Studying Missiology with a Presuppositional Methodology

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Thomas Kuhn's study, *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Kuhn 1970), helped spark a virtual revolution in the epistemology of science. Using a philosophically idealist, post-Kantian perspective, Kuhn and others are attempting to demonstrate that there is no steady progress forward in knowledge in the natural sciences. Instead, movement comes often as a series of paradigmatic shifts, yet with no necessary implication of a forward direction. Using this framework, many have now come to believe that all types of scientific knowledge are paradigm dependent. Therefore, all scientific factuality is theory laden, and every fact is an interpreted fact. The result is, in the words of an old Simon and Garfunkel song, "Every man hears what he wants to hear and disregards the rest." This article desires to point a Scriptural way forward, away from this postmodernist relativism and the naïve Realism of evangelicalism, bound as it is by modernity. I have included a glossary of terms at the end for those who may need to familiarize themselves again with the philosophical terms which I use.

Following Kuhn, most philosophers of the social sciences today would no longer hold to any self-evident and universal, foundational truths upon which to base any knowledge whatsoever. All knowledge is belief mediated through human invented symbols (i.e., language), and "all of our beliefs together form part of a groundless web of interrelated beliefs" (Van Huyssteen 1997, 3). Second, most would also correctly reject, it turns out, the classic Greek dualism of the Enlightenment's age of modernity which contrasts objective and universal science with subjective and irrational religion (see fig. 1) (see Dooyeweerd 1979).

Science: Objective, Rational, and Universal Facts

NON-BRIDGABLE GAP

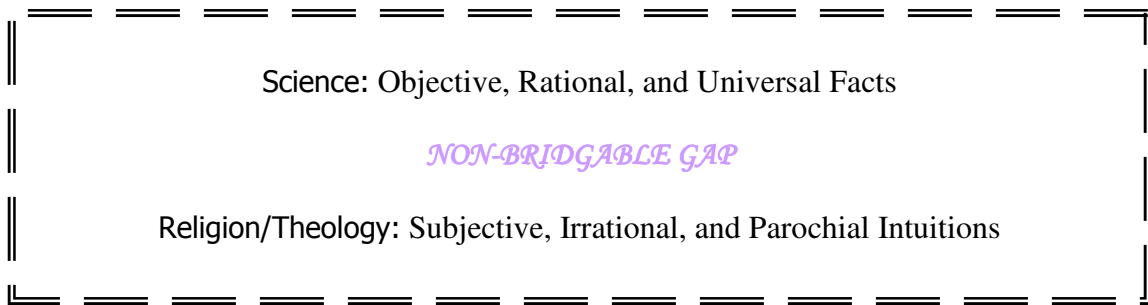Religion/Theology: Subjective, Irrational, and Parochial Intuitions

Fig. 1: Dualism of Modernity, Naïve Realism, and Classic Empiricism

Therefore, Kuhnian-influenced, post-Kantian scholarship sees all knowledge, including theological knowledge, to be mediated through the distorting mechanism of an individual's interpreting mind or collective human *minds* (see Van Huyssteen 1997, 19). This new post-modern theory of knowledge often called non- or anti-foundationalism emphasizes the "epistemic importance of community," because every group has it own rationality and logic (Van Huyssteen 1997, 3). In contrast to modernity, which bases knowledge on the perceptions of the individual, postmodernity or non-foundationalism sees knowledge as springing out of purely local, communal ideals. Each scientific community creates its own truths mediated through their ideals. Therefore "truth" is not universal, nor global but merely parochial and local (see fig. 2 below).

This revolution in thought has now hit the social sciences full force and has made a great impact upon anthropology, missiology, and intercultural studies (see e.g., Kraft 1979; Bosch 1991; Hiebert 1999). Indeed, much theology itself has also been deeply influenced (see Van Huyssteen 1989, 1997; see response, Larkin 1992).

Having rejected the dualism of modernity, such post-Kuhnian scholars consider all social scientific and theological disciplines to be "like scientific paradigms." Every discipline produces an "educational community" that initiates "members" into a unique paradigmatic manner for "recognizing and solving certain sorts of problems" (Gelwick 1983, 422). The logical concomitant of such post-Kantian idealism is a **group-based relativism**. Each disciplinary group or educational community provides a "differing view of reality" (Gelwick 1983, 425), a "total relativism of rationalities" (Van Huyssteen 1997, 3), each unique to those holding to the presuppositions of the group paradigm. In its most consequent form, then, nonfoundationalism creates a "relativism so complete that any attempt at a cross-disciplinary conversation faces the threat of complete incommensurability" (Van Huyssteen 1997, 3).

