

CAMP WILLIAM JAMES AND ROSENSTOCK-HUESSY'S VISION OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM

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INTRODUCTION

As I thought about what to say in this paper, it soon came to me that I had written three books on precisely this theme. [BB, DB, LM] Those books, in turn, had been based on journal notes that I'd begun in the fall of 1940—when I'd first attended a Rosenstock-Huessy course at Dartmouth. I was bowled over by his impassioned lectures at that time. Then, in spring of 1941, I heard his friend Dorothy Thompson deliver a Dartmouth lecture—to a large part of the student body—urging us to quit college and join Camp William James, a volunteer service project that had just lost its government funding. Half its members were from the regular CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) and half were recent graduates of Dartmouth and Harvard. Rosenstock-Huessy had been a key figure in the founding of that project, during 1940, and had told us about it in class. Well, after hearing Dorothy Thompson, I decided to quit college—and joined the camp in June.

I remember how we'd explain the camp to our many visitors (one of whom was Eleanor Roosevelt). We'd say that our main goal was to provide an example of how work-service could be integrated into one's college education. If most colleges and universities, around the globe, would include in their curriculum a year (or at least 6 months) of such service, that would enrich their students' other years, in college and beyond. More specifically, it would overcome academia's tendency to focus on abstract ideas—and overlook the pressing issues of our times, ones that can lead to such breakdowns of society as a depression, revolution, and war. We believed, with William James, that young people must learn how to mobilize their energies in peacetime, so that war will no longer “have its way.” [ME]

I can still remember how I'd spend many a Sunday afternoon at the camp, sitting in a high field, and reading Rosenstock-Huessy's just-published magnum opus, *Out of Revolution*. A unique mixture of history, philosophy, and theology, it ended with a call for a higher sociology, a unifying discipline which he called “metanomics.” [OR 757] I especially liked his put-down of Descartes, with his *cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am). Instead of that self-centered and

objectifying motto, which marked the rise of natural science, Rosenstock-Huessy proposed that we should now live under the banner of a new motto, *respondeo etsi mutabor* (*I respond although I will be changed*). [OR 741, 751-53] I had just responded to Dorothy Thompson, so I knew what that meant.

In 1942 Camp William James closed down, as most of us entered military service. [CWJ 201-18]

After four years in the army, including a role in the liberation of Buchenwald, I returned to Dartmouth. [BU] There I majored in philosophy, partly because I wanted to take all four of Rosenstock-Huessy's courses.

In my senior year, I took a Philosophy Honors course with Rosenstock-Huessy, meeting with him almost weekly at his house. Those meetings launched me, quite surprisingly, into graduate studies on the Russian Orthodox Church, about which Rosenstock-Huessy had written provocatively in *The Christian Future*. [CF 138-164] Even when I began those studies, at the Sorbonne in 1948, I remained in touch with Rosenstock-Huessy—and the circle of former students which had formed around his work.

Eventually, in 1969, with help from Rosenstock-Huessy's friend Freya von Moltke, I founded a little publishing house, Argo Books, to keep his books in print—and bring out unpublished essays. Sometimes I'd write an introduction for one of our books. [IA, SR] In 1977 I founded The Norwich Center, an organization concerned with advocating and implementing transnational volunteer service projects, in the spirit of Camp William James. [NC] Then, in 1981, I published my first book on Rosenstock-Huessy's prophetic thought, including a chapter about planetary service. That book had a title and text that foresaw this paper: *Letters to the Third Millennium*. [LM] Trying to keep up with the times, in 1996 I introduced Rosenstock-Huessy to the nascent audience of the world-wide web (<http://www.valley.net/~transnat/erh.html>). [WW]

With that history of writing about Rosenstock-Huessy, I faced a dilemma as I sat down to write this paper. Should I, at age 87, attempt to say something quite new and different from what I'd been writing for over sixty years? Or would it make more sense to locate and present those journal notes which seemed closest to this paper's theme? I decided on the latter approach; this would be an exercise in boiling down. I'd be distilling over a million words, scribbled down between 1940 and 2010, into just 6,000 words!

I. THE CROSS OF REALITY

Rosenstock-Huessy's introductory course was Philosophy 9, which I audited in 1940 and took in 1946. It focused on the core of his thinking, his new model of the human condition, which he described as a "Cross of Reality."

He presented that cross not only as a model but also as a *method* for healing society's ills. He often referred to Camp William James in his lectures, having seen the camp as embodying many of his ideas and goals.

