelligent cosmos. "To put it dramatically," Barth says, "it

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[18]Ibid., pp. 147-148.

yearns and cries out to be humanised."[19] For Barth, the line between the natural and humanistic is thin; these elements in existence interfuse each other. Human freedom thus "counts as a cosmic element" and manifests itself in the unity of being.[20] The possibilities of the natural universe and those of the humanistic are mutually identified and actualized in their persistent encounter. The blend of these elements grounds communication in the very fabric of the universe. Thus, a communicator's subjective inputs are not elements alien to empirical reality, but unite with it, particularly when based upon awareness and responsiveness to objective regularity.[21] Communication, in blending normativeness and individuality, gains dynamic ontological status. In Barth's view, genuine communication can never be mere rhetoric in a pejorative sense. Speech can never lie at the surface of reality. On the contrary, speech becomes a profound means of expression for the innate order and processes of the universe and in so becoming, it blends the normative and individual.[22] Existential, essential, and empirical realities unite in genuine communication. No one element is elevated above another; all converge in expressing

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[19]Ibid., p. 148.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid., pp. 140-148.

[22]Ibid., pp. 141-142.

ontological power and movement through speech.

The "rhythm of existence"

Third, a final implication emerging from the object-subject relation is "a rhythm of existence" or dialectic which provides ontological movement for communication. Barth says that the "being for one another of the intelligible and the intelligent is not static but dynamic, yet dynamic in an orderly and not a disorderly way."[23] A distinct, manifold rhythm pervades the object-subject encounter. Existence manifests a repetition or cadence. Forms of existence emerge, characterized by recurrent cycles, processes, and patterns. "There is always speech and hearing, question and answer. There is always beginning, cessation and new beginning. There is constant discovery, concealment and rediscovery. There is continual coming and going. There is no becoming without perishing, but no perishing without new becoming."[24] Existence is characterized by reciprocal responses in rhythmic patterns and communication participates in this dialectic. Communication occurs as a life process and, like other organic functions, exhibits alternating rhythms. Barth says "no swing of the pendulum does not evoke and is not actually followed by its opposite."[25]

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[23]Ibid., p. 144.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid.; cf. Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/1:368, 378-379.

Applied to discourse, this rhythm of existence implies dialectic, a setting forth of ideas followed by counterbalancing, confrontation, and criticism of these in an ongoing process. Barth says that "no over-emphasis is not immediately emulated and corrected."[26] This counterpointing implies that in communication processes, as in other life processes, there are built-in correctives. Criticism in and of discourse is an inherent dialectical corrective. Barth regarded his early theology, as Kierkegaard did his, as corrective. He conceived of theology as a critical science and utilized dialectical confrontation in evolving his systematic views. As in nature the fittest survive through dialectical encounter of opposites: so communication, sharing ontological roots with other forms of existence, is purified and strengthened through confrontation and criticism.[27] The "rhythm of existence" in both its phenomenological and existential aspects provides ontological movement for communication. Barth thus recognizes critical process in the structure of reality and establishes communication in that process. If communication survives, it participates in this critical dialectic which tests its fitness.[28]

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[26]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:144.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Hegel influenced Barth's concept of dialectic or the "rhythm of existence." For Barth and Hegel, dialectic was more than critical methodology; it was ontology, an underlying movement in knowing and communication. Ontological regularity finds a crucial form in

Barth's Concepts of Knowledge and Experience

Barth's concepts of knowledge and experience correlate with his concept of existence, providing an important triad of bases for communication. In examining this correlation, this section defines and characterizes Barth's concepts of knowledge and experience. The following elements influencing communication emerge: (1) knowledge and experience are based on existence; (2) knowledge and experience require active personal participation; (3) knowledge and experience are processive; and (4) knowledge and experience are dialectical.

The objective basis of knowledge and experience

First, knowledge and experience are based on existence. Knowledge consists in acknowledging reality, or what is communicated by objects to subjects.[29] Knowledge results from a communication between essence and existence. Knowledge begins with recognition of objective existence.[30] Barth says that "man exists

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dialectic. Barth says concerning this dialectical ontology in Hegel: ". . . what makes this system a system . . . gives the order and regularity . . . is nothing but the rhythm of life itself, recognized as running through the fulness of history. This rhythm . . . is the regularity inherent in the system, its heart-beat, as it were. It is the famous dialectical method of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. . . ." Karl Barth, Protestant Thought: From Rousseau to Ritschl (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1959), p. 284.

[29]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:213-214.

[30]Ibid., p. 226.

not abstractly but concretely, i.e., in experiences, in determinations of his existence by objects, by something external distinct from himself."[31] Because of his basic empirical orientation, Barth rejects Cartesianism, or the "I-experience," as a primary basis for knowing reality.[32] Valid knowledge requires definite objects (things known) and subjects (knowers) interacting in definite situations. While according primacy to ontology--to the object-centered aspect of experience--Barth recognized the interdependency of the objective and subjective.[33] He says that "the ontic or objective element implies as its consequence the noetic or subjective established by it. Conversely, the noetic or subjective element implies as its presupposition the ontic or objective which establishes it."[34]

Barth recognized a "dialectic of object-subject," i.e., that objective forms require subjective apprehension.[35] He correlated

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[31]Ibid. Italics are mine.

[32]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:222-223. Italics are mine.

[33]Ibid., 1/2:238-239.

[34]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:215. Barth's objective emphasis was at least partly due to his desire to center theology primarily upon God as an entity, recognized as both object and subject, rather than focusing religious knowledge and experience primarily upon man. Cf. Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:20, 438.

[35]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:270; Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/2:302.

essence (objectivity) and existence (subjectivity).[36] His thinking was dialectical enough that he conceded that theology could be constructed from a subjective rather than objective orientation. While arguing that objectivity is fundamentally determinative, he recognized that "the human determinateness, the experience and attitude of the knowing subject might well be exalted into the criterion of theological knowledge."[37] While Barth chose not to do this, and while he strongly criticized some subjective orientations in theology, he blended the objective and subjective in mutual relatedness. This synthesis recognizes a dynamic ontological movement in communication, linking invention and discourse with the structures of existence, knowledge, and experience, and making communication responsible to these.

Personal participation

Second, knowledge and experience require active personal participation. Knowledge must become experiential, i.e., what is communicated by an object to a subject must become subjective reality, a property of the knower's existence, as well as an

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[36]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:215-216.

[37]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:20. Here, as often in this study, we are borrowing from Barth philosophical concepts which he grounded in a theological setting. In this procedure we are in agreement with both Barth and Kenneth Burke. Burke says that "words" have a purely "naturalistic, empirical reference" but have been adapted for theological use. Since theological language is borrowed, as Barth also emphasizes (for example, cf. Barth,

objective or phenomenological reality. Barth defined knowledge as follows: "By the knowledge of an object by men we understand the proof of their acquaintance with its reality in respect of its being there (or its existence) and in respect of its being thus and thus (or its nature)."[38] Several elements in this proof of personal participation emerge: (1) subjective proof of acquaintance with an object's existence and nature; (2) subjective determination by objective existence; (3) subjective coexistence with the object of knowledge; and (4) subjective witness to its content. The demand that knowledge must become experiential first means that subjective proof of acquaintance with an object's existence and nature is required. Barth says that "'proof of their acquaintance' implies that the reality of the object in question, its existence and its nature, now becomes, while true in itself, somehow and with some degree of clarity and definition also true for them."[39] Proof of acquaintance with an object involves assimilating meaning

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Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:735), one can legitimately reclaim terms and concepts developed theologically and re-employ them in their secular sense. As Burke says, "once a terminology has been developed for special theological purposes the order can become reversed. We can borrow back the terms from the borrower, again secularizing to varying degrees the originally secular terms. . . ." Burke, Rhetoric of Religion, p. 7.

[38]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:214. Italics are mine.

[39]Ibid.

from an object beyond acknowledgment of its external existence. A communication occurs: subjective reality incorporates objective reality. The subject receives mediation from an object and affirms this mediation. Barth also defines "knowledge . . . as self-authenticating acquaintance in its subject with the reality of an object. . . ."[40] Existential proof of acquaintance provides subsidiary confirmation of empirical reality. Barth insists on the primacy of ontology, arguing that objective reality transcends our "merely verbal and mental" assertions. Simultaneously, he asserts that in terms of the human significance of knowledge, "everything depends upon the fact that we are involved in the matter as speakers and listeners."[41] Subjective proof of acquaintance with an object's existence and nature is thus an important step in the communication of reality.

A second element in subjective participation in knowledge involves determination by objective existence. Barth says: "We defined knowledge as that confirmation of human acquaintance with an object whereby its trueness becomes a determining factor in the existence of the man who knows. It is precisely this factor determining the existence of the man who knows that we call experience."[42]

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[40] Ibid., p. 216. Italics are mine.

[41] Ibid., p. 225.

[42] Ibid., p. 226.

Experience occurs when an individual becomes subjectively determined by the nature and reality of an object. Experience occurs as object confronts subject and again as subject confronts object, i.e., relates to this object. The knower's subjective response to an objective stimulus becomes a determining factor in his existence. This determination occurs in two processes:

> . . . /man exists/ as the object of experience, i.e. determined by this external thing which so far has come in contact with him, and in the way in which it has made contact, and as the subject of experience, i.e. as one who now a second time comes in contact with a definite external thing in a definite manner, he is what he is, he exists as a man, and not otherwise.[43]

Our determination by objects is not impersonal and passive; we participate with and act upon objects. As "the object of experience" man is only partially determined; he must again confront the objects he encounters and become "the subject of experience," i.e., actively and purposefully relate to objects in his experience, interacting with them, shaping and being shaped by them.

Barth's concept of subjective determination by objective existence contributes to an epistemology for rational discourse. Experience corresponds to the rational structure of being.[44] In correlating objective and subjective elements in ontology and epistemology Barth serves communication. He offers a counterpoint to

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[43] Ibid. Italics are mine.

[44] Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:419.

those who would separate existence, experience, and discourse from rationality and knowledge. He sees these elements in their architectonic unity. He conjoins objectivity and subjectivity in an active process of existence, experience, and knowledge, providing a rational model for communication.

A third element in personal participation is subjective coexistence with the object of knowledge. A consequence of knowledge of and experience with objects is that the subject, having attained a measure of acquaintance with an object, thereafter begins his thinking with an awareness of the existence and reality of that object. Knowledge entails thinking with and existing with an object. Subjective coexistence constitutes a "knowledge-relation," i.e., the truth of an object, its reality and nature, becomes a necessary element in thought. Barth says:

> Whatever else and however else they may think of it, they must begin by thinking of the actual trueness of its reality. When faced with this trueness they can no longer withdraw into themselves in order from there to affirm, question, or deny it. Its trueness has come home directly to them personally, has become their property. And at the same time they themselves have become the property of its trueness.[45]

Knowledge is a relationship in which a knower has been so affected by an object that its reality accompanies his thought, influences it, and makes him aware of and a part of its trueness. Such objects posited in their reality stimulate expression. In the absence of

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[45]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:214.

such stimulus--if no object can be posited in its reality--motivation for communication wanes and invention occurs in a vacuous monologue: thought is then developed in subjective terms alone. Conversely, when a knower is aware of the reality of an object, invention occurs dialogically, in a "knowledge-relation."[46] Knowledge then has existential and objective validity. Subjective coexistence with an object of knowledge thus provides incentive for invention and communication.

A fourth element in personal participation in knowledge is subjective witness to its content. Knowledge requires communication. Its existential vitality--its determining influence upon and coexistence with the thought of a knower--requires expression. Knowledge which has existential life summons utterance; its ontological dynamic calls for affirmation. Barth distinguishes between "mere knowings" or perceptions and knowledge which becomes subjectively determining.[47] Genuine knowledge involves an individual, brings him into relation with reality, truth, and specific properties of existence. Such a relation, because of its animation, cannot easily be suppressed. Existence--and knowledge is an existential relation between a knower and a thing known--gravitates toward utterance. Thus Barth says "knowing becomes knowledge when

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[46]Cf. Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/2:302.

[47]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:214.

the man becomes a responsible witness to its content."[48] A knower, participating in the existential reality of an object, becomes a spokesman providing evidence of the reality of that object as testified in his relation to it. Barth thereby brings a strong existential realism into the process of communication. Content is an active relationship between object and subject and thus the knower is in a position to bear witness to this content which has determined his existence.

Knowledge and experience are processive

Third, knowledge and experience are processive, i.e., in continual movement, development, and change. This movement proceeds from the structure of existence. If knowledge, experience, and existence are correlated in object-subject relations, then these relations are variable. Objects and subjects are limitless and changing. Consequently, the subject-object correlation, what is mediated through it, how it is perceived, and what it communicates, varies. Knowledge cannot be static since reality is fluid. Knowledge--if it acknowledges reality--must be revised constantly.[49]

The process nature of knowledge and experience entails

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[48] Ibid., p. 226.

[49] Cf. Barth, Epistle to the Romans, pp. 2-3, 15-16; Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 9, 150.

progression from one partial insight to another. Our perception of reality is fragmentary, never complete. We are part of the process; the whole is imperceptible to us. Our thoughts and expressions are relative to our limited encounters with reality. Thus Barth regarded human thought and disciplines as "an inquiry." Human perceptions never assure perfect apprehension of reality. We know in a "prism"; our knowledge is refracted through the senses and our subjective processes of interpretation, and thus we know by "a laborious advance from one partial insight to another intending but by no means guaranteeing an 'advance!'"[50] This process character of reality, knowledge, and experience involves important consequences for communication. Several implications of this refractive nature of knowledge and experience--its oblique, indirect, and fractional character--emerge: (1) knowledge, invention, and discourse must retain the character of an investigation; (2) the process character of knowledge and experience entails that human thoughts and expressions are provisional and require supplementation; and (3) human thought and discourse, including theory and criticism, is part of a history, i.e., knowledge and speech are in a process of becoming.[51]

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[50] Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, p. 14.

[51] Ibid., p. 20; Doctrine of God, 2/1:194; Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:144, 809.

Invention as inquiry

Due to the process nature of reality, knowledge, invention, and discourse must retain the character of an investigation. Constantly changing object-subject relations require continuous inquiry. Knowledge, thought, and speech follow objective reality, searching after it; their efforts at conceptualization and expression trail original movements or events. Knowledge and speech are subsequent to and derived from the ontological events they seek to represent. They recollect previous perceptual events.[52] Expression follows perception. Communication attempts to transfer a perception of reality from one medium to another--from an original perception through a perceiver, to a receiver. Subjective expressions of reality only indirectly speak of the objective, even though the objective interpenetrates the subjective.[53] Human thought and speech is relative, conditioned by the limits of human perceptions and interpretations of reality, by differences between subjects and objects, by weaknesses in our ability to transmit our perceptions, and by the varying nature of object-subject relations.[54]

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[52]Barth, Word of God and Man, p. 133; Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:226.

[53]Cf. Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:188, 198; Doctrine of God, 2/1:57, 59; Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:376.

[54]Cf. Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:150, 188-191; Ibid., 1/2:368; Doctrine of God, 2/1:57, 59; Doctrine of Creation, 3/4:559; and the Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:110-111.

Because of the refracted, partial nature of knowledge and experience, invention and discourse must maintain the character of an investigation--an attempt to understand and express.

Provisional nature of invention, theory, and criticism

The process character of knowledge and experience also entails that human thoughts and expressions are provisional and require supplementation. For Barth, a definite system of knowledge is impossible because reality eludes it.[55] Speech is incomplete because our knowledge is partial. Our utterances are provisional; they require updating, amplification, and correction. There can be no definitive inventional system, only guiding concepts, for the reality which any conceptual apparatus or methodology seeks to encompass is processive. Theory and criticism must remain temporary; they can only serve present needs. Barth says concerning theology as a critical science that as a critical retrospection "it can only work through examples, and not comprehensively or exhaustively." Due to the process nature of reality and communication, theoretical and critical formulations are fractional, dealing with only part of reality, and tentative, "pending better instruction," and not conclusive in any final sense. A lesson is to be learned, Barth says, but in critical science it "can really only be

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[55]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:866-867; Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 89.

the lesson for the needs of next day." What such a science provides is educational, since "the instruction can in no wise anticipate the reality of life, but can only give the most immediate and most needed guidance for meeting this reality."[56] Thought and speech is relative, partial, and in need of completion in ongoing investigations, criticisms, and supplementary communications.

Intellectual and rhetorical evolution

Human thought and discourse, including theory and criticism, is part of a history, i.e., knowledge and speech are in a process of becoming. Speech is emerging meaning. A "word," a message or messages, must develop from the many words spoken. Meaning--the content of communication which influences and determines--must evolve. Barth says that "to 'exist' is to 'step out.'" Applied to persons, this means that we must emerge from being "one natural phenomenon among others" into a sphere of reflection, decision, and action where we become existentially aware, independent subjects.[57] The same is true of discourse: meaning must find a characteristic form, an independent existence, so that it stands out or becomes a recognizable entity, a subject matter, from among many linguistic or behavioral phenomena. Discourse must give birth

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[56]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:87-88.

[57]Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:92.

to meaning--physical stimuli must become ethical and intellectual phenomena capable of achieving existence in the subjective experience of receivers. Discourse must attain meaningful existence so that it can coexist with and condition the thought and action of receivers.

Barth says that the subject matter of theology as critical science "is the series of expressions which constitute the material of all Christian proclamation. . . ."[58] This subject matter concerns the "expressions which, more or less constantly and emphatically . . ." comprise the total configuration of the speech of the Christian community. Barth says that "here, as everywhere, these expressions acquire their meaning from the associations and contexts in which they are used." This "series of expressions" thus has "varying meaning" and "becomes from time to time a definite, characteristic language."[59] Criticism asks how effectively this "series of expressions," given its variable meaning in different contexts, serves its particular purposes, as related, for example, to the requirements of particular communities, speakers, situations, and subjects as these are seen from the perspective of a total history or intellectual and rhetorical evolution.