Postmodernity has rightly unmasked the illusions created by epistemological foundationalism. We now know[i] that any issue is always seen from a particular interpreted point of view, and that our epistemic practices therefore constitute contexts in which our very participation is a precondition for our observations. (Gregersen and Van Huyssteen 1998, 5)

Growth of Instrumentalism and Critical Realism

Each disciplinary community, which is a unique cultural system on its own, is incommensurable to all other such communities. The language, logic, rules, and rationality of each cultural or disciplinary sphere are governed intra-disciplinarily and intra-culturally. Postmodernity, which is a fruit of the post-Kantian and post-Kuhnian era, rejects all singular "homogenous metanarrative[s]" (Gregersen and Van Huyssteen 1998, 5). This includes certainly science and theology, intercultural studies and missiology as I have stated above. Such epistemological relativism, however, is untenable for any research methodology that intends to communicate to a wider community than the small community of those initiated into the research paradigm. Thus, in response, many scientists and even theologians become mere instrumentalists or mere "technicians" in a pragmatic search for success, paying slight attention to their own philosophical presuppositions.

Often a solution for such epistemological nihilism is a mediating, synthetic approach with several variations, termed "critical realism." This project seems to be an attempt to meld the Realism of modernity bound positivism and empiricism with the "critical philosophy" or "critical metaphysics" of Immanuel Kant (Raschke 2004, 39, see 37-40). Ian Barbour introduced this epistemological *via media* into theology-science discussions. Now through the works of Charles Kraft and Paul Hiebert, Barbour's approach has been introduced into missiology-science discussions (Barbour [1966] 1971; Van Kooten Niekerk 1998; see e.g., Kraft 1979; Hiebert 1999). It has been the "dominant epistemology in the science-theology debate for several decades" (Van Kooten Niekerk 1998, 52). Several posit various permutations of this basic theme, such as postfoundationalism (Van Huyssteen 1997; 1998; 1999),[ii] soft non-relativism (Smart 1987) and "re-

sponsible relativism" (Gelwick 1983, 424) but each of these attempts at a mediating position is similar.

Interdisciplinary Methodology

Critical Realism and other integrative and synthetic approaches attempt to overcome rigid paradigm boundaries and disciplinary isolation. These approaches attempt to move in the direction of interdisciplinary research. "Interdisciplinary study itself is a paradigm shift" in global academia (Gelwick 1983, 422). On the one hand, his approach is distinct from disciplinarity and cross-disciplinarity[iii], which involve only one discipline or disciplinary perspective (Gelwick 1983, 426). On the other hand, the integration of multiple disciplines proceeds on an ascending continuum from least to complete integration: (1) multidisciplinarity,[iv] (2) pluridisciplinarity,[v] (3) interdisciplinarity, and (4) transdisciplinarity[vi] (Jantsch 1980; Gelwick 1983, 426; Klein 1990, 55-73; Kenzo and Wan 1999).

Definitions

Interdisciplinary study involves teamwork, which emphasizes "integrative" studies over "discrete" studies done in disciplinary isolation (Klein 1990, 60). Synthesis is achieved by developing a "holistic framework" that "facilitate[s] the interaction of quantitative and qualitative empirical efforts" (Klein 1990, 60). The result is a new, singular, and coherent entity that demands understanding and integration of varying epistemologies and methodologies. The new entity then constructs "a common vocabulary" (Klein 1990, 57), establishing a "new metalevel of discourse" (Klein 1990, 66).

Transdisciplinarity is the ultimate, and possibly unreachable, goal in the integration continuum. It "signifies the interconnectedness of all aspects of reality, transcending the dynamics of a dialectical synthesis to grasp the total dynamics of reality as a whole. It is a vision of interdisciplinarity penetrating the entire system of science" (Klein 1990, 66). Erich Jantsch, to whom this continuum is greatly indebted, exemplified this approach in the volume he edited; *The Evolutionary Vision: Toward a Unifying Paradigm of Physical, Biological, and Sociocultural Evolution* (Jantsch 1981). Materialistic evolutionism, he believes, is the transcendent unifying principle of total reality.