While it was not assigned reading for the course, many of us profited from reading his latest book, *The Christian Future*, published in 1946. [CF] A closing chapter in that work provides this succinct description of the Cross of Reality:

Man's life, social as well as individual, is lived at a crossroads between four "fronts": backward toward the past, forward into the future, inward among ourselves...., and outward against what we must fight or exploit.... Hence both mental and social health depends on preserving a delicate mobile balance between forward and backward, inward and outward trends. Integration, living a complete and full life, is accordingly not some smooth "adjustment" we can hope to achieve once for all, as popular psychology imagines; it is rather a constant achievement in the teeth of forces which tear us apart on the Cross of Reality. [CF 168-169]

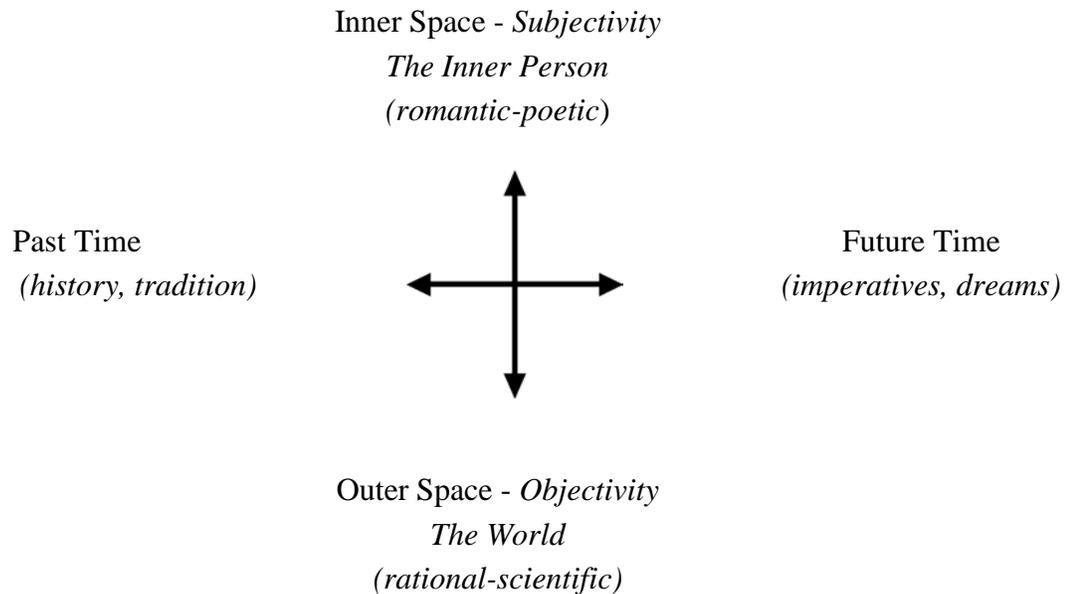
My journal notes on the Cross of Reality, when I first audited Philosophy 9 in the fall of 1940, were quite similar:

Rosenstock-Huessy says we are all crucified in a Cross of Reality on which we have to face backward to the past, forward to the future, inward toward our selves, and outward toward the world. He brings this cross image to life, not as an abstract idea, not as *his* idea, but as a new model of the human reality, a model which he invites us to discover with him. When he diagrams the cross on a blackboard, he makes a horizontal line for its time axis, then a vertical line to represent the space axis. This visual depiction becomes an icon for all his students, an icon of our human predicament—and our potential.

Since each of us lives at the center of this cross, our lives are crucial, not only for ourselves but for all humankind. We are constantly torn between the need to be true to the achievements of past time and the need to respond to the new callings of the future.

Similarly, on the space axis of our lives, we are constantly trying to relate our personal, subjective inner space to the objective demands of the outer world, the space around us.

The Cross of Reality, showing that times are as important as spaces, corrects the scientific subject-object model of reality, the Cartesian model, which is merely spatial, and enlarges on its limited method. All these relationships become clear when Rosenstock-Huessy diagrams the cross on the blackboard:



Just a little later in my journal, at Camp William James in 1941, I reflected on how that cross was embodied in the life of the camp:

First, we came to Camp William James because we heard a calling toward the *future*. We wanted to create a new institution, a period of all-out service as part of all young people's education. It would be the CCC plus Dartmouth and Harvard, an entirely new combination. It's a break from the ivory tower of academe into the problems and life of a real community, Tunbridge, Vermont. Another calling, our sending a group to Mexico, to help rebuild the town of Colima—recently flattened in an earthquake—shows a second way we're looking to the future, and makes clearer that we're engaged in a "moral equivalent of war," not just planting trees or helping some farmers.

Second, we're creating our own *inner space* within the farm building which is our headquarters. Of course it's also the inner space of our group, the community we've formed here. The fact that most of us have memorized some verses from Chesterton's "Ballad of the

White Horse” emphasizes the poetic nature of this orientation. In one stanza, Chesterton attacks academic objectivity with these wonderful words:

*Not with the humor of hunters
Or savage skill in war,
But ordering all things with dead words,
Strings shall they make of beasts and birds,
And wheels of wind and star. [BW]*

Third, we have the experience of being connected with *past time*, with the ongoing life of a rural town with roots going back for many generations. We go to square dances where the calling is in an Elizabethan style that’s died out in England. Quite a contrast with the rootless suburbs of New York or the slums of New Haven, both places where many of us grew up.

Fourth, we are getting national publicity through stories in the *Boston Globe* and the *New York Times*. This makes our little inner group known to the outer world, objectively, with both good and bad consequences. It’s helped recruiting but it’s also what led to our losing federal funding. In Congress we were attacked as just another New Deal boondoggle—and had to close our CCC camp in Sharon.