Methodologically, critical science considers the total

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[58]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:87.

[59]Ibid., p. 86. Italics are mine.

historical proclamation of a community, "the sum-total of the attempts at . . . proclamation that have occurred up to date, as variously determined by the meaning attached to the expressions in question."[60] Barth takes a meaning-centered view of the history and criticism of discourse. History and criticism, while dealing with the total evolution of the speech of a community, culture, etc., necessarily focus upon centers of meaning within that total configuration of discourse. Criticism deals not only with the variable meaning a series of expressions has acquired through use in different contexts and times, but also with the variable meaning which has been attached to these expressions through previous critical analysis. In recognizing discourse as a history, criticism not only evaluates its meaning as acquired in practice but also as interpreted through earlier criticism. Criticism, however, must not be obscured by criticism but must return to original discourse. Still, criticism partially builds upon earlier criticism which illuminates centers of meaning in discourse.[61] Criticism's influence in correcting and revising earlier discourse must be considered as shaping the total configuration of discourse. Not all criticism is direct, then, but is partially mediated through earlier criticism. We see much of the history of speech through criticism.

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[60] Ibid., p. 87. Italics are mine.

[61] Ibid.

Criticism necessarily concerns itself with "a very small fraction" of the total "series of expressions." Only a fragment of the total evolution "can be made the object of investigation." Further, "even within this known fraction there can be . . . only some few elements, which stand out representatively from the rest in the series, and with which this work can busy itself."[62] Additionally, earlier criticism must be consulted for its contribution of standards by which discourse has been and may be judged.[63] These are not binding, however, as the objects of critical science must be re-examined in each new situation. On the basis of historical and contemporary investigation, guidance may be provided as to how the "series of expressions" which comprises the subject matter of the discourse of a particular community can "be used in altered connections and contexts and therefore in a new and, we hope, a better sense."[64] The history and criticism of discourse evolves. Its scientific and educational (advisory) character, as well as its processive nature, prohibits its crystallization in any kind of system. The "whole of a corrected . . . proclamation" can never be put "finally before the public." Only tentative and perhaps temporarily functional guidance emerging from careful analysis of

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[62]Ibid.

[63]Ibid.

[64]Ibid.

"a definite section of the entire world of past and future . . . proclamation . . ." can be offered.[65]

Knowledge and experience are dialectical

This section briefly considers the need for dialectic, and then defines and characterizes Barth's dialectic. For Barth dialectic was primarily an ontological and epistemological necessity and secondarily a critical methodology.[66] For Barth "existence is existence in movement."[67] Objects and subjects constantly interact. Subjects progressively acquire knowledge--i.e., acknowledge reality as they perceive its movements--and their experience is based upon determining encounters with meaningful elements in these movements.[68] Meaningful events and emerging centers of meaning require correlation, analysis, interpretation, and communication. The dynamic movement of existence, knowledge, and experience requires forms suitable to its vitality, forms capable of expressing, organizing, unifying, and critically evaluating these movements.

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[65]Ibid., p. 88.

[66]The existential basis for Barth's dialectic is discussed as part of his concept of existence, cf. pp. 74-75, supra, the "rhythm of existence." The present section analyzes more particular implications of this dialectic.

[67]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:939.

[68]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:14-16, 213-214, 226.

Dialectic is such a form.[69]

Barth's dialectic is so much a part of his thought that no single definition encompasses its meaning. Dialectic must be dealt with in at least a partially dialectical manner; i.e., a variety of statements must be made to elucidate the concept. The following defining characteristics of Barth's dialectic emphasize implications for communication: (1) dialectic is a conceptual evolution or "history" of thought marked by determining events and encounters, (2) dialectic involves critical correlation of opposites, and (3) dialectic implies an elasticity, portability, and adaptability of concepts.

Dialectic as conceptual evolution or "history"

Dialectic is a conceptual evolution or "history" of thought marked by determining events and encounters. Dialectic involves the movement of reason within existence, seen in its various relations, manifestations, and sequences.[70] Barth was apparently indebted to Hegel for much of this view of dialectic or "history" which views concepts in their relation to events and as events possessing full ontological status as much as any occurrence in

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[69]Barth, Word of God and Man, pp. 198-212.

[70]Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:47; Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:360; ibid., 4/3:144-147, 195, 469-470.

the physical world.[71] Ideas are an organic part of history, an integral part of "world process," the integrated functions and movements of the cosmos. Knowledge, as acknowledgment of reality, must evolve with it. Knowledge cannot viably exist solely in a subjectively-conceived or self-contained state; it demands outward movement and communication. Apart from dynamic ontology--a following, apprehension, and representation of objects--knowledge is sterile. Knowledge is an ontological movement with full historical status. A fundamental correspondence exists in "world process" between sequences of historical or empirical, object-related events; sequences of conceptual or cognitive and rational events; sequences of behavioral or experiential, subject-related events; and between these sequences and speech or symbolic and interactional events. Existence, knowledge, experience, and speech are mutually aligned in the total, evolutionary process of history.

Since Barth virtually equates dialectic and "history," using them interchangeably at times, it is appropriate to consider his contrast of the concept of history with that of a state:[72]

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[71]Hegel contributed to Barth a comprehensive picture of the "life of reason . . . in the full movement of life." While Barth rejected Hegel's absolute self-confidence in knowing, he adopted from him the crucial dialectical and historical insight that concepts are events, transactions in a dynamic process of life. Barth, Protestant Thought, p. 283, ff.

[72]Although Barth once recommended abandoning the term dialectic in favor of "history," cf. Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:195, he never did so in practice. He continued to use

> There are states that are very much in movement, developing through many changes and varied modes of behaviour. The conception of a stiff and motionless uniformity need not be linked with that of a state. But the idea of a state does involve the idea of something completely insulated within the state . . . the idea of a limitation of its possibilities and therefore of its possible changes and modes of behaviour. It is never capable of more than these particular movements. Even the concept of the most mobile state is not therefore equivalent to that of history.[73]

Movements within a state or system--"fixed circles of changes and modes of behavior," their "sequence, continuity and causal connection," or "the sum total of . . . possible and actual changes and modes of behavior" in a system--only tell part of what we need to know about a system. A system or state needs to be seen within the context of an overall historical and dialectical process.[74] We learn much about a system when we see it affected from outside itself in dialectical encounter with something opposite its nature.

"dialectic," which was very prominent in his earlier writing, in many important contexts in his later writing. The identification Barth made of these terms is evident, for example, in his statement concerning the necessity of "understanding in its dialectic the history of the Christian community. . . ." Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:880. He understood "history" as a dialectic and dialectic as a "history."

[73]Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:157-158.

[74]This viewpoint should challenge students of communication to further unify historical, critical, and experimental studies because of its reminder that controlled, limited systems analysis needs historical perspective. Process includes but cannot be reduced to a finite number of systems. Systems need analysis not only for their isolated variables and patterns but also in their broader development as related to many systems and to a total evolution.

Barth says that "the concept of history in its true sense as distinct from that of a state is introduced and achieved when something happens to a being in a certain state, i.e., when something new and other than its own nature befalls it."[75] Dialectic or "history" involves critical awareness of relations between systems; it interprets the movements of systems in total world process. Dialectic or "history" thus occurs at the level of analysis and of events. Theory, criticism, behavior, and events, while distinguishable, are seen in their ontological unity within the total evolution of existence.

Barthian dialectic or "history" views events and encounters within a total movement as determining the meaning of systems. Knowledge and meaning are not static but evolutionary and specifically transactional, i.e., involving actions upon a subject or state by something outside it. Barth says:

> History, therefore, does not occur when the being is involved in changes or different modes of behaviour intrinsic to itself, but when something takes place upon and to the being as it is. The history of a being begins, continues and is completed when something other than itself and transcending its own nature encounters it, approaches it and determines its being in the nature proper to it, so that it is compelled and enabled to transcend itself in response and in relation to this new factor.[76]

Evolutionary progress is made as systems encounter new systems,

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[75]Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:158.

[76]Ibid. Italics are mine.

elements, objects, or subjects. Encounters permit introduction of new elements into a system, criticism and revision of old elements, and the integration and evolution of new forms and relations. Encounter leads to the outward transcendence of a system--to its moving beyond itself to a new form or level in total evolution. Barth says: "The history of a being occurs when it is caught up in this movement, change and relation, when its circular movement is broken from without by a movement towards it and the corresponding movement from it, when it is transcended from without so that it must and can transcend itself outwards."[77] Dialectical encounter opens entire new sets of possibilities for a system.

Dialectic as critical correlation of opposites

Because of its evolutionary nature based upon the integration of new elements through encounter, dialectic is a way of critical correlation. Since reality is seen as part of a total evolution, the dialectical thinker recognizes the interdependence of all thought. Different knowers possess varied, partial pictures abstracted from the total mosaic of existence. Criticism, comparison, and correlation of these pictures is necessary for understanding and enhancing conceptual and behavioral evolution. Thus, Barth says, interpreting Hegel, that "history here has entered so

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[77]Ibid.

thoroughly into reason . . ." that reason "is in a position to recognize itself at once in all history in some stage of its life-process, and also in its entirety, so far as the study permits us to divine the whole."[78] The dialectician recognizes meaning in its evolution, not so much in oppositions, but at different levels of development. Since earlier stages of knowledge and experience are transcended, the dialectician may not so much reject opposing views but reconcile them, not renouncing a weaker level of interpretation of reality--but pointing the way to a higher synthesis.[79] The dialectician recognizes contributions through the inputs of diverse views of reality--that through cross-fertilization of ideas, interaction, mutual criticism, and synthesis, conceptual and behavioral evolution is advanced. In keeping with the Hegelian pattern of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, concepts and relations are criticized and assimilated in new combinations.[80] This entails a process "which consists in something distinguishing its parts, separating them, and absorbing them into itself again."[81] Dialectic, then, is a process of critical incorporation. Thus, amusingly, perhaps, but constructively, the later Barth observed

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[78]Barth, Protestant Thought, p. 284. Italics are mine.

[79]Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/3:306, 354, 418-419.

[80]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:3-4, 195.

[81]Barth, Protestant Thought, p. 297.

that his eldest son, New Testament scholar Markus Barth, largely demolished an early work by Barth on the meaning of baptism. He wrote: "When my son was studying the literature available at the time, he had to tell me kindly but firmly that 'not one stone was left upon another' of my 1943 work." Barth admitted that "this has been more or less my own finding too." Undaunted, however, the dialectically-minded elder Barth observed in his later revised book on the subject (it was his last book, a final fragment of the Dogmatics), that "I have had to accept in the main his predominately negative thesis and incorporate it into my own predominately positive thesis."[82] Barth saw his earlier work as a particular stage of his own conceptual evolution, accepted criticism of it, even from within his family, and incorporated this criticism in a new level of interpretation.

Barth saw dialectic as a critical correlation of opposites. He wrote that "the unity of truth . . . is the unity of contradictions, more, the reconciliation which is effected between them. It is their reconciliation, but also the establishment of their basis, their necessity, and their adjustment and dissolving."[83] Dialectic examines the common ground of varying propositions, attempting to see their unity and mutual implications. Further,

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[82]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/4:x. Italics are mine.

[83]Barth, Protestant Thought, p. 297.

it seeks to recognize the necessity of these opposites, the contributions of each element, how these elements can be harmonized and disagreements eliminated. Thus, "the contradictions of being and thinking, object and idea, nature and spirit, object and subject . . ." and other existential and what Perelman calls "philosophical pairs," are seen in "the relationship they have both among themselves and with their higher unity. . . ."[84] Dialectic does not set aside contradictions but makes them relative and contributory to a total, progressive evolution.

Dialectic implies elasticity, portability, and adaptability of concepts

Finally, as a consequence of dialectic's nature as a conceptual evolution involving critical correlation of opposites, dialectic implies an elasticity, portability, and adaptability of concepts. Dialectic encompasses diverse lines of thought and interrelates different systems and processes.[85] The dialectical

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[84]Ibid., p. 298. Much of Perelman's philosophy of rhetoric, such as his "arguments based on the structure of reality," "the relations establishing the structure of reality," "the role of philosophical pairs," etc., is similar in concern, if different in content, to Barth's communicology. Cf. Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, The New Rhetoric, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), pp. ix-x. Kindred concerns appear in the work of communicologists such as Richard Weaver and Kenneth Burke.

[85]Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/3:306.

thinker, while keenly observing the various elements of any system, shows great elasticity of thought in interrelating these systems. James Robinson, in introducing a series of essays on Barth's dialectic, cites the theologian's expressed preference to speak "'dialectically,' to exegete in 'a dialectic movement as inexorable as it is elastic,' to attain 'the inner dialectic of the subject matter.'"[86] Barth believed that wrestling with the inner dynamic of ideas, their tensions, comparisons, contrasts, and movements, is necessary. Mere formal analysis of technical meanings bound to concrete historical situations, while important, was for him insufficient. While careful analysis is important, categorical rigidity is a hindrance, particularly in view of the evolutionary nature of concepts, systems, and processes. Technical analysis is but the foundation for experience with a subject matter. A thinker and speaker must interact with his subject matter, immerse himself in it, experience its pressures and tendencies, and then release this experience with a subject matter in a dynamic, flexible manner.

The internal and external unity and direction of a subject matter--not only or primarily its closed, circular movement--but its outward tendency, needs expression. The boundaries of systems

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[86]James M. Robinson, ed., The Beginnings of Dialectical Theology, trans. Keith R. Crim and Louis De Grazia, vol. 1 (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1968), p. 24, quoting Barth's second German edition of The Epistle to the Romans, p. 113. Italics are mine.

need to be recognized for what they are in reality--elastic, moveable, and permeable. The dialectical and scientific thinker recognizes a chemistry in thought as in physical reality. While correct analysis of the composition and properties of various substances is important, the interaction of different sets of elements in order to generate new substances, organic or conceptual, is also necessary. Thus, conceptualizations need to be portable--the thinker should be open and ready to mix systems or at least elements from different systems, as Barth blended many diverse philosophical and theological views in his thinking, adapting these views and creating new combinations.[87] Such a scientific, creative, and investigative mode of thinking, based on ongoing, dynamic interaction with evolving reality, seems to insure a progressive sense of discovery and development for the processes of invention and communication.

Summary

This chapter explored Barth's conceptualization of existentialism and dialectic as it impacted on his ideas about communication. Three philosophical bases of Barth's communicology were examined: his concepts of existence, knowledge, and experience. Barth's communicology derives from his theory of existence and

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[87]Barth, Evangelical Theology, pp. 89-92.

finds its motivation and necessity in the nature of reality. Three implications of Barth's view of existence were examined: (1) the order of the object universe manifests itself even in defective human communication; (2) normativeness and individuality unite when communication combines the phenomenal and existential; and (3) there is a "rhythm of existence" or dialectic which provides ontological movement for communication. Barth's philosophy of existence is grounded in the object-subject relation, which structures reality and knowledge. Interaction is built into the universe in the object-subject relation, and communication is grounded in this ontology. The "intelligible cosmos" expresses itself through the "intelligent cosmos," manifesting its regularity in subjective existence and providing communication with a cogent orientation in a world process. Barth thus reconciles essentialism (Hegel) and existentialism (Kierkegaard). Subjectivity is oriented by encounter with the object world, enabling the individual to participate in its laws, rhythms, and constants.

Barth's concepts of knowledge and experience correlate with his concept of existence, providing a triad of bases for communication. The following elements influencing communication emerged: (1) knowledge and experience are based on existence; (2) knowledge and experience require active personal participation; (3) knowledge and experience are processive; and (4) knowledge and experience are

dialectical. First, knowledge consists in acknowledging reality. By recognizing communication as an ontological movement, Barth linked invention and discourse with dynamics of existence, knowledge, and experience.

Second, knowledge and experience require active personal participation. This involves: (1) subjective proof of acquaintance with an object's existence and nature; (2) subjective determination by objective existence; (3) subjective coexistence with the object of knowledge; and (4) subjective witness to its content. Knowledge and experience must correspond to the structure of being. Content is an active relationship between object and subject; thus, the knower is able to witness to this content which has determined his existence, bringing existential realism into the process of communication.

Third, knowledge and experience are processive. Knowledge must be revised because reality changes. Several consequences follow: (1) knowledge, invention, and discourse must retain the character of an investigation; (2) the process character of knowledge and experience entails that human thoughts and expressions are provisional and require supplementation; and (3) thought and discourse, including theory and criticism, are part of a history, i.e., in a process of becoming. Speech is emerging meaning. Discourse must give birth to meaning--physical stimuli must become

ethical and intellectual phenomena existing in the experience of receivers. Criticism analyzes evolving meaning within a "series of expression" in a community. Barth thus takes a meaning-centered and evolutionary view of the history and criticism of discourse.

Fourth, knowledge and experience are dialectical. Three characteristics of Barth's dialectic were observed: (1) dialectic is a conceptual evolution or "history" of thought marked by determining events and encounters; (2) dialectic involves critical correlation of opposites; and (3) dialectic implies an elasticity, portability, and adaptability of concepts. Dialectic involves the movement of reason within existence in its various relations, manifestations, and sequences. Barth held that ideas are an organic part of history. A basic correspondence exists in world process between sequences of historical, conceptual, behavioral, and speech events. Events and encounters within a total movement determine the meaning of systems. Evolutionary progress is made as systems encounter new systems, elements, objects, or subjects. Evolution through encounter is a fundamental ontological and communicological principle. Dialectic is a way of critical correlation. The dialectical thinker views reason at different stages in its "life-process." The dialectician may not so much reject opposing views but reconcile them, not renouncing a weaker level of interpretation of reality--but pointing the way to a higher synthesis.