As Gelwick states, those trained in interdisciplinarity discover "the ultimate moral benefit" that "cognitive absolutes" are not tenable and that those who use the methodology "tend to adopt a responsible relativism." Thus, there are limits upon "all absolute views of reality," which are to be remedied by synthetic and integrative philosophies and methodologies of science and religion (Gelwick 1983, 424). Certainly what Gelwick states is true if one assumes an absolute, monistic view of reality as a Grand Unifying Theory (GUT) for ontology (metaphysics).[vii] Metaphysically, there are only two choices: (1) an idealistic, spiritualist monism, or (2) a materialistic form. Neither of these absolute views can explain why there are unifying noumena in the case of materialism or particularizing phenomena in the case of idealism.

Anticipatory Biblical Analysis

Biblical Christianity, however, rejects both monisms as "absolute views of reality." Both the noumenal and phenomenal[viii] aspects of created reality push epistemology towards a viewpoint that must take both the material and ideal into account. Thus a perennial question of philosophy has been the relationship of the one to the many (Rushdoony 1971, 1978; Bahnsen 1998, 238). The problem is "how to get a network of purely conceptual and absolutely comprehensive relations into significant contact with an endless number of unrelated facts" (Van Til 1978, 237; Bahnsen 1998, 383). Inevitably this dilemma has led all autonomous Western (and Eastern) thought towards some form of a syncretism, which is an inevitable pragmatic and dialectical dualism in life, even to those who desire to escape from it. All dialectical dualisms, however, are unstable and inevitably break down. The break down always leads to a reversion to monistic thought, first at the presuppositional level and then culturally. Monistic presuppositions lead to individual and cultural anomie, and the to individual and cultural dysfunction (Dooyeweerd 1953-58, 1979; Rushdoony 1971, 1978).[ix]

Christians, to the contrary, know that there is no true fact (particularity, manyness) that is not connected to a true meaning framework (unity, oneness) in the whole creation and vice versa. No person can escape the Triune Creator's truth and creation design. Therefore, only biblical Christianity begins with a true synthetic balance that does not compromise or mix either the noumenal or the phenomenal. The reason for this balance is that biblical Christianity begins with a commitment to a personal Plural-Unity as the transcendent foundation of all ethics, physics, and metaphysics.[x] Neither modern nor postmodern man can escape from the one (noumena) or the many (phenomena) within the creation. Both the one and the many have been created and are presently upheld by the Grand Unifying, yet always Tri-Personal, One-Many. Every true fact is created by God, comes to the mind structured and upheld by God, and exists within a unifying truth framework created and upheld by the same triune God. Both the created and immanent, one and many reflect the glory of that Triune God, in whom exists the equal ultimacy of the one and the many (Van Til)[xi] (see Rushdoony 1971, 1978; Frame 1995, 71-78; Bahnsen 1998, 238-241; 326).

This perspective is not a mere nostalgic return to a pre-modern view of the unity of knowledge. It is first a return to the biblical-Hebraic roots of both Testaments. Following Paul's example (e.g., 1 Corinthians, Colossians and Ephesians), furthermore, it is a return to these roots only after a thoroughgoing engagement with the contemporary. In other words, in our case, it is a radical return to the unity of all knowledge only after an engagement with the presuppositions of both modernity and postmodernity.[xii]

Lastly, it is a return to that unity only in the triune God who provides the unity of all knowledge. He has revealed Himself with complete truthfulness in every area of life in the Scripture, which teaches the unity of all knowledge in the one true God (Isa 45:5-10, 18-23; Ro 3:29-30). "For the Christian, universals exist in a concrete (not abstract) fashion within the mind of the personal Creator Himself. God "thinks 'universally' and such thinking is found in man 'analogically'" (Bahnsen 1998, 240). In other words, only the one, truthful God gives meaning (unity) to the particular facts of the universe by means of his creation and providence. All facts come to man already interpreted meaningfully by the Creator. Man's position is to discover and submit to the

Creator's pre-interpretation and learn to "think God's thoughts after him." Human beings can discover and think God's thoughts exactly and accurately—but *never* comprehensively—which only God can do. The result is a singular epistemology, and a singular rationality for all disciplines and ethno-cultures of humanity. This understanding provides both a unifying paradigm for acquiring theological and scientific knowledge, and a model for interdisciplinarity, as we shall see.