To sum up, the camp has provided each of us with a more intense experience of life, a more crucial experience, than we’d get in any ordinary college year. We’ve come to see that a period of such service, when integrated into one’s education, would show its participants how we all live historically, drawn toward the past and the future.

Planetary Service & Society’s Ills

Rosenstock-Huessy, and the rest of us at Camp William James, envisioned a time when volunteer service camps might be spread all over the earth. Toward the end of *The Christian Future*, Rosenstock-Huessy wrote, “our peacemakers and planners must be supported by camps all over the globe, where youth, recruited from every town and village all over the globe, serves. This service must implement the global organization as the young must experience what the old are planning before the old can have any authority.” [CF 238] The volunteers recruited for such service would become global citizens, ones whose first-hand experience of society’s ills would give them the “survival knowledge” needed to avoid such social breakdowns as revolution and war. [OR 757-58]

In a book devoted to this theme, *Planetary Service*, Rosenstock-Huessy wrote “we have no hope for abolishing war until we accept the framework of a universal planetary method of crossing borders between all peoples and all countries.” [PS 13] He went on to suggest that this method could not be discovered or implemented by governments. Rather, he saw planetary service as able to bring peace only if it were conducted “under the pirate’s flag.” [PS 77] I think he would have been delighted by the story told in Greg Mortenson’s *Three Cups of Tea: One Man’s Mission to Promote Peace*. [TCT] And I think he would have welcomed the main project launched by our Norwich Center: US-USSR Bridges for Peace. [NC]

In one of his most convincing analyses of our social ills, Rosenstock-Huessy described how peace in society is constantly threatened by a breakdown on one of the fronts delineated by the Cross of Reality. [SR 11-16] We always face four primary threats:

1. *Revolution*—A breakdown on the *future* front; loss of respect for the past; expressed as an excess of *imperative* or future speech. The antidote for revolution is to create respect, a loyalty to the past that enables a future to be created.
2. *Anarchy*—A breakdown on the *inner* front; loss of respect for objective, exterior order; an excess of inward or *subjective* speech. The good that cures this ill is unanimity, unity or harmony.
3. *Decadence*—A breakdown on the *past* front; loss of faith in the future; an excess of *backward-looking* speech, narrative speech, related to the past. Decadence is the inability of one generation to communicate future imperatives to the next. The corrective for decadence is faith, which is not a belief in the past but a belief in the future.
4. *War*—A breakdown on the *outer* front; loss of any interior agreement; an excess of speech that *objectifies* the other. The good that counteracts it is government, the efficient organization of territory.

The preceding analysis will give the reader a hint of why Rosenstock-Huessy often described his work as leading to a “grammatical method.” The Cross of Reality depicts that method, showing that we live under the pressure of four kinds of speech: imperative, subjective, narrative, and objective; we are structured, as it were, by those four basic kinds of language. We are more interesting—and challenging—than Descartes realized. We are creatures of the living Word, in all its forms, and through all of history, not the isolated and objective observers of the world outside us, the natural world revealed by *cogito ergo sum*.

II. THE SPIRIT AS SPEECH

During the early 1960s I met almost weekly with Rosenstock-Huessy at his home in Norwich. A perennial topic was the issue of getting his numerous unpublished works into print. He showered me with manuscripts, eight of them on the subject of language. As I read them, I recalled how, in *The Christian Future*, he'd despaired of ever getting these into print. [CF 128] I also recalled that his Dartmouth courses had never covered this subject. And I was enchanted by such lines as these:

Man's language aims at something not aimed at by apes or nightingales: it intends to form the listener into a being which did not exist before he was spoken to. Human speech is formative and it is for this reason that it has become explicit and grammatical. [OS 4]

All speech is the precipitation of the intensified respiration which we experience as members of a community, and which is called the Spirit. [DS I - 573]

Everybody who speaks believes in God because he speaks. No declaration of faith is necessary. No religion. [SR 181]

Speech is nothing natural; it is a miracle. [AG 37]

Speech is the body of the spirit. [PK 63]

I never asked Rosenstock-Huessy why he had not included a course on language in his offerings at Dartmouth, but my guess was that he thought his work in this field was more appropriate to graduate students. In any case, I soon concluded that the eight language essays in English—and others in German—were critical to a full appreciation of his work. For example, his model of the Cross of Reality becomes much richer when one sees how we live through any significant experience as four different “grammatical persons.” Here is his concise and beautiful formulation:

The soul must be called “thou” before she can ever reply “I,” before she can ever speak of “us,” and finally analyze “it.” Through the four figures, *thou, I, we, it*, the word walks

through us. The word must call our name first. We must have listened and obeyed before we can think or command. [JD 70]

This four-fold image of how the word walks through us, *in a particular order*, stands in stark contrast to the well-known formulations of Rosenstock-Huessy's friend Martin Buber(1878-1965). Of course it was Buber who first attracted wide attention to a philosophy based on the grammatical persons of *I* and *thou*. [IT] Thus, one of the best ways to approach Rosenstock-Huessy's insights on language is to contrast them with Buber's.