CHAPTER IV

BARTH'S CONCEPTUALIZATION OF COMMUNICATION

Barth explored "the important sphere of speech" or "this field of speech"[1] in developing his anthropology or doctrine of man. This chapter investigates a central question related to his anthropology: What is Barth's conceptualization of communication? To answer this question, five functions of communication developed by Barth are analyzed: (1) to make reference, (2) to participate in a common event of perception which includes the equally important related functions of obtaining understanding and achieving an interpretation, (3) to establish our humanity through being in encounter and reciprocal interactions, (4) to act, and (5) to experience human fellowship in reality, which includes the important related function of receiving, creating, comparing, and criticizing images, or pictures of reality.

Barth's development of these functions of communication contributes to a philosophy of communication in at least three areas:

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[1]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:738-739. Barth refers here, as he usually does elsewhere, to speech as a field of experience.

first, toward a better conceptualization of interpersonal communication; second, toward an axiology, or general value theory of communication; and, third, toward a teleology or goal conceptualization of communication. These contributions are elaborated in the following sections.

To Make Reference

A foundational presupposition and master key to Barth's thought is his assertion that "the goal of thought and language must be determined entirely by the unique object in question."[2] Thought, language, and communication are fundamentally concerned with making *reference* to objects. This axial principle has important consequences, providing elements of necessity and objectivity, variety, control, seriousness and substance for communication.

Barth says that the goal of speech must be determined entirely by the unique object in view. This does not mean that making reference is the only goal of speech; it means that to be rational speech necessarily refers to objects. Barth says that a genuine human word says "something specific . . . points away from itself . . . points toward a fact, an object."[3] This

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[2]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:125.

[3]Ibid., p. 464. Barth defined an object as "something posited in its own being by another." Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:194. Cf. n. 12, p. 28, supra.

pointing is logically necessary for speech and helps establish its objectivity and factuality. If no object is in view, thought, and hence language and speech, is vacuous. Simply pointing to personal states of the speaker or situational factors misses the reality of objective reference. Symbols, personal states, and contextual factors, though important, must not become ends in themselves, obscuring reference to objective realities. Process must not obscure substance. Barth disdains non-referential symbolism--speech which loses sight of posited objects. He says, "we do not speak for the sake of speaking, but for the sake of the indication which is to be made by our speaking. We speak for the sake of what we denote or intend by our speaking."[4] Symbols must stand for something. Speech presupposes a definite datum or data. If it deviates from this object or objects it devolves into myth, fantasy, or sheer expressionism. In such a case genuine communication, speech or hearing has not occurred. Barth says "we can speak meaningfully of hearing a human utterance only when it is clear to us in its function of indicating something that is described or intended by the word. . . ."[5] The referential or descriptive function thus supplies an indispensable foundation and goal for communication.

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[4]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:464.

[5]Ibid.

Second, the referential principle provides inexhaustible variety for speech. If thought and language is determined by its objects, then the meanings and purposes of speech are as varied and unlimited as those objects. Indeed, language must continually be in process to keep pace with the object world it seeks to represent, a world including objects who are also knowing subjects or persons, as well as an organic universe. Speech, therefore, is as open-ended as the object world.

Third, the referential principle provides control for communication. Barth says that the particular object in view not only provides a goal for discourse but also a limit. He states that "the same object in its uniqueness must also signify for us the boundary beyond which we are not to think or speak."[6] The unique object exerts a governing influence over realistic discourse, focusing thought and speech toward itself and calling forth cognitive and linguistic patterns apposite to its nature. The referential principle acts as a kind of cybernetic, or helmsman, directing discourse, giving it a channel, motivation, and impetus. To depart from this referential function is to wander aimlessly in thought and speech. To maintain the referential bearing is to think and speak rationally, meaningfully, and with purpose.

Fourth, the referential principle provides seriousness and

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[6]Ibid., p. 125.

substance for communication. This results from the objectivity it supplies. Substance is also a function of a receiver's attitude. Barth urges taking seriously "the human speech uttered by specific men at specific times in a specific situation, in a specific language and with a specific intention."[7] If substance in discourse is discerned, a communication must be understood in its referential aspects--those related to the speaker and his specific purpose, those related to his specific frame of reference, his language, and those related to the specific objects to which his language refers. Serious attention must be given to these factors if serious regard is given to the speaker. Each of these factors contributes to the substance of discourse. If genuine communication occurs receivers must take these elements seriously. What is the attitude with which a receiver attends to a speaker, his situation, his language, and his objects of reference? If these are regarded lightly, little or no substance will be communicated. Is the receiver willing to cooperate in the process of making reference? The process of making reference is mutual, requiring efforts of both receivers and sources. When serious reference-making to a mutual object of inquiry is undertaken on both sides, then realistic reference occurs and discourse is invested with substance.

Barth thus contributes to the rationale of communication

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[7]Ibid., p. 464.

by stressing its objectivity, emphasizing the referential function of speech with its consequences of logical necessity, objectivity, variety, control, seriousness, and substance in communication; and he contributes to an axiology and teleology of communication by arguing for integrity of reference in speech, for objective reference provides speech with motivation, impetus, and purpose. To speak seriously, honestly, and with purpose, is to speak with objective reference.

To Participate in a Common Event of Perception

A second function of communication is to participate in a common event of perception which includes the equally important related functions of obtaining understanding and achieving an interpretation. These functions are components or phases of the same process. Barth stresses that interpersonal encounter must become an event--first, an event of perception and then a fully reciprocal speech event. The event of perception goes beyond the initial referential function of communication and prepares for the yet more comprehensive event of speech. Barth indicates the progression from reference-making to the event of perception as follows:

> We can speak meaningfully of hearing a human utterance only when it is clear to us in its function of indicating something that is described or intended by the word, and also when this function has become an event confronting us, when therefore by means of the human word we ourselves in some degree perceive

the thing described or intended.[8]

The referential function is primary but preliminary; it must become an event in which percipients not only cognize a symbol, a speaker, and a context, but in which the word spoken mediates something to them and confronts them as an object for reflection and decision. This mediation is not a passive cognition of an object of reference; it is an active encounter through symbols which transmit and evoke a perception of an object which in turn exerts a claim upon both percipients, speaker and hearer. The confrontation is mutual; both parties relate together to the objective referent. Communication occurs when speaker and listener share in some degree a common perception of an object of mutual reference through symbolic encounter with that object and when it in turn mediates something specific to them and confronts them so that they have to take a position with respect to it. Communication, in this perspective, is mutual participation in a common perceptual event.[9]

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[8]Ibid., pp. 464-465. Italics are mine.

[9]Barth's stress upon participation in the event of perception may be compared with Tillich's concept of participation in symbols. The accent of these writers is different. Barth emphasizes the objective reality of what is referred to by symbols (referents), whereas Tillich appears to use symbols more abstractly, and, while using them carefully, generally shows less concern for their concrete referents. For Barth, it is not so much the symbol but the perception of the object mediated through the symbol, which grasps the percipient and binds communicators together in a

The response called for by participation in a common perceptual event includes the related functions of obtaining understanding and achieving an interpretation. These functions are further phases of the event of perception. Barth develops in these functions a process view of understanding and interpreting discourse. For him, understanding discourse is more than cognizing symbols, contextual factors, interpreting speakers, or simply recognizing meaning. These occurrences, while important, are preliminary.[10] Barth warns that "if I were to confuse this preparation with the listening, understanding and expounding, and concern myself only with the word as such and the one who speaks it, how I should deceive myself! As far as I am concerned, he would have spoken in vain."[11] Understanding does require inquiry into these factors; in fact, Barth conceptualizes understanding in part as a process of inquiry. He says that "understanding is . . . a return to the word, an inquiry into the word itself: the word with all its linguistic and factual presuppositions; an inquiry in which . . . I turn afresh to the word and speaker. . . ."[12] Understanding requires

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perceptual event. This does not mean that Barth devalues symbols but rather that he views them instrumentally, not as ends in themselves but as having their end in mediating a perception of objective realities.

[10]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:464.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid., p. 465.

more than inquiry; it demands taking a position with respect to what has been mediated in discourse. This positioning recurs: initially, in the event of perception, in an original communicative encounter, and, retrospectively, as a post-communication analysis and criticism. Barth advocates returning to the speaker, to the perception of an object, and the word "even when it has been spoken."[13] Understanding thus transcends the original perceptual event as an ongoing and retrospective response to this event.

Understanding and interpreting discourse requires a repetition, renewal, or re-creation of the original encounter. This involves not only continued objectivity in taking seriously the referential function of speech as it occurred in an initial transaction but a further retrospective assumption of a position with regard to the communicative event. In this retrospection the focus is upon the object of perception. Barth says "as I turn afresh to the word and speaker, I take up a standpoint outside the word and speaker, that is in that perception of the thing described or intended in the word which is mediated to me by my hearing of the word."[14] In taking such a retrospective position, the interpreter of discourse looks for a viewpoint from which he can appraise what was mediated to him in the event of perception. Barth calls this

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[13]Ibid.

[14]Ibid.

a "locus," a perspective or point of reference.[15]

Barth stresses that understanding discourse requires seeing the speaker in his concrete relation to an object of perception.

> The result of my inquiry in this form will be my interpretation of this human word. My exposition cannot possibly consist in an interpretation of the speaker. Did he say something to me only to display himself? I should be guilty of a shameless violence against him, if the only result of my encounter with him were that I now knew him or knew him better than before. . . . Did he not say anything to me at all? Did he not therefore desire that I should see him not in abstracto but in his specific and concrete relationship to the thing described or intended in his word, that I should see him from the standpoint and in the light of this thing?[16]

Neither the object or the speaker is to be seen in abstraction but in their specific interrelation, so that interpretation consists in significant measure in a percipient seeing himself in relation both to a speaker and an object and the speaker in relation to the object. To fail to discern this relation of the speaker to the object is to do disservice to him. Barth says:

> How much wrong is being continually perpetrated, how much intolerable obstruction of human relationships, how much isolation and impoverishment forced upon individuals has its only basis in the fact that we do not take seriously a claim which in itself is as clear as the day, the claim which arises whenever one person addresses a word to another.[17]

Objects cast light on speakers and speakers on objects. Encounters

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[15]Ibid., p. 469.

[16]Ibid., p. 465.

[17]Ibid.

are realistic and meaningful when they take into account the speaker-object-percipient relationship; when this relationship is ignored encounters are fragmented, darkened, and perhaps dishonest. When this relationship is fully recognized and investigated, then understanding occurs, communicative potential is realized, and a proper and particularly humane interpretation can be made. Barth sees great potential for understanding and interpretation in the unfolding of the speaker-object-percipient relationship:

> When their word is heard, and in the hearing attention is paid to what is signified and intended in this word, and there is an understanding of the full meaning and scope of their humanity in the light of this object of their word, then a proper exposition of their work can take account of their humanity in all its scope and meaning--not, however, *in abstracto* but in its connexion with the object revealed in their word as it is heard and understood.[18]

A final element in understanding and interpretation is the demand for further penetration into the meaning of the object: the subject-matter of the discourse must be encountered in depth. Barth warns against preconceiving an interpretation of discourse; he says that we often hear "as though we know already, and can partly tell ourselves what we are to hear." He cautions against subjectivism by the interpreter: "Our supposed listening is in fact a strange mixture of hearing and our own speaking, and . . . it is most likely that our own speaking will be the really decisive

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[18]Ibid., p. 467.

event."[19] If genuine understanding occurs, the interpreter must be "gripped by the subject-matter";[20] i.e., he must encounter it in its independent reality without absorbing it into his own subjective interpretation so much that its distinctive meaning and existence is lost. This grasping must happen "so that we can no longer confuse it with the word or the humanity of those who speak, and even less with ourselves."[21] But more than independent recognition is required: in interpretation as in the original event of perception, the claim of the object must be allowed if understanding is to occur; it must, by confronting us with its meaning, "become to us a subject-matter." Understanding is not simply recognition of meaning; it is a penetration to meaning and encounter with a subject-matter. Barth asks:

> Is it not the case that whatever is said to us by men obviously wants--and it is with this claim that it confronts us with something said to us--to make itself said and heard? It wants in this way to become to us a subject-matter. It wants us for our part to bring it a true objectivity, i.e., interest for its own sake. Therefore the human word, by means of which it is told us, wants to be heard openly and not with that mixture of hearing and our own speaking and interrupting. In order to be understood by us, it wants not to be mastered by us, but to lay hold of us. It wants to be evaluated in its relation to what is said in it, when this has been spoken to us and made itself intelligible to us.[22]

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[19]Ibid., p. 470.

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid., p. 471.

[22]Ibid.

Understanding, then, finally requires objectivity in an ongoing encounter in which the full claim of an object, seen in relation to a speaker in a total context, exerts its influence upon a percipient-interpreter.

Barth's interpretation of communication as participation in a common event of perception thus contributes to a rationale of interpersonal communication by the emphasis upon a comprehensive understanding of the speaker-object-percipient/interpreter relationship, and by recognizing the potential in the unfolding of this triadic relationship for communication. Barth's interpretation contributes to an axiology of communication by stressing this relationship as a key to understanding our full humanity.

To Establish Our Humanity

A third function of communication, establishing our humanity, occurs through being in encounter and reciprocal interactions which become the event of speech. This encounter transcends the inherently important but preliminary functions of making reference and participating in a common perceptual event. These prior functions prepare for and by their objectivity safeguard being in encounter and the event of speech, but they emphasize encounter with a subject-matter whereas being in encounter stresses self-actualization through communication. For all his objectivity, Barth does not neglect individual fulfillment through speech encounter.

Percipients are not only enlightened by referring to a unique object in an event of perception; they also actualize their humanity by interpersonal encounter. Self-declaration is important as well as objective reference and meaning. Barth argues that human existence is constituted and manifested in encounter, that man in communication is in the process of establishing, expressing, extending, and confirming his own personhood and is rendering, at the same time, this service to others.

Barth's concept of being in encounter is examined in three phases: (1) as mutual transparency, (2) as "mutual speech and hearing," and (3) as "mutual assistance in the act of being." As part of the second phase, Barth develops his concept that "humanity as encounter must become the event of speech," detailing the meaning of speech as constituted in four primary elements: "reciprocal expression and its reciprocal reception, reciprocal address and its reciprocal reception."[23] Following a more general discussion, these phases and elements are examined in their implications for the functions of communication.

Being in encounter is basic to Barth's anthropology. He presents "the broad definition that humanity . . . consists in the determination of man's being as a being with others. . . . It is not as he is for himself but with others, not in loneliness but in

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[23]Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:253.

fellowship, that he is genuinely human. . . ."[24] Man for himself betrays genuine humanity; his humanity is established as he includes others with himself. This inclusion is implied in the self-declaration "I," which assumes a "Thou" as a correlate. The declaration I, on this premise, cannot be monological; it presupposes the existence of another, thereby proclaiming not only self-existence but the being of another. This declaration recognizes the other within the sphere in which it is made and summons the other to say Thou in response. Barth says that "the word 'I' with which I think and declare my humanity implies as such humanity with and not without the fellowman. I cannot say 'I,' even to myself, without also saying 'Thou,' without making that distinction and connexion in relation to another."[25] This immanent symbol "I" bridges man's self-expression in speech and his link with fellow-humanity. Our mutual existence declares and confirms itself in speech.

The I-Thou relation, which is basic to being in encounter, invites communication. Through encounter we posit, project, and position ourselves with respect to our interpersonal environment as in making reference and sharing in a perceptual event we position ourselves with respect to our object environment. Through encounter we discover what we are and where we are in relation to others.

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[24]Ibid., p. 243.

[25]Ibid., p. 245.

Barth thus says "I am as I am in a relation,"[26] i.e., we identify and establish ourselves, the boundaries of our existence, its problems, questions, potentials, and answers, as we express ourselves with respect to others.

Mutual transparency

The first phase of Barth's concept of being in encounter involves mutual transparency. Barth expresses this as "a being in which one man looks the other in the eye,"[27] by which he seems to say that interpersonal visibility, openness, and mutual perception is integral to genuine being in encounter. Such perceptive encounter leads to duality, a mutual awareness of shared humanity. This phase of being in encounter makes interpersonal knowledge, communication, and relationship possible. Barth says "as I and Thou art we are open to one another. I know thee as a man, as something like myself, and I make it possible for thee to know me in the same way."[28] Dodges, deceit, and concealment are set aside and a mutuality takes their place in which common humanity and involvement is recognized. Barth says:

> This two-sided openness is the first element of humanity. Where it lacks, and to the extent that it lacks, humanity

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[26]Ibid., p. 246.

[27]Ibid., p. 250.

[28]Ibid.

> does not occur. To the extent that we withhold and conceal ourselves, and therefore we do not move . . . out of ourselves to know others and to let ourselves be known by them, our existence is inhuman, even though in all other respects we exist at the highest level of humanity.[29]

Mutual transparency involves an openness which prepares for self-disclosure, movement out of self, and interpersonal participation. The significance of these movements made possible by mutual transparency is that "these are the first and indispensable steps in humanity, without which the later ones cannot be taken. . . ."[30]

Mutual speech and hearing

A second phase of Barth's concept of being in encounter "consists . . . in the fact that there is mutual speech and hearing."[31] As part of this phase, Barth develops his concept of the event of speech as reciprocity, which involves reciprocal expression and address and their reception. Mutual speech and hearing, where interaction is fully reciprocal, "is the human significance of speech."[32] Reciprocity transcends openness. Transparency, "seeing and being seen," is receptive but does not provide adequate opportunity for self-declaration and self-interpretation. At the

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[29]Ibid., p. 251.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid., p. 252.