In summary then, because God has previously pre-planned and pre-designed every detail of the universe and of history, "there are causal connections, meaning, and purpose to be discovered by man when he uses his powers of observation and applies his intellect to what he finds." Except in those areas where Scripture gives direct information about nature and history, he cannot find "God's thoughts regarding them [in Scripture]." Therefore, he must use his senses. "Given the presuppositions of creation, providence, and revelation, empirical knowledge is both possible and important to man" (Bahnsen 1998, 241).[xiii]

Certainly, the Bible is not a systematized textbook for science. Yet it does provide the meaning framework and some truly objective, factual data (history, chronology, origins, etc.) within which to discover God's thoughts in nature and socio-culture. The unbeliever, however, pretends to be religiously neutral, presupposing that chance, time, and luck stand behind all data, a view that "reduces [itself] to irrationalism. Empirical methods of knowing can be made intelligible only within the Christian worldview" as a truth framework to interpret all data (Bahnsen 1998, 244).[xiv]

Interdisciplinarity and Anthropological Research Methods

The move toward interdisciplinary study is a sign of our increasing awareness of the limits of problem solving, and of the restrictions on creativity, when researchers and students are tied to a single discipline. (Gelwick 1983, 423)

Without the foundational presupposition of the personal Triune Providence, contemporary theorists are being forced again to reconsider the relationship of data to meaning, of the one to the many. Social science theorists debate over whether quantitative, data-bound empirical methodologies are inextricably tied to modernity with its positivist ideology, and whether qualitative methodologies are tied to post-modernist subjectivism. So-called positivist methodologies are termed foundationalist[xv] and naïve realist. They are further criticized as "essentialist" because they allegedly attempt to discover the real essence of physical and social facts as they are in themselves. The opposite methodologies are categorized as non-foundationalist and idealist. Positivist and empiricist methodologies are tied to modernity and a correspondence theory of truth. Anti- or non-empiricist methodologies are tied to post-modernity and a coherence theory of truth (see discussion and typology charts in Hiebert 1999; Barbour 1974).

Several suggest that an interdisciplinary methodology is the only method that can bridge the gap between the data bound correspondence theories and meaning bound coherence theories of truth (see Gelwick 1983; Klein 1990; Van Huyssteen 1997; 1998; Wan 1998; Kenzo and Wan 1999). Several postulate scientific realism or its variant form, critical realism, as the best philosophical

foundation for adopting this mediating, interdisciplinary methodology. Princeton theologian Wentzel Van Huyssteen, especially, has developed a variant theological form of critical realism to allegedly bridge the gap between the two extremes (Van Huyssteen 1989, 1997, 1998, 1999). In the realm of the interface of theology and science, Van Huyssteen emphasizes the term post-foundationalism to describe his form of critical realism (see Van Huyssteen 1986; 1997; 1998; 1999). At present, the thinking on interdisciplinary methodology in theological circles seems to be dominated by critical realist or postfoundationalist philosophy.

Interdisciplinary methodologies are an excellent means to bridge the gap between the extremes. However, a Reformational form of interdisciplinarity is a much more biblical alternative than critical realism as the philosophical foundation for this bridging effort. I build this scriptural alternative upon the insights of Herman Dooyeweerd (1971), H. G. Stoker (1969; 1971), and especially upon Greg Bahnsen's official collation and interpretation of C. A. Van Til (Bahnsen 1998). Next, I will summarize some of the key philosophical presuppositions of critical realism and give a Vantillian critique.

Philosophical Presuppositions of **Critical Realism**

In missiological circles, some are now also claiming that a radical (see e.g., Kraft 1979)[xvi] or a more moderate and biblical (Hiebert 1999)[xvii] form of critical realism is a middle ground between the two extremes of naïve realism (positivism and empiricism) and idealism. Kraft and Hiebert (as well as Van Huyssteen above) seem to have followed Ian Barbour's lead in adopting this terminology (Barbour 1971; 1974).

Positivist and Empiricist Methodologies	Idealist Methodologies
Foundationalist	Non-Foundationalist
Tied to Modernity	Tied to Postmodernity
Correspondence Theory of Truth	Coherence Theory of Truth
Every Fact is Theory Neutral	Every Fact is Theory Bound

Fig. 2: Presupposition Extremes in Research Epistemologies.