Buber said that any person, an independent *I*, can choose to have either warm dialogical *I-thou* relationships or cold objectifying *I-it* relationships, with others or with God. One does not become a fully-realized person until one chooses the *I-thou* relationship. As Buber put his key insight, "as I become *I*, I say *thou*." [IT 11]

Rosenstock-Huessy, by contrast, said that there is no such thing as an independent *I*. One becomes an *I* only as one is addressed by others, and by God, as *thou*. The proper grammatical order is *thou-I*, not *I-thou*. It is when we hear imperatives, when we hear ourselves addressed *personally* as *thou*, that we enter into the human story. As Rosenstock-Huessy put it, "The first form and the permanent form under which a man can recognize himself and the unity of his existence is the Imperative. We are called a Man and we are summoned by our name long before we are aware of ourselves as an Ego." [OR 746]

In further contrast with Buber, Rosenstock-Huessy said that, after hearing oneself addressed imperatively (or vocatively) as *thou*, and then realizing oneself as *I*, one then goes on to become two further grammatical persons: *we* and *he (or she)*. In other words, Rosenstock-Huessy describes us as living in a four-fold reality, a Cross of Reality, while Buber describes our condition as two-fold.

Having mentioned Martin Buber, I should note Rosenstock-Huessy's close friend and intellectual partner, Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929), who worked quite closely with Buber. Rosenzweig has been widely acknowledged as one of the most innovative Jewish thinkers of the 20th century. What is often overlooked is that Rosenzweig credits Rosenstock-Huessy with having been "the main influence" in leading him to write his magnum opus, *The Star of Redemption*. [KS 388, ST] An echo of that influence can be heard in this line from *The Star*: "One knew that the distinction between immanence and transcendence disappears in language. [ST 199]

It was in a 1916 letter to Franz Rosenzweig that Rosenstock-Huessy first articulated his insights on speech. Later that letter provided most of the text for Rosenstock-Huessy's short

book, *Angewandte Seelenkunde (Practical Knowledge of the Soul)*, published in 1924. [PK] A key statement in that book is:

Does the soul have a grammar? Now, as the Word comes out of the soul, and the truest Word comes straight from the very depths of the soul,then, just as the mind has logic, the soul will have a sense of the way words fit together—that is, “grammar”—as its inner structure....He who would explore the soul must fathom the secrets of language. [PK 15]

One of Rosenstock-Huessy’s most revealing descriptions of those secrets appears in his little book, *The Origin of Speech*. [OS] There he distinguishes between two kinds of speech. On the one hand, we have the formal or high speech that we use “to sing a chorale, to stage tragedy, to enact laws, to compose verse, to say grace, to take an oath, to confess one’s sins, to file a complaint, to write a biography, to make a report, to solve an algebraic problem, to baptize a child, to sign a marriage contract, to bury one’s father.” On the other hand, we have the informal or low speech that we might use to show “a man the direction to the next farm on the road” or to stop “a child from crying.” Such low speech, which makes up “our daily chatter and prattle,” often serves “the same purposes as animal sounds.” [OS 1]

This makes clear what Rosenstock-Huessy means by “high” speech. He means the intentional, relational, and dialogical speech, the fully articulated speech we use when we seek to tell the truth, establish relations with others, or make peace.

The Law of Motion of the Spirit

The Cross of Reality is best understood as a dynamic model of just how high speech works in us. It shows us that we live in an infinitely richer realm than that described to us by natural science or by most traditional theology. We are neither the cold observers of the world outside us nor the faithful children of a God above. Instead, we live at the heart of reality. We are the agents for the evolution as well as the revolution of matter and spirit. There is no outside prime mover like the God described by Descartes, Spinoza, or the deists. Nor is there a supreme being, above and beyond, like the God of theists. The only motion of the spirit is within human souls and between human souls. God speaks, or fails to speak, in each of us. He is infinitely close, not infinitely distant.

Now, if the only motion of the spirit is in and between us, is it possible to describe that motion? Rosenstock-Huessy suggests a specific law of motion of the spirit. This law, showing us how the spirit moves within us and how the soul is formed, becomes clear only when we realize that *spirit* is not something nebulous in the air. Rather, spirit is audible; it is the higher kind of all human speech. And such speech does not have an infinite variety of forms. Again, there are only four basic kinds of speech, and they move us through the four stages of any significant experience:

1. Imperative (vocative) speech is what calls us to the future. We hear ourselves addressed as *thou*. Such speech wakes us up and inclines us to respond. *Go thou!* Fulfill what you are called to do.

2. Subjective (poetic, prayerful, and philosophical) speech is what we use to address our inner self, our *I*. Now the grammatical mood becomes subjunctive. *What if I were to go?* Inner questioning arises in response to the pressure of imperatives.

3. Narrative (historical) speech enables us to recall past time or tell the current history of our lives. *We* becomes our grammatical person because creative action requires more than one person. *We went, or we are going.* Learning from what has happened in the past, we start interacting with others.

4. Objective (scientific) speech makes it possible for us to analyze the world outside us. Now we and others can see ourselves as *he, she* or *they*. *She went; they went.* No longer “moved” by speech, we step back and assess what is going on.