[32]Ibid.

level of transparency alone much of the image of another must be constructed from the standpoint of a percipient. Inadequate information may result in a distorted image; one may be at the mercy of another's construction of himself. Independently formed images may obstruct communication. More than transparency and mutual observation is required. Barth says that "if in the encounter of I and Thou there is to be not merely mutual consideration but a mutual contact and intersection of being and activity,"[33] then dialogue is necessary. He says: "What is needed at this point is speech--the human use of the mouth and ears. Humanity as encounter must become the event of speech. And speech means comprehensively reciprocal expression and its reciprocal reception, reciprocal address and its reciprocal reception. All these four elements are vital."[34]

Self-expression is the first reciprocal element in "humanity as encounter" becoming the event of speech. The I must declare and interpret itself to the Thou if "spontaneous crossing of the necessary frontier of mere visibility in relation to the other"[35] occurs. Self-expression warrants that the I is not leaving the interpretation of himself to the Thou, but intends to assist him

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[33]Ibid., p. 253.

[34]Ibid. Italics are mine.

[35]Ibid., p. 254.

by supplying his self-interpretation. As the I speaks the Thou is provided with an opportunity to compare his image or picture of the I with that given by the I.[36] Although self-expression may acquire the meaning of self-protection by safeguarding the image of oneself as known to others, its primary motivation is that this assistance in interpretation is owed the other. Genuine self-expression does not arise out of fear of being misunderstood or from an apologetic purpose. Words are not true self-expression if they present a mask, an unrealistic image, or a defense. Self-expression is confirmed in honest intention to disclose and to assist the other. Barth concludes:

> To take the Thou seriously is to be concerned for the Thou in self-expression and self-declaration; to have regard in my self-representation for this other who necessarily has to do with me for good or ill; to do my best not to leave him to his own devices in the unavoidable task of making something of me. Only on this presupposition will my self-expression in relation to him be true and not false.[37]

Reception of expression is the corresponding and second reciprocal element in "humanity as encounter" becoming the event of speech. This requires acceptance of the other's motives and purposes as directed toward self-disclosure. Barth says that "what

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[36]The concept that speech is an opportunity to receive, create, compare, and criticize images is developed by Barth in various contexts and is more fully examined in this chapter as part of the last function of speech, to experience human fellowship in reality. See pp. 133-137, infra.

[37]Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/2:254-255.

matters now is the humanity of my hearing, and this is conditioned negatively by the fact that at least I do not hear this other with suspicion, and positively by the fact that I presuppose that he is trying to come to my help with his self-expression and self-declaration."[38] If hearing is humane, the receiver must recognize a need for the word of the other, welcoming it as an event contributing to interpersonal interpretation and relationships. Reception is movement toward a source. Whatever its consequences, the movement and disclosure is a mutual benefit and need. The significance of "the event of self-expression" is that it contributes to interpersonal sharing and self-giving. Barth calls this sharing a "supreme favor" and concludes that "hearing on this presupposition is human hearing of the self-expression of the fellow-man."[39]

Reciprocal address is the third element in which "humanity as encounter" becomes the event of speech. Self-expression and its reception are incomplete reasons for "crossing that frontier of mere visibility."[40] Something objective needs communication. Why is address necessary? Barth first answers that it is necessary so the receiver can complete his interpretation of the source; secondly, the source represents "something objective which he needs as a

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[38]Ibid., p. 255.

[39]Ibid., p. 256.

[40]Ibid.

subject but which is in the first instance unattainable, being concealed in me."[41] Interpersonal address thus involves self-giving, self-disclosure, and mutual appropriation. Through this appropriation the mosaic of our mutual humanity may be constructed.

Interpersonal address further requires elements of penetration, directness, disturbance, and decisiveness. Thus, "the word of address is necessary as a kind of penetration from the sphere of the one into the sphere of another being. . . . Address is coming to another with one's being, and knocking and asking to be admitted."[42] Address involves an interpenetration of spheres of existence, an intersection of being, activity, and mutual understanding. It invites shared existence, experience, and purpose. Since such an invitation to share is often unwelcome, part of the purpose of this knocking is to disturb, to make the other aware of a need for "the objective thing which I can offer and impart. . . ."[43] Awareness of need cannot be taken for granted and interpersonal responsibility requires disclosure to meet needs.

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[41] Ibid.

[42] Ibid. Barth's concept that interpersonal address requires penetration into another's sphere of being complements the aspect of his concept of understanding discourse which emphasizes penetration into the meaning of a subject-matter, cf. pp. 116-117, supra. In complete communication both elements--objective and intersubjective penetration to meaning--are required.

[43] Ibid., p. 257.

Barth says:

> Why I cannot be silent but am required to speak is that I necessarily abandon him and leave him to his own devices if I spare myself what is perhaps the thankless venture, and him the unwelcome penetration of his sphere, and withhold from him that which he definitely ought to know, but cannot know until I tell him. I cannot withhold it, because he encounters me as a man, and I should not take him seriously as a man if I did not seriously try to find the way from me to him.[44]

Interpersonal address is grounded in the vital human need for interpersonal concern and shared knowledge. Such address involves comprehensive and incisive efforts to reach the being of another; it requires decisive and persistent appeals so that humanity is encountered and in order that speech itself may be truly humane. Barth concludes: "The humanity of the encounter between I and Thou demands that I should not merely make a few tentative efforts in this direction, but do my utmost. Speaking on this presupposition, not for one's own sake but for that of the needy other, is human speaking."[45]

The fourth element in which "humanity as encounter" becomes the event of speech is the reception of address. This requires acceptance of the one who addresses as a subject, not an object. This subject, in addressing a Thou, seeks to build a bridge between persons and to share in mutual being. Reception of address requires

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[44]Ibid.

[45]Ibid.

responsiveness to his objective impartation. Being cannot be in genuine encounter as long as the speaker and the message he seeks to impart is resisted. The receiver must not withstand the address of the Thou but invite it, grasping "that it is not just a matter of the other but of myself."[46] The sense of threat and ego-defensiveness need to be put aside if real encounter occurs. The risk of communication and encounter needs to be undertaken. To avoid this encounter is to deprive both the I and Thou. The essence of receptiveness to address is that "human hearing of the other takes place on the presupposition that I am affected myself if I do not hear him, and do so in all seriousness."[47]

"Humanity as encounter," then, becomes the event of speech through four processes: reciprocal expression and address and their respective reception. Reciprocity, therefore, is one of Barth's central concepts of the meaning and function of speech.

Mutual assistance in the act of being

The third phase of Barth's concept of being in encounter "consists . . . in mutual assistance in the act of being."[48] Barth regards mutual transparency and even mutual speech and hearing,

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[46]Ibid., p. 259.

[47]Ibid.

[48]Ibid., p. 260.

with its important entailment of reciprocity, as means to a higher end. This higher purpose involves a summons to action and putting ourselves at the disposal of another. This is action in fellowship--mutual responsiveness to the claim of another. Barth says that "action in encounter is action in correspondence with the summons which the Thou issues to the I when it encounters it. . . ."[49] More than behavioral response to a persuasive appeal or to information requiring decision is involved: interpersonal encounter and response, a being with and for being--being's response to being--is at issue. Being in encounter involves the summons of a person as well as that of an objective message. Barth says "as we see one another and speak and listen to one another, we call to one another for assistance."[50] The summons involved in much of our communication requests sharing in the task of being. Barth explains that "assistance is actively standing by the other. It is standing so close by him that one's own action means help or support for his. It thus means not to leave him to his own being and action, but in and with one's own to take part in the question and anxiety and burden of his, accepting concern for his life. . . ."[51] This summons and response arises out of awareness of mutual need. "This

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[49]Ibid., p. 261.

[50]Ibid., p. 262.

[51]Ibid.

is the higher thing which is decisive beyond mere reciprocal sight and speech and hearing. . . ."[52] Responsiveness to assist in the act of being "leads the encounter of I and Thou to its goal and makes human being human."[53]

A third function of communication, to establish our humanity, has been examined. This function is achieved through being in encounter and in reciprocal relations which constitute the significance of speech. Three phases in the concept of being in encounter were analyzed: mutual transparency, "mutual speech and hearing," and "mutual assistance in the act of being." Four elements in the concept of reciprocity were examined as an aspect of mutual speech and hearing: reciprocal expression, address, and their reception. In these three phases of being in encounter and in the concept of reciprocity, in which encounter becomes the event of speech, we seem to have the heart of Barth's interpersonal communicology and a crucial, actualizing element in humanistic anthropology.

To Act

A fourth function of communication is to act. This section observes some of Barth's views concerning the relationship of speech and action. Barth's discussion of speech as act and action

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[52]Ibid.

[53]Ibid.

as speech occurs in the context of his consideration of "The Ministry of the Community."[54] Barth sees the active life of man as "differentiated, though not divided, into speech which is also action on the one side, and action which is also speech on the other."[55] Speech and action are an organic unity, though each element is distinctive. Generally, speech is prior. Barth says that "for the most part the Word precedes and the act follows. But neither is lacking even where one or the other alone is mentioned or receives prominence."[56] Why should speech ordinarily precede action? Barth answers that "the burden of both the speech and action of the community is that men are called to knowledge, yet not to empty but to active knowledge. Because it is a matter of knowledge, speech must come first. But because it is a matter of active knowledge, the element of action must not be lacking."[57] Barth says that "speech is to be linked at once and directly with a distinct human action, becoming an active life in unity with it."[58] If speech is not united with action, either speech or action may be lifeless. He says: "If all is well, the speech of the community

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[54]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:830-901.

[55]Ibid., p. 862.

[56]Ibid.

[57]Ibid., p. 863. Italics are mine.

[58]Ibid., p. 862.

in all its forms must also be action. Similarly, action will also necessarily be both implicitly and indeed explicitly speech."[59] Speech is an inception of action and contains potential for action. This potential needs actualization in event or behavior. Speech and action, therefore, share a common source, the active life of man, a common unity, concretely manifested behavior, and a common goal, active knowledge.

As an organic unity, speech and action require "equal seriousness and emphasis."[60] To be concerned with one is to be concerned with the other. Barth says of the ministry of the community: "it is not as though it were concerned with something different in the two, but wholly with the same thing though in different ways in both. For its speech is also action and its action speech." Action is not an "incidental" or "optional" element. One need not wonder whether action should accompany speech or simply "do so perhaps in a very rudimentary and imperfect form."[61] Speech and action are different forms of the same message. Speech is incipient action--it contains the seed, nucleus, or motive for action, as action does for it--while action is the concrete actualization of speech. At times one or the other may be predominately effective.

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[59]Ibid., p. 882.

[60]Ibid., p. 863.

[61]Ibid.

Barth asks: "Who can say . . . that the community may not often speak and therefore call to knowledge more clearly and forcefully with its action than with the verbal speech which must necessarily . . . precede and indicate the meaning of the action?"[62] While stressing the necessary sequential priority of verbal speech because of its interpretative function, Barth regards action--non-verbal speech--as equally requisite to effective communication. A primary function of communication is thus to act by speech, i.e., to initiate and interpret an act in speech and then to complete and actualize it in deed.

To Experience Human Fellowship in Reality

The fifth function of communication is to experience human fellowship in reality. This is Barth's final purpose for speech and a synoptic statement of the preceding functions. The statement is seen in the context of Barth's discussion of man's struggle with a false image or picture of reality. In overcoming this broken and distorted image Barth thinks that speech has a final function.[63] Consequently, an important function associated with the final function of speech is the opportunity provided in speech

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[62]Ibid., p. 864.

[63]An interesting analogue to Barth's discussion is Floyd Matson's The Broken Image (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1964; Anchor Books, 1966).

to receive, create, compare, and criticize images, or world views. With these related concepts Barth climaxes his view of the functions of communication and contributes his concept of shared responsibility in the interpretation of world views. If this responsibility is undertaken, he believes, communication can assist humanity toward a more meaningful and truthful understanding of existence.

Barth believed man generally exists in a "lost and false situation" in which his "whole being is given an aspect which deforms, distorts and corrupts its true reality."[64] Although man and the world were inherently created in goodness by God, this goodness and reality has been falsified by man, who tends to resist truth. A new human situation is needed in which man's representation of reality will correspond to truth. As it is, "reality discloses itself to him in an image which is defaced, distorted, and corrupted."[65] This false image has no power to change truth or reality, only to obscure it. Even in the broken image, truth is present and inescapable. But man is bound to his image of reality; "it controls, determines, limits and characterises his existence." He finds that "he is forced to have and to experience the world and himself in the defaced, distorted and corrupted form in which

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[64]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:468.

[65]Ibid.

they represent themselves to him in this image. He exists in a subjective reality alien to and contradicting his objective reality."[66]

Barth says that "the painfulness of the situation is concentrated, and finds its most striking co-efficient and exponent, in the problematical nature of human speech."[67] He sees speaking and hearing as a tremendous possibility by which the human situation can become truly humane, although this is often not the case. "What should take place in human speaking and hearing," he says, "is the utterance, declaration and revelation of human reality with a view to its indication, impartation and communication to others and with the final purpose of the communion or fellowship of the one with the others."[68] This statement capsulizes much of the thrust of the preceding functions of communication--with their emphasis upon reference-making, participation, encounter, speaking, and acting in order to convey and share human reality. Barth observes that reality cannot be communicated so long as truth is resisted or if speakers "lack this determination."[69] All speech, he says, suffers from this lack. Consequently, one of the

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[66]Ibid., p. 469.

[67]Ibid., p. 472.

[68]Ibid., p. 472-473.

[69]Ibid., p. 473.

important functions of speech is to discern and compare images, i.e., the pictures of reality or world views which communicators presuppose, imply, or declare. Speech is thus an opportunity to receive, create, compare, and criticize images. Barth states that "in any . . . cognitive act, we are definitely active as the receivers of images and creators of counter-images."[70] Although perceptual mediation is involved in this process, Barth's greater concern is not with psychophysical processes, which are fundamentally important, but with the actual content of the world views of those in encounter. Despite a positive capacity to receive and create images, humanity tends toward the creation of false images. Consequently, comparing and criticizing images or pictures of reality is a vital, ongoing function in communication. Barth says:

> This is why it is so tremendous a task, constantly to be resumed . . . not only to say, even in our own thoughts to ourselves, let alone to others, that which we really intend to say in the way intended, but also to hear that which others both say and intend to say, i.e., to interpret or even to discern the dream with which they are occupied when they say it.[71]

Both speakers and listeners, Barth holds, share responsibility to assist each other in the task of understanding their shared experience. One should not be concerned with his own vision of reality alone but also with that of the other; one should not interpret his

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[70]Barth, Doctrine of God, 2/1:182.

[71]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:473.

image only but assist the other in mutual interpretation. Unfortunately, this responsibility is often neglected or rejected. Barth says "this is why human speech especially is the arena of such ceaseless misconceptions and errors, and also of so many more or less intentional great or small concealments and distortions, and also of so many tragic and comic misunderstandings for which both speakers and hearers must usually share the responsibility."[72] Conversely, if this shared responsibility is undertaken, then speech with its great possibilities for referring, perceiving, and participating in reality, will serve its final function of declaring and creating fellowship in reality.

Summary

Barth explored "the important sphere of speech" or the "field of speech" in developing his anthropology or doctrine of man. This chapter investigated a central question related to his anthropology: What is Barth's conceptualization of communication? To answer this question, five functions of communication were analyzed: (1) to make reference, (2) to participate in a common event of perception, including the equally important related functions of obtaining understanding and achieving an interpretation, (3) to establish our humanity through being in encounter and

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[72]Ibid.

reciprocity, (4) to act, and (5) to experience human fellowship in reality, including the important function of receiving, creating, comparing, and criticizing images, or pictures of reality.

First, communication concerns making reference to objects. This function has important consequences, providing elements of necessity, objectivity, variety, control, seriousness, and substance for communication. Second, communication involves participation in a common event of perception, including the related functions of understanding and interpretation. Communication occurs when speaker and listener share a perception of an object through symbolic encounter with that object and when it in turn mediates something specific to them and confronts them so that they have to take a position with respect to it. Third, communication establishes our humanity. This occurs through being in encounter and reciprocity. Being in encounter was examined in three phases: as mutual transparency, "mutual speech and hearing," and "mutual assistance in the act of being." The concept that "humanity as encounter must become the event of speech"--in which Barth details the meaning of speech as reciprocity--was also examined in its four processes: reciprocal expression and address and their respective reception. Fourth, communication involves action. Speech and action are organically related. These elements share a common source, the active life of man, a common unity,

concretely manifested behavior, and a common goal, active knowledge. As an organic unity, speech and action require "equal seriousness and emphasis." Fifth, Barth's final function for communication is to experience human fellowship in reality. This includes the related function of receiving, creating, comparing, and criticizing images, or pictures of reality. With these concepts Barth climaxes his view of the functions of communication and contributes his concept of shared responsibility in the interpretation of world views.