Critical realists in missiology and theology (e.g., Barbour 1974; Kraft 1979; Van Huyssteen 1989; Bosch 1991; Hiebert 1999)[xviii] follow Kuhn's paradigmatic approach to some extent (Kuhn 1970). The opposite of Kuhn's approach is termed essentialism and is criticized as being foundationalist in philosophical background. All thus reject a typical positivistic model in both science, including social science, and theology. The basic question is not anymore "whether a given theory is provable, correct, or true" (Van Huyssteen 1989, 174). Instead, critical realism in its various forms, ranging from Hiebert's conservative and more biblical form to Van Huyssteen's and Kraft's (Kraft 1979) more radical forms, asks a different question. The foundational query concerning any proposed theory in science or theology is, does it propose "adequate solutions to meaningful problems" within a particular cultural and worldview paradigm (Van Huyssteen 1989, 174; see Kraft 1979). "Truth" is not based on a universal rule, but is paradigm specific. Each paradigm has a specific rationality and truthfulness within the system. This rejec-

tion of proof and accuracy seems to demonstrate a pragmatic, post-Kantian influence (i.e., instrumentalist influence).

Basic Presuppositions of Critical Realism

The basic assumption of this perspective in theology and missiology is post-Kantian and post-Kuhnian. All access to "reality" is through a human, mentally imposed interpretation. Every fact is a human interpreted fact: "There is no uninterpreted access to reality and that in the process of interpretation the role of metaphor is central" (Van Huyssteen 1989, 158).[xix] Critical Realism views descriptions of reality, assumed to be actual and external, to be accessed *indirectly* through human created models. Models are supposed to "refer" to something actual but in fact are only "metaphorically based screens or 'grids,' indirectly redescrib[ing] reality" (Van Huyssteen 1989, 157; see also Kraft 1979, 25-31, Hiebert 1999, 77-78)[xx]

The basic assumption, following Kant, is that no human or human language can describe something as it is in itself (*Das Ding an sich*) (see Barbour 1974, 34). No human can discover the essence of anything. "We always relate to our world(s) through [human] interpreted experience" (Van Huyssteen 1999, 268). This includes both theological and scientific knowledge, creating an "epistemic similarit[y]" between the two. Neither can claim "demonstrably certain foundations" to uniquely "warrant . . . theory choices" (Van Huyssteen 1999, 267). Neither can demonstrate that a theory is "provable, correct, or true," only that it is pragmatically useful (Van Huyssteen 1989, 174). At this point, critical realism does not differ from Instrumentalism.

This form of critical realism creates what Van Huyssteen calls "a responsible epistemic pluralism" (Van Huyssteen 1999, 268), based on a "postfoundationalist" rationality (Van Huyssteen 1999, 268). A postfoundationalist concept of rationality is primarily individualistic, existential (i.e., decisional), and fideistic: "the predicate 'rational' first of all characterizes an individual's responsible decisions and beliefs, not propositions as such, nor communities." Paradoxically, however, it also involves the "larger context of the community." Because each individual's judgment is fallible, it requires an "ongoing critical evaluation by others" (Van Huyssteen 1999, 268). The standard of judgment, furthermore, is not transcendent to the community but immanent within it. It involves an attempt to take the individual's judgment seriously and involves an "evaluation against the standards of a community of inquiry" (Van Huyssteen 1999, 268).

Rationality is thus diverse from community to community. There is no trans-cultural rationality: "There are no universal standards of rationality against which we can measure other beliefs or competing research traditions" (Van Huyssteen 1999, 267). Parochial tradition is not merely "part of our background knowledge, but . . . the main source of our knowledge" (Van Huyssteen 1999, 265). Consequent nonfoundationalism emphasizes the "fact that every group and every context may in fact have its own rationality" (Van Huyssteen 199, 127). The result of this perspective is that the Reformation doctrine of *sola Scriptura* is no more. "There are no more foundationalist, universal, cross-cultural, or interreligious rules for theology," though some rules and presuppositions can be shared cross-culturally to make some discourse commensurable across cultures, traditions, or disciplines (Van Huyssteen 1999, 266). Communal tradition seems to reign supreme.