Nine Theses On Language

I will now sum up Rosenstock-Huessy insights on high speech in the following nine theses (while asking the reader’s forgiveness for restating, in the first four theses, the points made just above).

1. There are four basic types of speech: (a) imperative, (b) subjective, (c) narrative, and (d) objective.
2. In any significant human experience we experience all four of those kinds of speech in just that order.

3. Each kind of speech relates to a different personal or group orientation toward times and spaces: (a) imperative toward the future; (b) subjective toward our “inner space,” (c) narrative toward the past, and (d) objective to the outside world.
4. Each kind of speech also relates to a particular person of grammar: (a) the imperative to *thou*; (b) the subjective to *I*; (c) the narrative to *we*; (d) the objective to *he, she* or *they*.
5. When we examine the pattern of those speech orientations and grammatical persons, we see that they form a Cross of Reality, at the center of which any person or group finds itself.
6. A corollary to the axiom of the cross is that its future orientation is the most important; as we hear vocatives or imperatives, we are moved to respond.
7. What we call the human psyche, or soul, is formed as it lives through the “crucial” speech experience posited by the Cross of Reality.
8. When we realize that the Cross of Reality shows the essential patterns of language in the human mind, we can also perceive that it makes visible a ‘dialogical method’ for the human sciences. It tells us that any question should be examined in the light of all four orientations, and especially we should take into account the *tensions* among each. (See Appendix A for what I call “The Complete Cross of Reality,” a depiction of how each of its four orientations relates to speech, times, spaces, kinds of literature, persons, disciplines, and social breakdowns.
9. The Cross of Reality depicts the action of high speech in any person or group; such speech *establishes relations with others, creates peace, and tells the truth*. And such speech can be recognized as the way spirit is present and active in human beings. Thus, we can call speech the body of the spirit.

All nine of those theses, when taken together, establish the dialogical method as a fundamentally new way of thinking about human reality. From elementary observations about language and grammar, and about the inner person and the outer world, they proceed to the realization that high speech is the embodiment of spirit.

As I will explore in more detail now, in Section III, when we embody spirit in a secular sense, we are also embodying it in a religious sense. There is no great divide between spirit, as manifest in people of good will, and the Holy Spirit. It follows that all people of good will embody the Trinitarian God.

III. TRANSLATING THE RELIGIOUS INTO THE SECULAR

While the preceding section focused on how Rosenstock-Huessy offered us a secular understanding of the Holy Spirit, seeing the Spirit as speech, this closing section will widen the focus out to other ways in which he advanced the project of translating the religious into the secular—and vice versa.

It may be helpful here to recall that theologians had given little attention to such a project until they began to read Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Letters and Papers from Prison*—in the 1960s. Bonhoeffer wrote that today's world has "come of age." [LP 326] Therefore, the time has come to articulate a "religionless Christianity" and to learn to speak of God "in a secular way." [LP 282, 280]

One of Rosenstock-Huessy's most powerful statements on the relationship between the religious and the secular is made in a closing chapter of *Out of Revolution*. There he describes God as in process of devolving his powers to man:

In the Bible there are two names for God: one is grammatically a plural, Elohim; the other is the singular Jahve. The Elohim are the divine powers in creation; Jahve is he who will be what he will be. When man sees through the works of Elohim and discovers Jahve at work, he himself begins to separate past from future. And only he who distinguishes between past and future is a grown person; if most people are not persons, it is because they serve one of the many Elohim. This is a second-rate performance; it deprives man of his birthright as one of the immediate sons of God.

In the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican, Michelangelo shows God creating Adam, and keeping in the folds of his immense robe a score of angels or spirits. Thus at the beginning of the world all the divine powers were on God's side; man was stark naked. We might conceive of a pendant to this picture: the end of creation, in which all the spirits that had accompanied the Creator should have left him and descended to man, helping, strengthening, enlarging his being into the divine. In this picture God would be alone, while Adam would have all the Elohim around him as his companions. [OR 727-28]

That image of the spirits descending, of course, tells us that creation is constantly going on. It is an image that is quite congenial to the thought of Rosenstock-Huessy's 1920s colleague, the

Russian religious philosopher Nikolai Berdyaev (1874-1948)—whose work Rosenstock-Huessy had encouraged me to study in Paris in 1948. This is what I wrote in my journal at that time:

God Is Like a Whole Humanity

Toward the end of his book, *Spirit and Reality*, Berdyaev makes a remarkable statement: “Spirit—the Holy Spirit—is incarnated in human life, but it assumes the form of a whole humanity rather than of authority....God is like a whole humanity rather than like nature, society, or concept.” [S&R 187]

In those concise words, Berdyaev suggests how we can get beyond our anthropomorphic and theistic idea of God as a supreme being. “Whole humanity” evidently includes all creation, the earth and universe, since humanity could certainly not exist without this physical setting, this *space*. Similarly, “whole humanity” includes all *time*, since we are not whole unless we include our beginnings and our end. And “whole” also points to what makes us whole: in religious terms, the spirit.