Barth's thought related to the functions of communication contributes to a philosophy of communication in at least three areas: first, toward a better conceptualization of interpersonal communication; second, toward an axiology, or general value theory of communication; and third, toward a teleology or goal conceptualization of communication. Barth's contributions to interpersonal communication include: his stress upon objectivity in communication; his interpretation of communication as participation in a common perceptual event, emphasizing a comprehensive understanding of the speaker-object-percipient/interpreter relationship; his concept of being in encounter and reciprocity, contributing to the communicology-anthropology relationship; his concept of speech as action; his concept of speech as experiencing fellowship in reality; and his concept of speech as an opportunity to receive,

create, compare, and criticize images or world views. These concepts, because of their humane goal orientation, also contribute to an axiology and teleology of communication. Contributions to these areas include: grounding interpersonal interaction in concepts of what ought to occur in communication; providing concepts of the desirable and beneficial which give interactions an ethical basis, motive, and direction; arguments for integrity of reference-making in speech; being in encounter as a key to actualizing humanity; and an emphasis upon human fellowship through communication based upon realism achieved through ongoing encounter, sharing, and criticism of world views.

CHAPTER V

PRINCIPLES OF ECUMENICAL COMMUNICATION

This chapter considers how community or intergroup unity may be achieved. The central question addressed is: What principles of communication did Barth believe were conducive to ecumenicity or cooperation and unity among groups? To answer this question the chapter first considers the significance of a theory of community for contemporary rhetoric, and, second, examines some foundational presuppositions in Barth's theory of community.[1]

A theory of community is seen herein as in the mainstream of contemporary rhetorical theory and needs. To this Barth contributes a theory of how community may be achieved.[2] Barth's perspective includes an inductive, scientific approach to community, and his "principle of the common center," which orders community around a common object of interest, emerges as the axial

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[1]This chapter does not analyze Barth's total theory of community but outlines concepts significant for intergroup relationships and communication.

[2]For a discussion of the importance of studying how community is achieved, see Bitzer and Black, Prospect of Rhetoric, pp. 202, 240, 242, passim.

concept in his theory of community.

The Significance of Community for Rhetoric

This section considers the significance of a theory of community for contemporary rhetoric. A theory of community contributes to rhetoric in at least three ways: (1) as part of a conception of the task of rhetoric; (2) as part of a conception of modern inventional theory; and (3) as part of a conception of how the "universal audience" or audiences are produced.

The ecumenical task of rhetoric

The National Developmental Project on Rhetoric urged the development of a rhetoric of ecumenical significance. Lloyd Bitzer suggested "that we view rhetoric as a discipline and art whose practical mission is realization of the great aspirations of the human community."[3] In this perspective, rhetoric includes approaches to problem-solving applicable to contemporary issues. Rhetoric enables one to address "vital subject-matter," "to formulate and evaluate positions, and to engage in intelligent dialogue and action."[4] Accordingly, a shift of emphasis was urged for rhetorical studies in which attention would be given to contemporary problems "to which rhetorical methods would be applied."

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[3]Ibid., p. 202.

[4]Ibid.

Specifically, scholars at the Wingspread Conference advocated "investigations of the ways in which communication can help develop world community."[5] The final report of the National Developmental Project called for a "reconstituted" rhetoric, conceived of as "an art of inquiry and communication, seeking to generate agreements among people. . . ."[6] The conferees considered the ecumenical task of rhetoric so central to contemporary rhetoric that in their "Suggestions for Future Projects" they proposed "that the National Endowment for the Humanities support a project designed to examine the arts of communication for their service to and impairment of community. . . ."[7] Thus, an approach to rhetoric emphasizing contributions to contemporary problem-solving, competent dialogue, and the generation of agreements among people, is part of a fundamental conception of the task of rhetoric.

Community and inventional theory

A theory of community also contributes to rhetoric as part of a conception of modern inventional theory: (1) as part of its basis, through the concept that rhetoric studies how cooperation is achieved; (2) as part of its evaluative function, which involves

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[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid., p. 240. Italics are mine.

[7]Ibid., p. 242.

making judgments among competing world views; and (3) as part of its goal, which involves generating frameworks which put group relations into meaningful perspectives. First, a theory of community basically contributes to inventional theory by conceptualizing rhetoric as a study of how cooperation is achieved, which entails a view of invention as a means of analyzing and correlating relationships between people. The "Committee on the Nature of Rhetorical Invention" of the National Developmental Project regarded the connection between rhetoric's ecumenical task and inventional theory as basic. They began their report "with the assumption that a vital aspect of man's experience is rhetorical," i.e., "that every man will find himself in circumstances in which he cannot act alone, in which he must seek to act cooperatively with others. . . ."[8] Rhetorical invention not only analyzes subjects but also "problems" and "situations" including "the discovery of . . . grounds of agreement. . . ."[9] A theory of invention adequate to contemporary needs includes a theory of how community is achieved. Inventional theory concerns not only the origination and management of discourse--the cohesion of ideas--but also the origination and cohesion of groups. It contains a logic of intergroup relations, of how diverse groups can be brought into

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[8]Ibid., p. 228.

[9]Ibid., p. 203.

common unity.[10]

Second, a theory of community contributes to the evaluative function of inventional theory, which involves making judgments among competing world views, particularly as to the means of their presentation. The final report of the National Developmental Project concluded that rhetoric "examines and criticizes communication practices for their quality--ultimately in terms of their contributions to . . . community" and that "the methods of rhetoric allow us to judge and order competing conceptions of 'the aspirations of the human community.'"[11] Rhetoric criticizes world views because argumentative and persuasive strategies relate to such positions. Understanding an argument requires understanding the world view from which it originates and which it supports. Robert L. Scott

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[10]Lloyd Bitzer addressed the need for a modern theory of invention based on a theory of community as follows: "It was one thing to devise a theory of invention for ancient Athens, where the public was very small--a city-state, a community having stability of beliefs and values. Today there are multiple communities marked by swiftly changing populations, conventions, beliefs, and values, but trying to talk with one another and needing desperately to join in wider and more fulfilling communities. Amid such diversity and change, can a theory of invention be devised? Can legitimate grounds of judgment and action be discovered or generated? Can community be formed? Is it true that a workable theory of invention depends on the existence of community?" Ibid., p. 204.

[11]Ibid., p. 240. Cf. Barth's concept that speech compares and criticizes world views, i.e., the pictures of reality which communicators presuppose. This notion of the purpose of speech correlates with its ecumenical task and with the evaluative function of invention. Cf., "Barth's Conceptualization of Communication," pp. 133-137, supra.

and other conferees of the "Committee on the Nature of Rhetorical Invention" argued that "galaxies" of arguments and persuasive strategies "have centers, which may be called world-views or stances or originating positions." In this view, "inventional resources may vary radically from one galaxy to another."[12] Commonalities also exist. Rhetorical efforts function to maintain world views. World views become frames for rhetorical efforts. Such "frames become instruments for rhetorical invention." Questions concerning the correlation of world views arise: ". . . . how do galaxies shift? How do new centers of commitment come into being?"[13] Such questions impact upon the ecumenical task of rhetoric and invention, which asks how groups with varied world views and rhetorical resources can generate agreement.

Third, a theory of community contributes to inventional theory as part of its goal, which involves generating frameworks which put group relations into meaningful perspectives. If world views frame rhetorical efforts, then ways of relating different world views, groups, and their rhetorics, become necessary. The conceptual mobility of modern society--the fact that many persons move in and out of different frames of reference during their

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[12]Ibid., p. 233.

[13]Ibid., p. 234. Italics are mine.

lives--increases this need.[14] Ways of bridging differing structures of experience are needed. A "generative theory of rhetoric" brings diverse groups, ideas, situations, products, events, and experiences into meaningful perspectives. Such a theory recognizes that "the constituents of invention" include "social conditions and resources" and "perspectives on facts, persons" as well as methods of presentation.[15] Generative rhetorics may establish bases for communication between groups, provide means for evaluating intergroup relations, and contribute to community among groups. From such generative theories, new world views and rhetorical frames may emerge, new rhetorical resources may surface, and communicative efforts may improve. Invention, then, will not be addressed so much to the recovery and reinforcement of predetermined arguments, but to the discovery and generation of new relationships between ideas and people.

Community and the "universal audience"

A theory of community also contributes to rhetoric as part of a conception of how the "universal audience" or audiences are produced. The "Committee on the Nature of Rhetorical Invention" recommended "that inquiry be made into the problem of 'producing'

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[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid., p. 231.

rather than 'discovering' the universal audience or audiences." Reference was made to Perelman's "concept of a universal audience" as "obviously important in the search for rapport or at least operational agreement among diverse groups."[16] Thus, the issue of community was linked with the concept of a universal audience. Lloyd Bitzer, for example, linked the issue of community with that of the universal audience by asking: "Are we witnessing the breakdown of traditional communities and the transition to something very new--perhaps a universal public, a universal audience?"[17] It was argued that "audiences are made, not given."[18] Accordingly, a generative theory of rhetoric must involve the invention or generation of audiences. Broader conceptions of audiences from receiver and intergroup perspectives are needed. The "Committee on the Nature of Rhetorical Invention" noted that in a process view of invention "the rigidity of the distinction between speaker and audience loses its sacredness" and that "the interplay of various points of view is often more generative than a single person's efforts."[19] The following section examines some principles which Barth believed could help interrelate diverse views of different

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[16]Ibid., p. 235. Italics are mine.

[17]Ibid., p. 204.

[18]Ibid., p. 235.

[19]Ibid., pp. 230-231.

audiences.

Barth's Theory of Community

This section examines some factors in Barth's theory of community. Three areas are analyzed: (1) Barth's concept of community with related terms; (2) intragroup factors; and (3) intergroup factors.

Barth's concept of community

Barth's theory of community involves defining and characterizing his concept of community with the related terms ecumenical and catholic. Since the latter terms represent the framework of Barth's concept of community, they are examined first. The terms "catholic," ecumenical, and community, respectively, are examined as they structure Barth's theory of community.

Barth's universal framework

Barth's concept of the term "catholic," which he regarded as the comprehensive basis for the related concepts ecumenical and community, frames his theory of community.[20] Barth defined the term as follows: "The adjective 'catholic' means general, comprehensive. It speaks of an identity, a continuity, a universality,

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[20]While employing the term ecumenical, Barth preferred the term "catholic." This was because he considered that the term "catholic" refers to the "being of the community" and "has an even wider temporal dimension" or historical connotation than the term ecumenical. Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:701-704.

which is maintained in all the differences."[21] Three elements in this definition urge discussion as aspects of Barth's theory of community: the elements of (1) "comprehensiveness" or "universality," (2) "identity," and (3) "continuity."[22]

First, Barth's theory is "comprehensive" in scope; it includes all humanity. Barth employs the term "catholic" to refer to the universal church and he applies it, through the church, to all persons. The universal church is a "provisional" human fellowship or audience which "points beyond itself to the fellowship of all men in face of which it is a witness and herald."[23] This "provisional," temporary audience points to an even larger universal audience. The church does not exist for itself but "for the world."[24] Barth saw the church as the "inner circle" of an all-encompassing election by God of all humanity.[25] Barth's theory of community was inclusive. He saw the church, a universal community,

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[21]Ibid., p. 701. Italics are mine.

[22]The terms "comprehensive," "identity," and "continuity" are discussed respectively. Concepts related to the term "universality" are subsumed under the term "comprehensive."

[23]Barth, Doctrine of God, 2/2:196.

[24]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:830.

[25]Barth, Doctrine of God, 2/2:196. Cf. Barth's description of the community as "the provisional representation of the whole world of humanity justified in Him." Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:643.

an opening to an even more comprehensive frame of reference, the universal body of all humanity, and as part of a comprehensive world process. He saw that the church exists in "world-occurrence."[26] This comprehensive viewpoint enabled Barth to include all persons in his theory of community and in his communications. Because of his universal framework, Barth did not exclude any; he was able to reconcile, not to divide. His was a rhetoric of "yes," not of "no."[27] In contrast to sectarian, nationalistic, provincial, or otherwise exclusive views, Barth adopted an architectonic approach to community which, instead of isolating any segment of humanity, addressed all.

Second, Barth's concept of the term "catholic" contributes the element of an "identity," a "sameness" and "solidarity" to a theory of community.[28] Barth wrote that "the term 'catholic' speaks explicitly of the true Church activating and confirming its identical being in all its forms." Barth saw the church as an ultimate unity. He said "Credo catholicam ecclesiam . . means that . . . I believe in the existence of a community which in the

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[26]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:681-761.

[27]Cf. Barth's statement concerning the Christian community that "in the long run it can only be pro, i.e., for men, since God in Jesus Christ is and has decided for them." Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:717-718.

[28]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:701-702; ibid., 4/3:773.

essence which makes it a Christian community is unalterable in spite of all its changes of form. . . ."[29] By taking this position, Barth was able to address members of different churches as consubstantial, as one in nature. This aspect of his "catholic" viewpoint provided him with a universal principle of identification, i.e., a conviction concerning the intrinsic unity of all humanity. This principle of "identity" presupposes a shared "common life" for the church and for all humanity. This principle of "identity" brought all communication within a framework of community between persons. On this premise, Barth approached any auditor with the expectation of finding a "neighbor" or "brother." On this premise, no listener or audience is to be approached as "a stranger" or strangers.[30]

Barth held that "the community does not perform its task properly if it does not perform it in this manner /i.e., by personally addressing a subject/--speaking implicitly or explicitly in the second person."[31] Barth says that the "manner in which the community comes to them /its fellow humanity/, acts toward them, thinks of them and speaks to and concerning them . . . necessarily

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[29]Ibid., p. 702.

[30]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:441.

[31]Barth, Doctrine of God, 2/2:324; Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:772.

emerges in the being and activity of the community. . . ."[32] This means of address and relation "necessarily impresses itself upon them, causing them to consider that in the community it has to do with a society of men who are . . . attempting to see and understand them in their own place and manner. . . ." The principle of "identity" requires addressing others as familiar, "as those who are well acquainted."[33] It requires a relationship and address characterized by "solidarity." "Solidarity with the world means full commitment to it, unreserved participation in its situation. . . ." Although the principle of "identity" or of "solidarity" does not remove the occasional necessity of contradiction, of saying "no" as well as or as part of saying "yes," it does mean proceeding "from the profoundest commitment to the whole of humanity and each individual man. . . ."[34]

Third, Barth's concept of the term "catholic" contributes the element of a "continuity" to a theory of community.[35] Barth says that the term catholic has a "temporal dimension," i.e., "exists in history," "is history," "makes history," and "exists

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[32]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:772.

[33]Ibid.

[34]Ibid., p. 773.

[35]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:701, 704.

only in change."[36] The concept of community involves a dynamic historical evolution. Neither a particular community nor a universal community exists statically. The community "is on a way which is surrounded by a continually changing landscape and in which it is itself continually subject to change. . . ." While "summoned always to be the same" it does so "in forms which are always new."[37] While preserving some constant features, communities are transformed in the process of time with changing conditions. Communities, like their language and ideas, must be renewed to meet evolving needs. This dynamic approach to community provides for restructuring groups and interpersonal relations. This principle of "continuity" attempts to correlate communities by pointing out to them that they are not states, i.e., self-contained entities, but evolving aspects of a total historical process.

The meaning of ecumenical

Several features of the term ecumenical deserve recognition as contributing to Barth's theory of community: (1) Barth generally equated the terms ecumenical and "catholic," seeking to enrich and expand the term ecumenical by investing it with the meanings of the term "catholic"; (2) the term ecumenical refers to efforts

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[36]Ibid.

[37]Ibid.

to develop intercommunity relationships and concerns principles which promote unity in these relations; and (3) Barth's theory of ecumenics views "a people" or community as a "fluid concept," a "historical construct," and a matter of "attitude" which recognizes the relativity of all communities and is hence open to changes in them.

First, Barth generally equated the terms ecumenical and "catholic." He held that "every . . . Christian community is as such an ecumenical (catholic) fellowship, that is, at one with the Christian communities in all other places, regions, and lands."[38] While he preferred the term "catholic," Barth often employed the term ecumenical synonymously with it. He urged, for example, that instead of emphasizing "local, national, continental," "social and racial traditions" or other situational factors which influence the speech of the Christian community, "theology will have to stand guard over the purity of the Christian message and insist on the ecumenical, catholic, and universal sense and character of this message."[39] While regarding "catholic" as the initially broader term, Barth observed that "as progress is made" in ecumenical efforts, "there are signs that . . . the wider term 'catholic'

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[38]Karl Barth, Community, State, and Church (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., Anchor Books, 1960), p. 150.

[39]Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 193.

will fill out or burst through the narrower term 'ecumenical.'"[40] The concepts associated with the term "catholic"--its comprehensiveness ("universality"), principles of "identity" and "continuity"--attach to the term ecumenical. Barth thus contributes to a theory of community by expanding the term ecumenical with concepts related to the term "catholic."

Second, in keeping with its etymology, Barth says that the term "catholic" contains "the narrower sense of 'ecumenical,' i.e., identical in the whole inhabited world, in all parts of the globe where men live. . . ."[41] He adds that the term "has been chosen to describe the modern attempts at reunion and unity."[42] Ecumenism concerns principles of unification, concepts which help bring the world's communities into unity. This concern for unification accentuates one of the most important ideas which Barth's use of the term ecumenical adds to a theory of community; namely, that ecumenics concerns intercommunity relationships. Barth notes that "from the geographical meaning" of ecumenical "there has derived . . . the wider sense in which the reference is to the relationship of the Christian community to the other natural and

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[40]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:703.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid.

historical human societies."[43] Ecumenics, then, concerns relationships between communities and principles which coordinate and promote unity in these relations.

Third, an important contribution emerging from Barth's view of ecumenics is his idea of "a people" or community as "not a fixed but a fluid concept."[44] The concept of a people is "a historical construct," a matter of an "attitude" based on a particular conceptualization of a history of persons in a geographical area.[45] Common "experiences," "certain historical foundations and facts, events and formations" plus "economic, social, cultural, political and religious factors" constitute "the historical realities which underlie the existence and distinction of peoples."[46] Differing attitudes, "assumptions, questions, anxieties, needs and tasks" related to these factors become "the root of . . . serious division" between peoples.[47] In discussing the problem of "Near and Distant Neighbours," Barth states that he is "concerned with relationships in which it is essential for every man to exist as man."[48] While

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[43]Ibid. Italics are mine.