This sharing, then, creates the basis for an interdisciplinary methodology. Two or more disciplinary or ethno-lingual communities attempt to share some rules and presuppositions in a process of finding mutually agreeable, and functionally "useful," solutions to problems. Upon his presuppositions, however, Van Huyssteen fails to explain how there can be any prior interdisciplinary communication so that some rules and presuppositions can be mutually shared.

A DTTC or Nuanced Vantillian Critique

As a nuanced Vantillian,[xxi] I agree that an interdisciplinary methodology helps bridge the gap between the two epistemological paradigms (see figures 1, 2). However, this agreement is based on grounds that differ from Van Huyssteen, Hiebert, and Kraft's critical realism. All three *de facto* presuppose human autonomy in rationality because they adopt the Kantian view that the human mind imposes its order upon chaotic percepts.[xxii] Modernity and post-modernity, positivism and postpositivism share this presupposition.[xxiii] I term the modified Vantillian perspective I use, Dependent Trinitarian Transcendent Creationism (DTTC) (cf. Kreitzer 2000). This acronym is, by necessity, reductionistic because there are other key ideas that are not included (such as e.g., antithesis, covenant, and etc.).

Creationism

Clearly, the foundational presupposition of all human thought is that of *creatio ex nihilo* (creation out of nothing). A natural concomitant of this is the biblical concept that the original creation was very good. This very good creation included two fully developed human beings with a complete conceptual universe encoded in their minds in the form of human language. Another facet of this presupposition is that the deluge during Noah's time was a world-encompassing Flood of universal judgment like unto the universal judgment of fire which is to come upon the earth at the end, as Peter witnesses (2Pe 3:4-7, 10-12). Lastly, the Creator placed within the minds of humanity what are now the various families of languages at the Tower of Babel. Taking the meaning of the Creation, Flood, and Babel accounts as transcendently revealed presuppositions indicates that all the sciences (including missiology) must redo much of their chronological thinking. All dating schemes for ancient things in contemporary social sciences are based on the totally opposite presupposition of uniformitarianism and methodological naturalism.

Human Dependency

God created humankind to reflect the glory and strength of the Creator. Humans are both finite and fallen, and hence all are dependent upon a totally transcendent perspective to make sense of the whole of existence. Fallenness, according to Scripture, implies that all of human thinking apart from Christ is both corrupt and distorted not because any fault of human sensory equipment but because of an internal spirit of rebellion against the Creator (Rom 1:18-32). God created Adam's kind to think within the framework of the thought structure of truth that He made. Only within that creational framework, as it is refreshed by the regenerating and enlightening Spirit, is

humanity capable of discovering accurate truth concerning the data surrounding him. Only within that creational framework is Adam's kind able to fit data into organizing schemata that accurately reflect a coherent and integrated whole system of truth itself upheld by God. Therefore the issue for all human thought processes in both worldview and moral principles is that of human autonomy versus human dependency.

Trinitarian

This concept is more than the reduced Trinitarianism of systematic theologies. Eastern thought possesses a spiritual monism in which the external world of diverse phenomena is merely *maya* or illusion.   Western philosophy often begins with a material monism and methodological naturalism. Both philosophies, however, are functionally dualistic because neither can escape from the one universe created by God with both unifying truth and diverse data. Christian thought must thus explicitly begin with the foundational presupposition of the "equal ultimacy of the one and the many" (C. A. Van Til; see Rushdoony 1971; 1978). Both are necessary for truth and both are inescapable because both exist at the same time in the ultimate reality which is God and within His creation, which reflects His glory.

Transcendent Foundationalism

According to the DTTC critique, then, every person has a foundation. Either it is an individual or communal foundation that is immanent within the creation or it is a transcendental foundation based upon the truth of the Creator as found in the Scriptures. There is indeed universal truth based upon the wisdom, character, and community of the Triune God. The DTTC perspective correctly begins with the Transcendental Argument for God (TAG): presupposing the existence of the Triune Creator and the complete presuppositional framework (worldview) of Scripture (see Bahnsen 1998, 311-312). Only after beginning with that total picture can one demonstrate that the opposite is genuinely impossible.