To relate Rosenstock-Huessy’s thought with Berdyaev’s, we became human beings as we learned to speak. It is living speech, the dialogue that human beings have with each other, that moved us, over the millennia of evolution, from being inhuman mammals to finally becoming *members of whole humanity*. We might say that we became cells in God’s body. And we might think of those cells as “sentences.” *We are each a sentence in the story of whole humanity, a humanity that becomes holy as speech makes it whole.*

If God is like a whole humanity, then he is not aloof from our suffering. Such a God would be involved in the experience of war and revolution that we have had in the last century, indeed in the last millennium.

Perhaps we could even say that God only knows himself in us, only enjoys himself in us, and has no other being than his life in us. That is, if we imagine ourselves as the leading edge of all creation.

Finally, I should answer the objection that “whole humanity” may sound impersonal, something like Comte’s lifeless “great being.” But God imagined in this way still addresses us personally. That is, all the generations that have gone before us, all over the world, down to our own parents, have spoken the Word that addresses us now, summoning us as *thou*, moving us to respond as *I*.

The Trinity in Secular Terms

In his 1947 Dartmouth lectures Rosenstock-Huessy would occasionally drop hints that seemed to relate the Trinity with the Cross of Reality. In the years that followed, I kept writing notes about these two “great icons” that had formed in my mind. Both these images seem universal, pertaining to all of reality, yet one is completely religious and the other completely secular. How can we relate them to each other? My answer has come as follows.

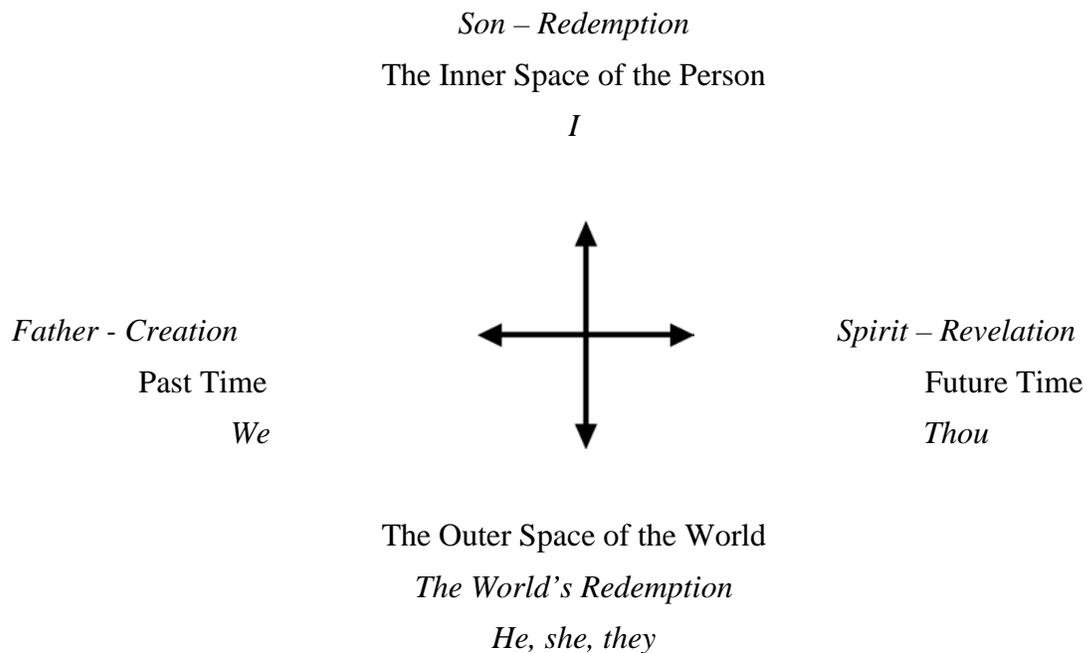
It is the Holy Spirit that inspires us in the imperative, calling us to the future. That is *revelation*. We hear ourselves addressed as *thou*.

The Son is our subjective and personal reply, as *I*. Subjective speech makes us aware of our responsibility for bringing our inspirations down to earth, and thus redeeming the world.

Next, we represent the Father as we take creative action. When we make ourselves heard in the narrative of history, we participate in the Father’s *creation*. As in marriage, we must act with others, thereby forming a *we*.

Finally, when our listening, speaking, and acting are completed and visible in the day-to-day world, others can speak about them—objectively. They can see how some part of the world was redeemed by our actions. They now describe us as *he, she, or they*.

On the Cross of Reality, these relationships appear as follows:



Near the end of his two-volume work *Die Sprache des Menschengeschlechts* (The Speech of Humankind), Rosenstock-Huessy makes a remarkable statement that relates to that cross diagram:

The Son establishes the proper relationship between the spoken word and the lived life. Words should be commands that are given and promises that are made. Life consists of commands that are carried out and prophecies that are fulfilled. This, we saw, is the real goal of all speech and all ritual since man first spoke. [DS II - 903]

In those words, Rosenstock-Huessy managed to link the Trinity with the Cross of Reality, without saying that he was doing so.

—The spoken word, commands, and prophecies are how we hear the *Spirit's* imperatives toward the future.