[44]Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/4:291, 300-301.

[45]Ibid., p. 295.

[46]Ibid., p. 294.

[47]Ibid., p. 295.

[48]Ibid., p. 285. Italics are mine.

taking seriously "historical realities" such as the above characteristics of intercommunity relationships, Barth points out the flexibility of such factors. The concept of community must be taken dynamically, not statically.[49] Boundaries between peoples are permeable and expandable. The speech, geography, and history of any people is subject to change.[50] Assimilations of peoples through language, geography, and historical events occur. As a matter of ecumenical attitude, recognizing the relativity of communities is important. Ecumenics concerns relationships and these are not fixed or final but subject to change.[51] Such an ecumenical attitude is important to Barth's theory of community.

The meaning of community

The term community focuses the meanings attached to "catholic" and ecumenical. The specific elements associated with these terms--those of "universality," "identity," "continuity," the concern for principles of unification, for intercommunity relationships, and the fluidity of the concept of "a people"--all converge with the term community. Several additional concepts which Barth related to the term contribute to his theory of ecumenics: (1) the

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[49]Ibid., p. 294.

[50]Ibid., pp. 300-301.

[51]Ibid., p. 302.

upbuilding of community proceeds from a particular human fellowship to a universal fellowship; (2) the community exists in its task; and (3) the community exists as an event.

First, the upbuilding of community proceeds from a particular human fellowship to a universal fellowship. This is a key and scientific, inductive element in Barth's approach to the emergence of community. Barth holds that the universal without the particular is insubstantial. He grounds his theory of community in distinctly visible groups. He says, for example, that "the Christian community is a phenomenon which all men may perceive and assert like all others in the sphere of history. . . ."[52] Barth says that "the place where the . . . Catholic Church is <u>believed in</u> is the <u>particular</u> church which has its own history and its own outlook."[53] Ecumenism must be based on "the concrete actuality of unitedness," upon an actually existing fellowship.[54] Ecumenism begins with a "particular community" which "must itself become the "ecumenical company," i.e., the aspirations of the universal community must be actualized first within a local group.[55] While

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[52]Barth, <u>Doctrine of Reconciliation</u>, 4/3:722.

[53]Karl Barth, <u>The Word of God and the Word of Man</u>, trans. by Douglas Horton (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), p. 228.

[54]Karl Barth, <u>Theology and Church: Shorter Writings, 1920-1928</u>, trans. by Louise Pettibone Smith (London: SCM Press, 1962), p. 125.

[55]Ibid.

the universal community has its abstract aspects, existing partly as a symbolic construct and matter of belief and attitude, these aspects are manifested visibly by a local community. The universal is disclosed in the particular and therein becomes "an empirical and rationally comprehensible" phenomenon.[56] The Christian community "exists essentially in the sphere of visibility" and hence "within world-occurrence."[57]

Accordingly, Barth's approach to the building of community proceeds inductively--from definite groups with specific histories, characteristics, and situations--to more inclusive intercommunity relationships. The particular "points" toward the universal.[58] Thus, universal community is built up inductively. Barth's position contrasts with a deductive approach to community. He places community "not behind or above" but "within world-occurrence." The Christian community does not exist in world process "like an embedded foreign body, like a meteorite which has fallen from a distant sphere. . . ." Community emerges from within the particular.[59] Barth's inductive orientation to building community sees the Christian community as one particular (although

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[56]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:722-724.

[57]Ibid., p. 723.

[58]Barth, Doctrine of God, 2/2:196.

[59]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:723.

distinctive) communal element among others:

> The Christian community does not merely resemble the other elements, magnitudes and factors in world-occurrence; for all the particularity of its structure and situation it is of like manner with them. It does not hover over them; it exists on the same level. It can thus be seen together with them, and critically and constructively compared with them.[60]

Because the Christian community stands as an element in world process, although it points beyond it, it has something to offer a general theory of community. Barth says "there can be no excluding the attempts made to understand it in the categories of general sociology as a union or society . . . and therefore historically as a link in . . . the history of the development of such unions. . . ."[61] In his inductive approach to the development of community, then, Barth proceeds from the particular to the universal, holding that the universal is manifested through the particular. As particulars, communities--and the larger community to which they point--may be studied as empirical, rational entities. Critical study of the elements of communities and in community may contribute to ecumenical unity.

Second, the community exists in its task. Barth stresses

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[60]Ibid.

[61]Ibid. Cf. Barth's question: "Should the clarifications which it /theology/ has helped achieve in the community also have significance . . . for the general cultural life of mankind (for instance, for the sense and procedure of other human sciences)?" Barth, Evangelical Theology, p. 194.

that the community is a fellowship of persons cooperating in the fulfillment of common goals. In the concept of community, Barth says, "we are concerned not merely and not primarily with institutions and offices but with human beings gathered together in corporate bodies in the service of common tasks."[62] As the community exists in its task, a specific purpose sustains its being and action. Because the community's task precedes its existence, the existence of a specific need and purpose serves as a summons for the formation of community: "It does not exist before its task and later acquire it. . . . Its task constitutes and fashions it from the very outset."[63] The community "is measured" by its task throughout its history. Its speech, actions, or abstentions from action are evaluated "in relation" to its task.[64] The community is defined by its task.

The content of the community's task--its specific origin, nature, and goal--characterizes the community. The task "is . . . addressed to specific people."[65] These persons are "awakened and assembled . . . for the fulfillment of a specific task."[66] The

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[62]Barth, Community, State, and Church, p. 149.

[63]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:795-796.

[64]Ibid., p. 796.

[65]Ibid.

[66]Barth, Doctrine of Creation, 3/4:488.

task and its specific content calls the community into being, shapes it, and gives it direction. The Christian community, for example, has the task of witnessing to Jesus Christ and in so doing "points beyond itself to the fellowship of all men. . . ."[67] It has a specific task of communication with respect to a specific message and with respect to a specific movement which, in this instance, carries it toward the achievement of universal community. The community is united by a central task, "by its common cause . . . in relationship to its individual members. . . ."[68] The norms and roles of the community, its order and the "particular functions" committed to its members, relate to its central task.[69] The task orientation of the community motivates its members, occupies its attention, and energizes its inquiry and activity:

> This task is so profoundly stimulating, so radically impelling, so important, urgent and comprehensive. . . . It demands its undivided attention and devotion because with every new gathering of the community and in every new situation in its history it must be taken up with full readiness and concentration, and enquiry must be made into its meaning . . . and the proper way to discharge it.[70]

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[67]Barth, Doctrine of God, 2/2:196.

[68]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/2:678; cf. ibid., 4/3:800.

[69]Ibid., 4/2:678.

[70]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:800.

The common task of the community does not imply suppression of individually "varied questions and concerns and cares and aspirations." These differences should not be concealed or denied.[71] Different situational factors necessarily entail, to some degree, different concepts, approaches, and activities in the service of similar causes. Consequently, the activity of the community "cannot possibly become the uniform and monotonous function of a collective."[72] Nevertheless, the community, despite any differences, attests to the unity of its task.[73] The fulfillment of this task provides a "constancy" and purpose for the community.[74]

The task of the community also entails an inner and outer movement: The community's "outward service has necessarily an inner dimension." The content of the community's task--its message or "witness"--must "be addressed to its own members and continually made perceptible to them."[75] The community must be "enlightened" and "awakened afresh . . . to participation" in its task. The community must be strengthened and renewed from within before it can attest its message from without. On this basis of

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[71]Ibid., pp. 800-801.

[72]Ibid., p. 801.

[73]Ibid.

[74]Ibid., pp. 813, 818.

[75]Ibid., p. 832.

an inner to an outer movement Barth speaks of the need of ecumenics within Christian communities: "The centripetal forces which it /the Church/ needs are still weak enough to make even the unity of Christian communities among themselves extremely doubtful in many places and a special 'ecumenical' movement both desirable and urgently necessary."[76] The task of the community proceeds from the inner to the outer. Barth says that if the necessary inner witness of the community failed "its outer witness might be compared to the empty bed of a stream which has been sealed at its source. . . ."[77] Barth says that the inner-outer direction of the community's task and the proclaiming of its message "is not to be reversed."[78] At the same time, care must be taken that the community's work not become a "sterile inbreeding" or "an end in itself" but a service extending from within to and for those without.[79]

Third, the community exists as an event. Barth argues that

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[76]Barth, Community, State, and Church, pp. 152-153.

[77]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:832.

[78]Ibid.

[79]Ibid., p. 833. Barth further compares the "relationship of outward and inward action" in and from the community as follows: "In this respect we may think of the circular motion of the heart which in order to pump blood through the whole organism not only goes out in the diastole but also has to return in the systole, yet only to go out again in the renewed diastole." Ibid.

the community has its being "in the particular relationship" of those who share "a common response" to its message.[80] This response and relationship occurs and the existence of the community is fulfilled in interaction. "The Church," for example, "is a community which hastens towards and comes together in a public convocation."[81] Community is "not the being of a state or institution, but the being of an event, in which the assembled and self-assembling community is actively at work. . . ."[82] Community is an occurrence. The community "is when it takes place, and it takes place in the form of a sequence and nexus of definite human activities."[83] The community exists in its history and behavior. "In these human activities as such it can be studied. . . . It is a phenomenon of world history which can be grasped in historical and psychological and sociological terms. . . ."[84] Some observable elements in the being of the community as an event include: "a gathering and separation of certain men to this fellowship"; evidence of "an . . . organization and constitution and order"; activities such as its "cultus, teaching, preaching, instruction,

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[80]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:651.

[81]Ibid.

[82]Ibid., pp. 651-652.

[83]Ibid., p. 652.

[84]Ibid.

theology," etc., "all in definite relationships to the political and economic and social conditions and movements, to the scholarship and art and morality, of the surrounding world."[85] The community thus exists and may be studied, along with its "laws," "tradition," and "purpose," in its "connexions and similarities and reciprocal actions in relation to other human phenomena and their history."[86] Barth holds, then, that the community exists "in the event or occurrence or act of its upbuilding as a community."[87] The community sustains its existence in its active gathering, interaction, and communication.[88]

Intragroup factors

Since Barth's concept of community stresses a particular to a universal, and an inner to an outer movement, it is appropriate to consider factors within groups which may contribute to community before proceeding to factors in relations between groups. Factors here refer to conditions and particularly attitudinal elements which may contribute to the achievement of community. In addition to his explanation of ecumenical concepts, Barth discussed other

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[85]Ibid.

[86]Ibid.

[87]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/2:641.

[88]Ibid., 4/3:832-833.

specific factors extending from these concepts which contribute to intergroup cooperation. He stressed that ecumenics begins within a particular group and extends from there to other groups. The following factors synthesize some of Barth's answers to two interrelated questions with which he was concerned: What does it mean to confess unity or community in the face of disunity? and What does it mean to do this from a particular place, i.e., beginning with one's own group?[89] Barth's answers to these questions from the intragroup perspective gather around three factors: the importance of each group (1) taking its separate existence seriously; (2) facing questions, including the question of its individual existence; and (3) agreeing to listen.

Taking separate existence seriously

A number of factors relate to this foundational issue. Taking the separate existence of a group seriously includes at least the following factors: (1) taking the local situation seriously; (2) seeing unity in disunity; and (3) pursuing the intentions of a particular community "to their origins and actual meaning," developing and implementing them.[90]

First, moving toward unity from a particular place with one's

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[89]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:677, 680.

[90]Ibid., p. 680.

own group means taking the local situation seriously. Barth explains this point initially by stating what such a movement does not mean. This progression cannot mean an escape from "the particular in our life situation . . . into the general and absolute. . . ."[91] We cannot escape from concrete disunity into abstract unity. It is necessary "to accept, to understand, or at least to be aware of the particularity of one's historical relations. . . ."[92] We do not progress toward unity by overtly or covertly rebelling against "the particular in our life situation, against those elements which are the results of chance and history. . . ."[93] We must begin where we are. An individual's escape from his particular history and community--a withdrawal "in disgust or superiority" from one's community into "some hermit's retreat or ivory tower" where one represents only one's "own person"--"is to abandon not only the distress but the hope of the community and indeed oneself."[94] Barth says that "a will to unite cannot be developed by people who have not yet taken themselves, to say nothing of others, seriously. . . ."[95] As with an individual,

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[91]Barth, Word of God and Man, p. 227; cf. Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:677-678.

[92]Barth, Word of God and Man, p. 227.

[93]Ibid.

[94]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:678.

[95]Barth, Word of God and Man, p. 228.

when communities "try to bring unity nearer by ceasing to take themselves seriously, by letting slip the special responsibility which they have, by denying and renouncing their special character for the sake of internal or external peace, . . ."[96] genuine unity cannot be achieved. Such an escape does not lead to unity but is "the way to a new separation."[97] Unity must be the product of critical thought, including self-examination. Hasty alliances based upon mixed motives and without careful prior thought, do not contribute to responsible unity. Barth says that we must be willing to go "the straight and rigorous way that leads from thought to action--and no other."[98] "Unity" cannot be served by understandings that lack content."[99] Communities, like individuals, must know themselves, take their particular histories and character

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[96]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:678.

[97]Ibid.

[98]Barth, Word of God and Man, pp. 225, 229. Barth says: "And thought means recollecting the meaning of what we say and do. When thought enters in, perhaps this or that will cease to be said and done or begin to be said and done otherwise than hertofore. Perhaps the same thing will need to be said and done with another meaning than it has had. Thought means fundamentally neither affirmation nor negation. . . . Thought, in any case, need not separate us from each other, even if its theoretical and practical results are not the same with all of us. I hold therefore that it must be fundamentally possible in the long last to come to an agreement in thought even with a Catholic theologian. . . ." Ibid., p. 133.

[99]Ibid., 228.

seriously, and proceed from the place of self-understanding, if they are to be integrated meaningfully into larger unions. Critical self-awareness is a key to progress toward unity. No external attempt at unity which fails to take seriously the separate existence and character of particular groups can contribute to genuine community.[100]

Second, moving toward unity from a particular place with one's own group means seeing unity in disunity. This movement and perspective is basically a progressive dialectic involving the critical correlation of opposites.[101] In this view, opposing communities represent contrasting viewpoints which, while they may contradict each other, are necessary, complementary elements in a total process. Opposing communities represent important parts which deserve synthesis into a subsequently richer whole. On this Barthian and Hegelian view, "the unity of truth" is seen as "the unity of contradictions."[102] A starting point in the movement toward unity is to see the unity of the whole in the various parts in which it can or does consist. Since the parts are necessary to

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[100]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:678-679.

[101]For a discussion of Barth's view of dialectic as a critical correlation of opposites, see "Existential Communication and Dialectic," pp. 97-100, supra. The above statements extend from this discussion.

[102]Barth, Protestant Thought, p. 297.

the whole, opposing communities and individuals cannot evade the fact of disunity. Because of the interdependence of the divided parts or groups, "concretely the gathering to the community means for each of us the gathering to one of these divided communions."[103] Movement toward unity requires facing the fact of disunity. The divided parts must be taken seriously "in their distinctness" if the whole is taken seriously. Thus, Barth asks how one community can know the unity of the whole "or be zealous and active in relation to it?" if it fails to recognize its own uniqueness even in disunity.[104] Divided communities need to learn about unity from their fragmented and isolated situation. A universal community and particular divided communities are correlates; "the one depends on the other."[105] Disunity must exist for reconciliation to occur; the parts must be accepted in their disunity before the whole in its unity can be formed. At this point the scientific, inductive character of Barth's approach to community can be seen: he recognizes that community begins with an inductive, critical examination of each part--of each community in its distinctive being--and that community is built up as these parts are examined, extended, and correlated. A totality is discovered or generated

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[103]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:679.

[104]Ibid.

[105]Ibid., p. 679-680.

by understanding, energizing, and combining particular elements.

Third, moving toward unity from a particular place with one's own group means pursuing the intentions of a particular community "to their origins and actual meaning," developing and implementing them. To achieve unity it is necessary that individual groups attempt to live up to their own claims. If individual communities are inert, if intragroup movement is lacking, intergroup unity would lack momentum. Consequently, movement toward unity does not imply a lessening but an intensification of intragroup efforts, provided these reach out to intergroup unity. If this reaching out for unity does not occur at the intragroup level, it is likely not to occur at all.[106] A community needs to understand its origins to envision its destiny as related to others. Barth says that "appreciation of the last things cannot be won by hurriedly passing over the things that come before."[107] Each community has a preliminary history which merits careful examination and criticism.[108] Each community has its reason for being. Each community has its historical roots; it was born out of some need and choice, having "its relative necessity and right as the complement to some omission or error on the other side." This

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[106] Ibid.

[107] Barth, Word of God and Man, p. 228.

[108] Ibid.

"relative necessity and right may still give at least a relative justification for its continuing." Consequently, a community may have, "for the time being, no cause to renounce . . . /its/ particular existence and doctrine and form of life. . . ." On the contrary, it may feel compelled "to cherish and renew and develop it."[109] The result of a community pursuing its origin and meaning may be that "unity . . . is proclaimed in all its . . . plurality."[110] Since a community may have its relative necessity, the claims of each may contribute to wider community. If each community follows out its presuppositions and implements them, communities may draw together as they realize their relative need for each other, their shared interests, and their converging interests.

Questioning individual existence

A second intragroup factor in moving toward unity involves a group's willingness to face questions and to question itself. This issue includes: (1) facing the causes of disunity and questioning their necessity; (2) facing the question of tradition; and (3) facing the question of a community's being.