There is *at base* only one non-Christian worldview; logically speaking, it is the negation of the overall picture described above—the denial of some or all of the propositions used to summarize biblically-based Christianity (e.g., the Trinity, creation, providence, sin, incarnation, redemption, regeneration). . . . Every non Christian philosophical position takes for granted that man, not God, must function with ultimate intellectual authority, being the measure or "reference point" for all that he believes to be true. (Bahnsen 1998, 321)

According to DTTC, Christian social scientists must irenically challenge all other scientific-philosophical worldview systems. They then must demonstrate that the antithetical meaning system is actually meaningless upon its own presuppositions. None of the antithetical systems give the preconditions for any intelligible knowledge or morality. All are internally self-contradictory. By demonstrating the impossibility of the contrary, a biblical (i.e., DTTC) social scientist or missiologist can arrive at certainty. Certainty, of course, is anathema to all post-Kantian systems, both critical realist and instrumentalist. This includes all postmodernist systems. However, certainly does not mean arrogant dogmatism and a stubborn, non-listening atti-

tude. The wisdom "from above, is . . . peaceable, gentle, reasonable" (Jas 3:14). Arrogance and not-listening is based upon human autonomy and a dualistic view of knowledge.[xxiv]

Proving the impossibility of the contrary is done by "spiral reasoning" (Frame 1995, 306-307). The Christian, founded upon his transcendent presupposition of the Triune God, "go[es] around and around" the antithetical presupposition or worldview. In so doing, one "presuppos[es] the things . . . learned on the previous trip [around] and appl[ies] those presuppositions to the new data." At times, new data obtained in the orbiting of the

Some Basic Presuppositions, Objections, and the "Impossibility of the Contrary"

D	Man is not dependent upon anything except himself. **Antidote:** In the very act of denying your lack of dependence you are depending on words, the understanding of others, and the stability of the communicating medium, etc. to try to deny dependency. This does not prove dependence upon a transcendent god but does disprove the statement.
D	Man is not to praise anything but himself, because we praise that which we depend upon. **Antidote:** The very act of stating this disproves the statement. We depend upon communication, other's to understand, air we breath and so forth all the time. Where do these other things come from?
Tri	There is no reality to any diversity because it is illusion. **Antidote:** You have just communicated with a diversity which you yourself claimed did not exist, contradicting yourself. Thus the real consequence of believing the statement would be to stop breathing, thinking, and living which involves diversity which you claim to be an illusion.
Tri	There is no reality to unity because all that exists is diversity of chaotic atoms. **Antidote:** You have just communicated with a diversity which you yourself claimed did not exist, contradicting yourself.
Tri	The "Trinitarian presupposition" is nonsensical because it is illogical. Antidote: Your very statement uses both unity and diversity to explain your rejection of the equal ultimacy of the one and many/unity and diversity.
Tran	All facts are [human] interpreted facts. **Antidote:** Then the above fact is interpreted by the human mind and communicates nothing. Therefore, all facts are either interpreted by the Creator God because He made and upholds all things and humans must follow His interpretations to know anything OR man has only relative "truth" which is actually nonsensical and meaningless.
Tran	I can know nothing transcendent nor is there any transcendent foundational truth. **Antidote:** This is in itself a transcendent truth claim and thus self-contradictory. I cannot know true facts in the immanent realm if there were no God who is the source of transcendent truth.
Tran	All truth is relative. **Antidote:** That means this "truth" is relative and the proposition is nonsensical. Conclusion: There is some absolute and unchanging truth.
Tran	No absolute truth exists **Antidote:** This truth is not absolute and the proposition is nonsensical. Conclusion: There is some absolute and unchanging truth.
Tran	All truth is merely community based, relational, and never propositional. **Antidote:** Certainly then if ALL truth is community based then this truth is as well. This means that the speaker must presuppose propositional truth to attempt to deny all transcendent truth.
Tran	No one can know anything with certainly until he/she knows everything **Antidote:** This is a self-contradictory statement. I know that I cannot know? Therefore some exact transcendent truth exist that can be known. I do not have to know everything to know that specific thing. On the other hand the self-contradictory nature of the statement shows that God has indeed put into the creation and into language ideas which can come only from Him. If man could start (he can't and doesn't) with a *tabula rasa* mind that is totally neutral, then he can know nothing with certainty because until we know everything, the bit of knowledge not know could overthrow atheory help up to that point.
C	Man is a mere product of time plus chance plus good fortune (i.e., chaos). **Antidote:** Just as nothing can produce nothing, so chaos cannot produce order, meaning, purpose, or upwards development of greater order. This also presupposes that chaotic matter-energy is eternal and has the ability to generate order, meaning, and a cycle of existence.
C	God is not distinct from the creation but is the creation. **Antidote:** If "god" is everything It is nothing (no thing). Something cannot come out of nothing. This leads to the Creator-creature distinction.