—Promises to fulfill those prophecies are our subjective, inward replies as *Son*.

—Ritual refers to the ceremonies through which we tell the narrative of the *Father's* past creation.

—And the word embodied in a person's life is how the three persons of the Trinity are present in our daily lives—in the *world*.

If we follow this train of thought, we realize that the name *God* does not refer to “a being who exists” somewhere outside us, but instead to that trinity of powers that we assume as we speak our times and spaces into a whole. We represent and complete the Trinity's actions as we bring these divine powers down to the earth of the objective world, the world of times and spaces. The three divine Persons, which were once known to us as items of belief, can now be recognized as categories of being and of becoming fully human. We represent them whenever we speak beyond the limited frame of our natural body as the mammal *Homo sapiens*.

The Trinity and the Three Millennia

Another way of perceiving the Trinity in secular terms was provided by Rosenstock-Huessy in his Dartmouth lectures (and in *The Christian Future*).

The first millennium was devoted to a full realization of how *we were made in the image of God: to the Son*. This was accomplished through the establishment of the Christian church and the recognition of Christ as the center point of history.

The second millennium was devoted to a full realization of how *the planet earth was created as our common home: to the Father*. This was accomplished through the establishment of science as our means of understanding creation, the natural world.

It remains for the third millennium to be devoted to a full realization of how *we create a peaceful global society: to the Spirit*. This will be accomplished as we establish new, unheard-of institutions. They may well be small groups of intersocietal pioneers, people who will teach us to speak the one language of humankind. [CF 115-16]

A New Vision of the Transcendent

In sum, Rosenstock-Huessy, with allies like Berdyaev and Bonhoeffer, offers us a new vision of transcendence.

The old vision—be it in Judaism, Christianity, or Islam—was usually based on imagining that there is a transcendental being, with supernatural power—outside of the universe, outside of creation, outside of history, outside of evolution, outside of human beings. Such a being seemed needed to start it all: to press the button that brought the universe into existence (deism). Or was needed as a father-figure, one to whom we might give allegiance (theism). Such a being *exists*, independent of creation—for the religious believer.

By contrast with that old vision, Rosenstock-Huessy tells us that there is a transcendental power which is at work *within* the process of creation, *within* history, working at the leading edge of evolution, always present in human beings. This power is made manifest whenever we say the word that needs to be spoken; it is the Word made flesh in all humanity.

As long as humanity exists on earth (or so long as something like humanity exists elsewhere in the universe), then God exists within all creation.

IN CONCLUSION

We have travelled, in this essay, from Tunbridge, Vermont to the outer reaches of the universe! Some summary thoughts are in order.

At Camp William James we sought to plant a seed which might grow into a new institution for the third millennium. We envisioned a time when such camps might be found over all the earth. While our little effort was nipped in the bud, today there are volunteer service activities, like the U.S. Peace Corps and the German *Aktion Sühnezeichen* (Action

Reconciliation), flourishing round the globe. There are even hints that our little seed helped inspire both those projects. [PC]

At Camp William James we also hoped that one day a period of volunteer service might be integrated into one's college education. And again, a degree of service learning has taken hold on many a U.S. campus.

While I don't recall discussing it with others at the camp, I'm sure there were other Dartmouth students there who saw our experience, as I did; the camp seemed to validate Rosenstock-Huessy's teachings about the Cross of Reality. We were living with an "all-out" commitment to the future, one that we had to balance with the other orientations in our lives. As I wrote in the first section of this paper, it was a crucial experience, a heightened sense of living in the Cross of Reality.

Still, it was long after Camp William James, some twenty years after, when I began to see the full import of Rosenstock-Huessy's work. His writings on language, on speech as the Holy Spirit, gave me a vision of a new kind of Christianity in the third millennium:

- It would be a Christianity with only one miracle: the miracle of speech.
- A Christianity without a Supreme Being who lived before and beyond the universe; instead, a God who lived in us—and in all creation.
- A Christianity that saw God in such images as the Spirit's incarnation in whole humanity.
- A Christianity that had a secular, understanding of the Trinity: seeing its three persons present in all people of good will.
- A Christianity which would encourage planetary service—without seeking any churchly credit. It would be what Rosenstock-Huessy called "Christianity incognito." [CF 125-28]

Such is the vision that has inspired me—and grown in me—over the seventy years that I have pursued the trail marked out by Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy.

Appendix A: The Complete Cross of Reality

Language: Subjective Speech

Orientation: The Inner Person (“inner space”)

Literature: Lyric

Person & Mood: I – Subjunctive

Fields: Literature, the Arts, Philosophy, Psychology

Religious Aspect: Personal redemption – Son

Stage in experience: Second

Social Breakdown: Anarchy

Language: Narrative Speech

Orientation: Past Time

Literature: Epic

*Person & Mood: We -
Narrative*

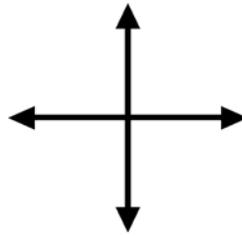
Fields: History

Anthropology, Law

*Religious Aspect: Creation
– Father*

Stage in experience: Third

Social Breakdown: Decadence



Language: Imperative Speech

Orientation: Future Time

Literature: Dramatic

*Person & Mood: Thou –
Imperative*

Fields: Politics, Religion

*Religious Aspect: Revelation
– Spirit*

Stage in experience: First

Social Breakdown: Revolution

Language: Objective Speech

Orientation: The Outer World (outside space)

Literature: Prosaic

Person & Mood: He, She, They, It – Indicative

Fields: Natural Science, Mathematics, Economics

Religious Aspect: The world’s redemption

Stage in experience: Fourth

Social Breakdown: War

NOTES

Page references appear in the preceding text.