First, moving toward unity means facing the causes of disunity and questioning their necessity. In the process of pursuing

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[109]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:680.

[110]Ibid., p. 681.

its origins, intentions, and claims, a community has opportunity to face the causes of its separation from other communities. It has opportunity to consider whether the reasons for its separate existence are justified, or, whether the causes of division are sufficiently relative and, hence, removeable or reconcilable. Is the community certain that the reasons for its particular separation from other communities are justified?[111] There are possible "grounds for the emergence of the spearation in question: national peculiarities, particular historical and social groupings, the existence of leading personalities . . . traditions . . . the usage and customs of the land, the instinct of self-preservation, the requirements of prestige natural to every human society. . . ."[112] A community needs to ask itself if these or other grounds for separation are tenable. It needs to ask itself if these differences are such that they "really cannot be surrendered in relation to others?"[113] It needs to ask itself if it really believes in these issues or if it is only holding to them out of supposed necessity. Does the community have different options in confronting these issues? Must a community accept the continued existence of walls "which separate . . . or can they be in part or

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[111]Ibid., p. 680.

[112]Ibid., p. 681.

[113]Ibid.

totally broken?"[114] Movement toward unity can be made at the intra-group level if a community candidly confronts and responds to such questions related to the causes of its disunity.

Second, moving toward unity means facing the problem of tradition. In facing causes of division and asking whether existing walls of separation must remain, a possibility is that "they have been broken long since, or exist only as an external factor and in the interpretative historical phantasy of a relative minority. . . ."[115] Barth argued for the importance of taking each community's history seriously. He warned, however, against clinging to "the interest of the antiquarian," i.e., adhering to traditional ways for their own sake, either because they are familiar or convenient, but not because they are based on critical understanding.[116] Speaking of his own Swiss Reformed background, Barth wrote:

> To our fathers the historical past was something which called not for loving and devoted admiration but for careful and critical scrutiny. They cherished the conservative principle, it is true, but with them it was so often crossed and broken by the opposite one that their beginnings at best show only a fragmentary loyalty toward the past, and for the most part represent a clean and merciless break with it.[117]

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[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Barth, Word of God and Man, pp. 228-229.

[117] Ibid.

Barth refused to accord "a finality and sacredness" to a particular tradition. While deeply respecting the values of particular traditions, he refused to see them statically. Since his view of history was evolutionary, he believed that the received teaching of a community must be--and usually was intended to be--left "open to being improved upon in the future."[118] Tradition is a preliminary history, not a final one. Tradition can be constructive and powerful when we learn from it, build upon its better parts, adjust its teaching, and face its issues "in our way amidst our surroundings" as our predecessors "did in their way amidst their surroundings."[119] Moving toward unity, then, involves facing the problem of tradition.

Third, moving toward unity means that each community must face the question of its being. In facing the causes of disunity and questioning their necessity and in facing the question of tradition, a community has cause to reconsider its own necessity, to reopen the question of its individual existence.[120] A community may be more radically confronted by internal self-questioning than by competing communities. If a community questions its individual existence in "good conscience," it may contribute to unity by

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[118]Ibid., p. 229.

[119]Ibid., p. 271.

[120]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:682, 684.

breaking walls of division from within. Self-questioning may diminish intergroup conflict. Barth says that under the impact of such questioning "all would then find themselves drawn up in their own place, and doubt, scepticism, indifference and the like would be everywhere impossible."[121] Opening the question of the existence of individual communities does not mean their "dissolution" but "fulfillment."[122] Traditions should not be swept aside hastily; each may contribute to a larger, more enduring unity. As a result of facing the question of its individual existence, a community is likely to become more open to the traditions of other communities. As a community confronts this question, it may ask "whether and to what extent there ought not to be on this side a willingness to learn from them instead of simply opposing them."[123] Along with the possibility of fulfillment, of new combinations of traditions and communities, a question of sacrificing less durable elements remains. In facing "the practical question what is to become of its individual existence" a community may find "that it will be necessary to scrap, or at least to revise or modify, its particular constitution. It may be that at many points it will need to

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[121]Ibid., p. 682.

[122]Ibid., p. 683.

[123]Ibid.

be liberated or renewed in its separate existence."[124] Some elements may be preserved, others destroyed, while others are perpetuated in new combinations. Barth offers this encouragement: "And even if the form is not exactly one and the same, will not that which remains in the one place be so near and similar to that which remains in the other that on both sides we will actually find that we are positively on the way to unity. . . ."[125] Much is to be gained, then, in the movement toward unity if communities will face the question of their separate existence.

Agreeing to listen

A third intragroup factor in moving toward unity involves a willingness to listen. This issue includes: (1) recognizing that community is based upon "common hearing and receiving" and that participation in a community depends upon this; (2) deciding to hear; and (3) recognizing that listening is preparatory and integral to common debate and discussion.

First, moving toward unity means recognizing that a community "is constituted . . . by a common hearing and receiving. . . ."[126] This aspect of a community's existence is a

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[124]Ibid., p. 684.

[125]Ibid., p. 685.

[126]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:588.

"common action" which is "partly contemporary" and "to a much greater extent . . . non-contemporary. . . ."[127] Since community is not a state but a sequence of events and actions affecting interpersonal relationships, contemporary participation is required if one genuinely relates to a community. The community lives in its members, their relationships, and their communication. Where individuals "attempt to break loose from the community of hearing and receiving" community is denied.[128] Hearing in community is hearing and receiving in participation. This involves ongoing "contemporary" interaction, i.e., that which "takes place among those who belong to the same age and period" of a community. It also involves "non-contemporary" hearing, i.e., that which "takes place . . . between the present age and those which preceded it."[129] Community is based upon both kinds of conversations. As it progresses from its origins to its goal, a community finds itself initiated, sustained, and fulfilled in the active listening relationships of its members. Without such listening relationships, individuals exist in relative isolation, not in community. Listening provides a concrete basis for much of the community's being and action. The community's proclamation or confession is based

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[127]Ibid.

[128]Ibid.

[129]Ibid.

on listening. "Confession," Barth says, "is the accounting and responding which in the Church we owe one another and have to receive from one another in relation to the hearing and receiving of the Word of God. Confessing is the confirmation of that common action."[130] What a community proclaims is what it hears. What it proclaims attests to what it has heard as a community either in its "contemporary" interaction or in its dialogue with its "non-contemporary" predecessors. Careful listening needs to precede proclamation. If a community proclaims a unified message, mutual listening within the group must have occurred.[131] If we speak with a group, we must hear with it. Thus, "a single voice" in isolation is not the voice of community. We can hear the voice of community "only where it is spoken out of a community of hearing and receiving . . . and therefore in fellowship."[132]

Second, moving toward unity means deciding to hear. Barth says that "the decisive step" in uniting divided communities is that they "should honestly and seriously try to hear . . . the

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[130]Ibid.

[131]Ibid., p. 591. Probably much more research needs to be done into the listening habits of groups, not simply as individualistic auditory processes, but also from the philosophical standpoint of how listening shapes the common attitudes, behavior, values, and speech of a community. Perhaps communicologists need to study listening as a movement as they have speaking movements.

[132]Ibid.

voice of the others."[133] Barth says that when a community does this "in its own place" but "without leaving it," the community is on the way to unity.[134] In making this decision and effort, it abandons its claim to exclusiveness or superiority. If it refuses to make this decision and effort, it cannot be on the way to one community. If it is open to "the question of its individual existence," then "it will be willing and ready to let them say something to it. . . ."[135] Agreeing to listen is a decisive step toward unity, for in it a community is "thus renouncing, in fact, its isolation . . . its exclusion. . . ."[136]

Third, moving toward unity means recognizing that listening is preparatory and integral to common debate and discussion. Barth sees the teaching of a community as open-ended. Since no community's doctrine is final, at least from the standpoint of its interpretation, listening is necessary to common debate and discussion. Barth says that "I cannot thrust myself into . . . debate . . . without first having listened."[137] If one's

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[133]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:684.

[134]Ibid.

[135]Ibid.

[136]Ibid. For a further, brief discussion of Barth's views about listening in the context of an ecumenical discussion, see his lecture "Roman Catholicism: A Question to the Protestant Church." Barth, Theology and Church, pp. 307-333.

[137]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:589.

discussion is to be heard in a community it must be based upon having heard that community.[138] The ability to address and influence a community depends upon prior listening. If one identifies with a community, one must hear its views. Effective speech is built upon effective listening. Speech--particularly that addressed to a community--is a kind of feedback. Barth emphasizes that proclamation "is an accounting and responding in relation to . . . hearing and receiving. . . ."[139] He believed that if community is achieved there must be an agreement to listen and this involves recognition that listening is vital to communication which attempts to lead to unity.

Intergroup factors

Barth's theory of community follows an inner to an outer movement, beginning within a group and reaching out to others. Consequently, what is said here under the intergroup heading is an extension of the intragroup factors. Three final aspects of Barth's theory of community are examined: (1) the value of common debate and discussion as an activity leading to unification; (2) the importance of a comprehensive basis for agreement; and (3) the "principle of the common center."

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[138]Ibid. Italics are mine.

[139]Ibid.

Common debate and discussion

A first intergroup factor in moving toward unity involves appreciating the ecumenical value of common debate and discussion. The adjective common is an important prefix to these terms. It refers to equal participation by all members of a community. For Barth, these activities are the responsibility of an entire community and an important factor in achieving unity between groups. Two aspects of this idea include: (1) debate and discussion as corporate action; and (2) the ecumenical goal and attitude of debate and discussion.

First, moving toward unity means participating in debate and discussion as corporate action. These activities are vital links between listening and proclamation in communities. Listening should precede responsible proclamation, for responsible proclamation is an accounting of serious hearing.[140] But this proclamation needs debate and discussion if it genuinely represents community. Debate and discussion bridges listening and proclamation, helping to criticize, shape, and interpret each. From the standpoint of community, neither listening nor the proclamation it shapes is a private action. Hearing is not isolated and for self; it is in, with, and for the community.[141] Similarly, proclamation, if based

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[140]Ibid.

[141]Ibid., p. 588.

on this kind of hearing, is in, with, and for the community. In thus speaking to a community, i.e., on the basis of first having seriously listened to it, the speaker acknowledges his solidarity with the community by putting his ideas before it. Barth says that this presentation is not undertaken "to force" the message on the community "in the peculiar form in which I necessarily hold it. . . ." Instead, the speaker puts his message before the community "to enter into debate" with it; "a debate in which I may have to be guided, or even opposed and certainly corrected, i.e., an open debate. . . ."[142] Such proclamation is not set forth with finality; the speaker should "regard it as a question for general consideration. . . ." Such a speaker presents his views with a sense of individual responsibility to the community. Regardless of the acceptance or non-acceptance of his message by the community, the speaker fulfills his responsibility to share with it. Accordingly, the community, recognizing that its vitality depends upon the fresh contributions of individuals, knowing its dependency upon encounter, likewise determines to "take account" of a speaker's message and "to enter into a debate which is open on its side as well."[143]

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[142]Ibid., pp. 588-589.

[143]Ibid., p. 589.

Second, the "aim" of such debate is community or "fellowship."[144] Such debate and discussion has an ecumenical goal: it leads to unification. Consequently, it is undertaken not in a competitive but in a cooperative spirit, in an attitude of mutual trust and respect.[145] The life of the community, Barth believes, is manifested "as a debate which comes into being because the members . . . owe and pay one another and must receive from one another a mutual accounting. . . ."[146] Such debate "has a common end," the "common proclamation" of the community.[147] This debate is not an end in itself. The community's "debate stands under a binding purpose and this purpose is that of union or unions. . . ."[148] Thus, "the immediate goal" of the debate "cannot be that of remaining apart, but of coming together and standing together in view of the actual coming together in proclamation."[149] This "immediate goal" of the debate and discussion is that those who participate in it, for example, those engaged in an ecumenical conference, should make a "common confession" and reach

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[144]Ibid.

[145]Ibid., p. 590.

[146]Ibid., p. 591.

[147]Ibid.

[148]Ibid., p. 592.

[149]Ibid.

a distinct, if limited agreement. The debate should be productive; it should yield definite proposals and/or articles of agreement. Such documents "can never be more than a partial agreement, an agreement at definite points. . . ."[150] Despite this provisional and temporary character, such agreements testify that genuine progress has been made, that honest hearing, proclamation, and discussion has occurred, and that decisions have been made.[151] Such decisions document the positive results of interaction and generate community. Barth believes that "it is in these common decisions in which a word is spoken here and there . . . as a word to be respected, it is in the existence of these agreements that we live out" the community's "history."[152] Community, then, is a product of decision and intergroup relationships which emerge, in significant measure, from common debate and discussion.

Comprehensive basis for agreement

A second intergroup factor in moving toward unity concerns the importance of establishing a comprehensive basis for agreement. Two aspects of this issue include: (1) the importance of establishing a "preliminary history" through comprehensive position

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[150]Ibid.

[151]Ibid., p. 594.

[152]Ibid., p. 595.

statements; and (2) the importance of addressing compelling and contemporary concerns.

First, moving toward unity means recognizing the importance of establishing a "preliminary history" through comprehensive position statements. Community and the elements which contribute to community do not spring up suddenly; they are products of a particular history in which "insights" have been won by a group and "battles" have been fought for their advancement and preservation.[153] Consequently, if communities are to blend and share their insights in mutual agreements and interaction, comprehensive discussions, including position statements representing the groups involved, are necessary. Barth underscores the importance of accounting for the preliminary histories of groups as follows:

> A creed without such a preliminary history. . . . might serve as a testimony to man's benevolent love of unity; as an expression of a common wish or ideal; as a compromise formula for groups whose differing statements are no longer the expression of living . . . thinking and who can now make a common statement only because they no longer know what once divided them. . . .[154]

Such an agreement, proclaimed for its own sake, would be like "a beautiful flag which is left in the barracks when the regiment is on the march."[155] Sometimes the purpose of a position statement

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[153]Barth, Theology and Church, p. 129.

[154]Ibid., p. 130.

[155]Ibid.

based upon a "preliminary history" may be "defined simply as the gain of a better understanding of why and how far, under present circumstances . . . we cannot understand each other."[156] Such a statement at least prepares for serious discussion. Such a statement may help avert the problem of groups "looking past each other" and "talking past each other all along the line" in their discussions. It may also help bridge the problem of detachment in such discussions and encourage groups to confront important issues.[157] A position statement based upon a "preliminary history," i.e., one which squarely faces root issues between groups as grounded in their past and present, may also permit "division to manifest itself." This can stimulate thoughtfulness on all sides. Barth considered achieving understanding of a central, divisive issue, as a "success" in ecumenical effort.[158] A position statement based on a "preliminary history" enables groups to recognize conceptual similarities and to explore differences. The clarification of these differences may provide a basis for immediate and ongoing discussion.[159]

Second, a corollary of the foregoing is recognizing that

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[156]Ibid., p. 272.

[157]Ibid., p. 273.

[158]Ibid.

[159]Ibid., p. 285.

moving toward unity means addressing compelling and contemporary concerns. Genuine unity is not achieved on the basis of superficial, merely verbal affirmations. Articles of agreement, if valid, must arise from some present "concrete situation" which "forces" the community to reach specific intergroup agreement.[160] Such agreements involve "a communicating of something to know and something to undertake. . . ."[161] They should contain definite content and directions. They should include a declaration of insights and truths which a community "feels itself constrained to bear witness to . . . before the world in a formal document. . . ."[162] Accordingly, a community which desires to proclaim its insights must have the courage to address itself to "problems of life which <u>today</u> beset its members. It cannot wait until its statement comes thirty years too late. . . . It must act while the problem is still 'hot,' . . . at the outset of the problem."[163]

"Principle of the common center"

A third intergroup factor in moving toward unity concerns

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[160]Ibid., p. 129.

[161]Ibid.

[162]Ibid.

[163]Ibid., pp. 132-133.

Barth's "principle of the common center," which orders community around a common object of interest. Two aspects of this pivotal issue include: (1) the role of the common center and object; and (2) how it functions in building community.

First, the common center and object plays an important role in unifying communities. A community, like the disciplines which serve it, must be fundamentally "self-nourished at its own source."[164] If a community or a discipline loses sight of its special object of interest and inquiry, it loses its integrity and cohesiveness.[165] Communities or disciplines which lose their special focus and reason for being face self-destruction.[166] Accordingly, Barth refused to ground or justify theology in any other philosophy or science. He insisted that the Church as a community, and theology as a discipline, must stand upon their own feet.[167] A community, like a discipline, must have its own, distinct "central binding element."[168] The Christian community, for

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[164]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:x. For example, theology as a discipline serves the Christian community. Cf. p. xii, ibid.

[165]For a definition and discussion of "object," cf. pp. 27-39, supra.

[166]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:x.

[167]Ibid.

[168]Cf. John W. Keltner, Interpersonal Speech-Communication (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1970), pp. 26-41.

example, has its "own source and object."[169] This is usually interpreted by Barth to mean God, Christ, or the Scriptures, although man and his language are considered subsidiary objects of inquiry. The special object may vary from community to community as it does from discipline to discipline. The community's experience is oriented around the object. As an objective reality, which may also be a subject or a personal model for the community, it provides a focus or center for the being and action of the community.[170] The history, work, and future of a community relates to its special object of interest. Thus, in some communities the special object becomes an object or center of total or at least comprehensive "concern" and "commitment."[171]

Second, the common center and object functions in building community. This "principle of the common center," which orders community around a common object of interest, is the axial concept in Barth's theory of community. This principle, which is similar to Barth's concept of fidelity to the object, extends this concept, previously seen as determining the nature of scientific activity, reason, and language, into the area of intercommunity relations.

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[169]Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/1:2.

[170]Cf., for example, Barth, Doctrine of the Word of God, 1/2:442; Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/3:681, 711, 831.

[171]Barth, Evangelical Theology, pp. 74-95.

Whereas a discipline orders its inquiry around a special object, operating at the level of analysis and investigation, a community orders its experience and practical activities around a special object. The speech of the community "points" to, "summons" to, "witnesses" to, and creates "fellowship" around a special object.[172] The special object is a reference point for the community. Where the same common reference is viewed by different groups, a commonality and hence basis for communication and community exists. Despite differences, groups with the same special object may unite around this object. Barth believed that community may be promoted by challenging each group to orient itself to its claimed center, its special object of concern. If each group does this, he believed, the interests of different groups will ultimately meet as they extend their own presuppositions and follow their own approaches in reaching out to this common object. Thus, each community should "move forward" from its own place toward its special object of concern.[173] A desideratum is that "from their own place all would orientate themselves to the centre which in loyalty to their own cause they regard as their own peculiar centre."[174] Strong impetus for unity would proceed from each

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[172]Barth, Doctrine of God, 2/2:196.

[173]Barth, Doctrine of Reconciliation, 4/1:680.

[174]Ibid., p. 682.

community as it addresses its own object and center of interest.

While the results of such an orientation would vary from group to group, Barth contends that, collectively, individual communities would be drawn closer together in the quest for a common object of interest. If differing communities reach toward their shared object of concern, then the possibilities of agreement are enhanced. If agreement is achieved or at least a common interest is expressed for the central concern, then peripheral interests can later be brought into agreement. Speaking of theology's ability to accommodate a wide variety of viewpoints, Barth says:

> All these exist together: the one not without the many and the center not without its infinite circumference, although no one point of the circumference is identical or interchangeable with any other. None is insignificant, unimportant, or dispensable; none is without its special truth and worth. There is none that does not represent and reflect the whole; and there is none concerning which, proper or improper knowledge might not have crucial consequences. . . . Oriented to him who is its starting point and its goal, theological knowledge becomes a knowledge that articulates the unity of the manifold.[175]

Barth's "principle of the common center" thus correlates concepts and groups by seeing the interdependence and importance of many ideas and communities, by giving each its place in a broadly-conceived galaxy or frame of reference. Instead of focusing on peripheral interests or piecemeal efforts to obtain unity, Barth concentrates attention upon a central object of concern, recognizing

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[175]Barth, Evangelical Theology, pp. 87-88. Italics are mine.

that a broad array of interests may be addressed to this object. The center organizes the circumference. Each community's special object and that shared by many communities, provides a unifying center. Barth capsulizes this function as follows: "While it gives every point of the circumference its special due, it brings together all parts from their own individual centers to their common center."[176] The "principle of the common center" unites converging lines of interest of many communities as they point toward a common object. It does this inductively and scientifically, requiring each local group to extend its own presuppositions, develop and manifest its own claims, and, by so doing, inductively discover the degree of its shared interest with other communities.

Summary

This chapter considered how community or intergroup unity may be achieved. The central question was: What principles of communication did Barth believe were conducive to ecumenicity, or cooperation and unity among groups? The chapter considered a theory of community's significance for contemporary rhetoric and examined some presuppositions in Barth's theory of community. Barth's "principle of the common center," which orders community around a common object of interest, emerged as the axial concept

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[176] Ibid., p. 88. Italics are mine.

in his theory.

A theory of community contributes to rhetoric: (1) as part of its task; (2) as part of modern inventional theory; and (3) as part of a conception of how the "universal audience" or audiences are produced. A theory of community contributes to rhetoric's task as a discipline serving "the great aspirations of the human community." It investigates "ways in which communication can help develop world community" and concerns generating agreements among people.

A theory of community contributes to modern inventional theory: (1) as part of its basis, since rhetoric studies how cooperation is achieved; (2) as part of its evaluative function, which judges among competing world views; and (3) as part of its goal, which involves generating frameworks for group relations. Invention discovers grounds for agreement and cooperative action. It concerns not only the origination and management of discourse--the cohesion of ideas--but also the origination and cohesion of groups. A revitalized concept of invention contains a logic of intergroup relations. Invention criticizes world views because persuasive strategies relate to such positions. A "generative theory of rhetoric" attempts to bridge differing structures of experience. Invention generates relationships between ideas and people.

A theory of community contributes to a conception of how the "universal audience" or audiences are produced. It recognizes that audiences are generated, not given, and that the "concept of a universal audience" involves "the search for rapport or at least operational agreement among diverse groups."

Three areas of Barth's theory of community were analyzed: (1) his concept of community with related terms; (2) intragroup factors; and (3) intergroup factors. The terms "catholic," "ecumenical," and "community" structure Barth's theory. His universal framework includes elements of "comprehensiveness," "identity," and "continuity." Barth envisioned a universal audience of all humanity which he addressed through the church, a "provisional" audience pointing to the even larger world-wide audience. Because of Barth's universal framework, he was able to reconcile, not divide. Barth's "principle of identity" presupposes solidarity, commitment, and participation with one's fellow-humanity. The "principle of continuity" sees communities as "existing only in change," as part of a dynamic historical evolution. The term ecumenical refers to efforts to develop intercommunity relationships. Barth's theory of ecumenics views "a people" or community as a "fluid concept," a "historical construct," and a matter of "attitude" which recognizes the relativity of all communities and is hence open to changes in them. The term community focuses

Barth's ecumenical thought and entails these notions: (1) the upbuilding of community proceeds from a particular human fellowship to a universal fellowship; (2) the community exists in its task; and (3) the community exists as event. Barth's theory of community is scientific and inductive. The universal is disclosed in the particular and therein becomes an empirical and rational phenomenon. The building of community proceeds inductively--from definite groups with specific histories, characteristics, and situations--to more inclusive, intercommunity relationships. The community is sustained, defined, and measured by its task. The community's norms, roles, and functions relate to its task. Its task has an inner and outer movement; it must be addressed first within the community and then without. The community exists as event. Community occurs; it "is when it takes place" in interaction.

Three intragroup factors in Barth's theory of community include: the importance of each group (1) taking its separate existence seriously; (2) facing questions, including the question of its individual existence; and (3) agreeing to listen. Taking the separate existence of a group seriously involves taking the local situation seriously; seeing unity in disunity; pursuing the intentions and claims of a community. Communities must take their particular histories and character seriously if they are to be

integrated meaningfully into larger unions. Seeing unity in disunity involves dialectical correlation. Opposing communities represent complementary elements in a total process. The unity of the whole may be seen in the various parts in which it can or does consist. Questioning individual existence involves: (1) facing the causes of disunity and questioning their necessity; (2) facing the question of tradition; and (3) facing the question of a community's being. Agreeing to listen involves: (1) recognizing that community is based upon "common hearing and receiving"; (2) deciding to hear; and (3) recognizing that listening is preparatory to common debate and discussion. If we speak with a group, we must hear with it. Listening precedes proclamation. Proclamation is an accounting of what has been received by listening to a community. Listening may constitute a movement in the history of a group. In deciding to hear, a community abandons any claim to exclusiveness. Agreeing to listen is a decisive step toward unity.

Three intergroup factors in Barth's theory of community include: (1) the value of common debate and discussion leading to unification; (2) the importance of a comprehensive basis for agreement; and (3) the "principle of the common center." Corporate debate and discussion can lead to unity. Debate and discussion bridges listening and proclamation, criticizing, shaping, and interpreting both. Proclamation invites dialogue. Debate and

CHAPTER VI

BARTH'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO A PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNICATION

This chapter examines some comprehensive implications for a philosophy of communication inherent in the work of Karl Barth. To accomplish this objective, the chapter takes a brief retrospective and prospective view of Barth's communicology. The following aspects are considered: (1) the purpose and thesis of the study; (2) some specific contributions to a philosophy of communication; and (3) some limitations of Barth's philosophy of communication and areas in which further research is needed.

The purpose of this study was to clarify and structure the implicit philosophy of communication in Barth's writings and development. The thesis of the study was that a philosophy of communication can be derived from his writings. Following the premise that Barth's work contains sufficient data to constitute such a philosophy, a number of areas of interrelated concepts relevant to communication were located. These concepts were discovered through a primarily inductive investigation of Barth's writings,

particularly his extensive systematic work, the Church Dogmatics. The thesis of the study was tested through a comprehensive analysis, interpretation, synthesis, and critical evaluation of communicological topics and concepts in Barth's work. Evidence presented in the discussion of a number of areas of Barth's rhetorical thought indicates a positive confirmation of the thesis.

Barth's thought contributes to a philosophy of communication in a number of specific ways. No attempt will be made here to re-summarize all of the particular findings of each chapter, since these are provided in detail in the chapter summaries. Instead, a number of comprehensive implications of Barth's philosophy for the study of communication are itemized. The following implications are observed: a study of Barth contributes (1) to an intercultural rhetoric; (2) to the architectonic and inventional functions of rhetoric; (3) to a scientific concept of reason; (4) to the philosophical basis of communication; (5) to the concept of speech as emerging meaning; (6) to a concept of dialectic; (7) to a conceptualization of the functions of speech; and (8) to a theory of community.

(1) Barth contributes to an intercultural rhetoric. At a time when cross-cultural studies are increasing and recognition is growing that rhetoric needs to expand its international scope, Barth contributes to intercultural dialogue in the field of

communication. Barth's work, which was produced in over one hundred major translations, has transcultural interest. Barth contributes the communicological thought of a thinker of international impact. He contributes the thought of a critical-humanistic scientist from a European tradition. Barth contributes a philosophical communicology which emerged within the context of his Swiss-German academic environment. Historically, rhetoric profited from studies of great European thinkers. Recently, continental philosophers such as Perelman, Heidegger, and Tillich have contributed to rhetoric. Barth contributes to an international dialogue concerning the role of communication which needs continuing development. Barth's contributions to intercultural rhetoric include, beside factors in his development leading to international dialogue, at least the following elements: his view of one of the primary functions of speech as the opportunity to compare and criticize differing world views; his concept of a people as a fluid, historical construct, susceptible to change as part of a dynamic evolution; his concept of a world community and universal audience of all humanity, along with specific intragroup and intergroup factors which may lead to international unity.

(2) Barth contributes to the architectonic and inventional functions of rhetoric. The National Developmental Project on Rhetoric addressed the need for rhetorical concepts which enable persons

to evaluate ideas, positions, and to engage in dialogue and action. Barth contributes to such concepts. The central theme evolving in this study was that the primary architectonic principle governing Barth's development and thought is a movement toward complete fidelity to the object of inquiry as determining the nature of scientific activity, rationality, and discourse. This architectonic principle oriented Barth's philosophy of communication. This concept, for example, was the basis for his experimental view of language, i.e., his notion that language must be faithful to the objects it represents and flexible in following their movements. Language must be tested for its fidelity to the objects it represents. It must be in process, fluid, mobile, tentative, and always subject to revision; it must reflect movement, change, energy, and life if it represents the ontological dynamic of objects. Rhetorical productions must evolve with the changing realities they seek to represent. Barth's concept was further manifested in his "principle of the common center," in which the axial concept of intergroup unity is viewed as the sharing of a common object of interest. Fidelity to the object, then, is an architectonic, unifying principle of human motivation and language in Barth's thought. This architectonic concept may broaden and enrich communication theory by its ability to synthesize scientific activity, reason, language, the functions of speech, and efforts

toward intergroup unity. This principle contributes a powerful inventional concept which governed the production of Barth's discourse. This concept also contributes to the concept of a discipline, with its emphasis upon the investigation of a special object within a specific field of inquiry. Thought, action, and discourse, is oriented toward this object and receives its impetus from its particular domain. Barth believed that if disciplines, communities, and speakers adhered more carefully and scientifically to the special objects they seek to investigate and represent, thought and communication would be enriched.

(3) Barth contributes to a scientific concept of reason. For Barth, logic is bound to its object. Reason is adherence and appropriate response to the object of inquiry. The proper use of reason is determined primarily by its object. Ontology precedes epistemology. Rationality is participation in "meaningful order," and this involves correlating objectivity and subjectivity. Reason is an event, an act of such correlation. Rationality is ordered activity according to the law of an object's being. Barth thus contributes to a scientific concept of reason by emphasizing its conformity to ontology and by correlating human experience with it.

(4) Barth contributes philosophical bases for communication. Barth's ideas about communication derive from his theory of existence. He integrated a balanced conception of existential and

dialectical notions. By grounding communication in the object-subject relation, Barth maintained an equilibrium between objectivity and subjectivity. He believed that essence communicates through existence, i.e., the nature of universal being communicates through the nature of individual being. Consequently, the humanistic and naturalistic unite. Speech can never lie at the surface of reality; it participates, even in its defective forms, in the order of reality. Speech manifests the laws, continuities, constants, and models of the phenomenal universe. Existential, essential, and empirical realities unite in genuine communication. Barth establishes speech in a dynamic ontology which preserves subjectivity in the framework of objectivity. He contributes to a philosophical basis for communication by his concepts of knowledge and experience. Knowledge is the acknowledgment of reality, and hence must move with ontological reality. Knowledge requires active personal participation. As the subject is determined by an object of knowledge, he provides proof of his acquaintance with it, he coexists with it, and becomes a witness to its content. Communication is thus grounded in the nature of knowledge and experience, which involves subjective appropriation from the thing known. Barth speaks of a "knowledge-relation," of knowledge as an existential relation between a knower and a thing known. Content emerges from the active relation between knower and thing known.

Knowledge and experience are thus processive, and inventional theory must consequently be revised to keep pace with evolving reality. Knowledge and discourse must retain the character of an investigation; they must remain provisional; they require supplementation. Human thought and discourse are part of a history; knowledge and speech are in a process of becoming.

(5) Barth contributes to the concept of speech as emerging meaning. Because of Barth's view of existence, knowledge, and experience, he regarded speech as a process of emerging meaning. A message must develop from the many words spoken. Meaning must evolve. Discourse must give birth to meaning--physical stimuli must become ethical and intellectual phenomena achieving existence in the subjective experience of receivers. Critical science concerns the "total series of expressions" of a community. In its total configuration and history, meaning varies according to the connotations it has acquired in different contexts or which have been attached to it through criticism. Criticism must focus upon centers of meaning within a total configuration of discourse, concentrating upon a few major elements within these. Barth thus provides a meaning-centered view of the history and criticism of discourse.

(6) Barth contributes to a concept of dialectic. Barth saw dialectic as conceptual evolution, as the critical correlation of

opposites, and as implying an elasticity, portability, and adaptability of concepts. Dialectic is the movement of reason within existence. Concepts possess full ontological status as much as any occurrence in the physical world. Ideas are an organic part of history. Consequently, speech may be regarded as an organic part of history. Dialectic incorporates diverse lines of thought. The dialectical thinker and speaker experiences the pressures and tendencies of a subject matter, interacts with it, and then releases this experience in a dynamic, flexible manner.

(7) Barth contributes to a conceptualization of the functions of speech. Barth's functions for speech include making reference, participating in a common event of perception, establishing our humanity through being in encounter, acting, and experiencing human fellowship in reality. Barth's development of these functions contributes to a better conceptualization of interpersonal communication, to the value theory of communication, and to a goal conceptualization of communication. Rationality depends upon objective reference. Communication thus also involves participation in a common event of perception. Humanity is actualized in encounter. Speech and action are an organic unity. The final function of speech is to experience human fellowship in reality.

(8) Barth contributes a theory of community in keeping with the ecumenical task of rhetoric. He provides an inductive and

pragmatic approach to the building of community which makes specific applications and extensions of his philosophy of communication in the service of intergroup unity. This theory contributes to a generative rhetoric which provides specific guidelines for developing intercommunity relationships. Barth's theory includes fresh perspectives on listening, proclamation, corporate debate, discussion, and other topics which underscore the value of and reinterpret rhetorical concepts in the service of community.

Finally, some limitations of Barth's philosophy of communication and areas in which further research is needed may be observed. A basic limitation in dealing with Barth is coping with the vastness of his writing. Although the Dogmatics, which contains more than eight thousand pages, was comprehensively examined for this study, this represents only about half of Barth's writing. Considerable further research might be conducted by focusing upon his other articles, books, and pamphlets, or upon specified periods of his life and work. Another limitation and incentive for further research stems from Barth's productiveness and style. Because Barth wrote prolifically over such a long period of time, the researcher must synthesize concepts over a broad span of time and literature. Further, Barth's style, at least in the Dogmatics, is often complex. Dialectical qualifications of his ideas occur in various parts of his work. One must be careful to interpret Barth

from the perspective of his overall thought and development. This productiveness and style is a stimulus to all kinds of topical investigations, however, as Barth develops as many interesting subthemes as he does major ones. No doubt this variety of Barth's topics has contributed to the development of more than eighty-five dissertations in this country which have dealt with aspects of his work. In view of Barth's outstanding significance as a theologian and in view of growing recognition of his philosophical acumen, this trend may well continue.

As a stimulus to further research, several questions and areas of investigation may be suggested: How do Barth's ideas about communication compare with those of other contemporary philosophers and theologians? To what extent can the views of these philosophers be correlated as a contemporary philosophy of communication? How does Barth contribute to the philosophy of the social sciences? What contributions does Barth make to semantics? to a theory of criticism? to the psychology of communication? to a theory of religious-ethical communication? To what extent does Barth present a personal and conceptual model for intercultural communication? These and other questions seem to indicate that Barth offers ongoing and varied direction for further research.

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