AG: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Der Atem des Geistes* (Frankfurt: Verlag der Frankfurter Hefte, 1951).

BB: Clinton C. Gardner, *Beyond Belief: Discovering Christianity's New Paradigm* (White River Jct., VT: White River Press, 2008). Chapters 1-3 available on Web at:
<http://clintgardner.net/Contents.html>

BU: Buchenwald Concentration Camp, Weimar, Germany; liberated by U.S. Third Army, April 13, 1944; as a member of the U.S. military government team put in charge of Buchenwald, I became Acting Commander of the camp on May 1, 1945.

BW: Gilbert Keith Chesterton, *The Ballad of the White Horse* (London: Methuen & Co., 1911), Book VIII.

CF: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *The Christian Future* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1946; New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

CWJ: Jack J. Preiss, *Camp William James* (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1978).

DB: Clinton C. Gardner, *D-Day and Beyond: A Memoir of War, Russia, and Discovery* (Philadelphia, PA: X-Libris, 2004).

DS: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Die Sprache des Menschengeschlechts* (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider; Bd. I, 1963; Bd. II, 1964).

- IA: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *I am an Impure Thinker* (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1970). Introduction by Clinton C. Gardner and Freya von Moltke. Available on Web at <http://www.argobooks.org/rosenstock/pdf/I-am-an-Impure-Thinker.pdf>
- IT: Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958).
- JD: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, ed., *Judaism Despite Christianity* (University AL: University of Alabama Press, 1969).
- KS: Franz Rosenzweig, *Kleinere Schriften* (Berlin: Schocken Verlag, 1937).
- LM: Clinton C. Gardner, *Letters to the Third Millennium: An Experiment in East-West Communication* (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1981). Complete text available on Web at <http://books.google.com/books> — much to the author's surprise!
- LP: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, Eberhard Bethge, ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997).
- ME: William James, "The Moral Equivalent of War" in *The Writings of William James*, ed. John J. McDermott (New York: Random House, 1967). Available on Web at <http://www.constitution.org/wj/meow.htm>
- NC: The Norwich Center, an organization founded in 1977 by Clinton Gardner and a number of friends. Its purpose has been to initiate or encourage projects inspired by Rosenstock-Huessy's work. On the Center's founding board were Freya von Moltke, Frank Davidson, a key figure in founding Camp William James, and Hans Huessy, Rosenstock-Huessy's son. Its main project was US-USSR Bridges for Peace (1981-1994). The history of that organization and The Norwich Center is on the Web at <http://www.valley.net/~transnat/transnat.html>. More recently the Norwich Center was

instrumental in launching a similar project: Building Bridges: Middle East-US. Its activities are described at: <http://www.buildingbridgesmeus.org>

OR: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Out of Revolution: Autobiography of Western Man* (New York: William Morrow, 1938; Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1969; Providence, RI: Berg Publishers, 1993).

OS: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *The Origin of Speech* (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1981). Complete text available on Web at: <http://books.google.com/books>

PC: Peace Corps. Page Smith, first camp manager at Camp William James wrote a letter to Hubert Humphrey advocating a peace corps, at the time when President Kennedy charged Humphrey with gathering ideas about such a project. It is also likely that Kennedy would have heard of Camp William James from Harvard classmates who knew about the camp. As to *Aktion Sühnezeichen*, its founders specifically acknowledged Rosenstock-Huessy as a source of inspiration for launching their project.

PK: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Practical Knowledge of the Soul* (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1988). Originally published as *Angewandte Seelenkunde* (Darmstadt: Röther-Verlag, 1924).

PS: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Planetary Service: A Way into the Third Millennium*, trans. Mark Huessy and Freya von Moltke (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1978).

SR: Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Speech and Reality*; introduction by Clinton C. Gardner (Norwich, VT: Argo Books, 1970).

S&R: Nikolai Berdyaev, *Spirit and Reality* (London: Bles, 1939).

ST: Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*, trans. William W. Hallo (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970).

TCT: Greg Mortenson, *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace*. (New York: Penguin, 2007).

WW: <http://www.valley.net/~transnat/erh.html>. Among other Rosenstock-Huessy Web resources are:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugen_Rosenstock-Huessy

<http://www.argobooks.org>

<http://groups.google.com/group/ERHSociety>

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rosenstock-huessy>

<http://www.erhroundtable.blogspot.com>

<http://erhsociety.org/ERHS/HomePage>