presupposition or paradigm under study "will require us to unlearn things that we thought we knew before. In the religious case, *we may have to revise our interpretation of God's revelation in some areas*" (Frame 1995, 306; emphasis added). By means of this spiral process, the opposite of the scriptural presuppositions can be transcendently demonstrated to be impossible.

This spiral reasoning process can apply to both particular data and data based meaning systems up to, and including, worldview paradigms. Empirical evidence interpreted within the biblical framework can be used in this process. This spiraling process inescapably demonstrates that facts and created factuality-systems can be known exactly and accurately but never comprehensively.[xxv] Though a social researcher can learn many things accurately and exactly, he or she can never know anything comprehensively as the Creator does.

Lastly, this spiraling process must include the international hermeneutical community and other disciplines exactly as Van Huyssteen and other critical realists intuitively realize (e.g., Hiebert 1999). Wisdom is in many counselors (Pr 11:14, 15:22, 24:6). No one individual, discipline, or ethno-community possesses comprehensive knowledge or universal observation, but each observes the same created reality and record complementary observations of God's one world. Collation and integration of the varying complementary perspectives provides a more comprehensive picture of that one reality. Hiebert, for one, rightly demonstrates this within his theistic version of critical realism (Hiebert 1999).

Summary and Deductions

The transcendental critique of unbelieving worldviews aims to show that, given their presuppositions, there could be no knowledge in any field whatsoever—that it would be impossible to find meaning or intelligibility in anything at all. (Bahnsen 1998, 514)

The "transcendental argument for God" provides certainty for the biblical worldview and shows that the opposite is impossible. Christian social scientists and missiologists using the DTTC paradigm "use factual and logical arguments, governed . . . by Christian presuppositions" to demonstrate the certainty of the total biblical-Christian worldview (Frame 1995, 306). In other words, all other worldviews accept time, chance, and chaos as the sole source for the development of order, meaning, and design out of nothing.
This is clearly impossible. Only within that framework can true factuality about the human social creation be discovered (see Hiebert 1999, 104; note 12 above). Only within the Creator's comprehensive truth paradigm, that is the biblical worldview, can humanity, both in its individual and ethno-collective manifestations, be researched and understood. Only in his light do we see light (Ps 36:9; Prv 4:18).

A DTTC perspective, thus, does "not object to facts, but only brute facts" (Frame 1995, 308). The same is true of theories. A theory about individual or collective humanity can only be true within the Creator's design-paradigm revealed in Scripture and within the observed data of creation. In Scripture, God describes human individuals and collectivities (e.g., ethnicity),

as they are in themselves, in their created essence. Only within that divinely interpreted essence can more about ethno-humanity be discovered.

No neutrality

Naturally, then, careful deductions can be made from the DTTC perspective. First of all, clearly no person's mind is neutral and autonomous. A person and an ethno-culture are for the Creator and his Son or they are ethically and noetically against the Lord God. Every person and culture is for or against God in values and mental interpretations of the Creator's universe (Jos 24:15; Pss 2, 19, 119; Mt 6:24; 12:30; Mk 9:40). Everyone, therefore, begins his or her social scientific reasoning and his or her missiological thinking with a precommitment to a worldview. Critical realists, postfoundationalists, and DTTC-Vantillians formally agree on this, though not on the implications of it.

No brute factuality

There are thus no "brute facts." There are no "particulars unrelated to any plan or interpretation." The universe does not consist of "purely random matter, moving completely according to chance." Furthermore, there are no abstract, autonomous "universals," that is "abstract, impersonal, and apparently self-existent universals" that serve as "connecting links" between "brute facts" (Bahnsen 1998, 279).[xxvi]

Singular truth flows from one God. Because God has pre-planned and presently controls all things and events, certain "facts and events" can be known and predicted, indeed interpreted "in advance." Therefore, not all theories and hypotheses about ethnic and socio-cultural phenomena, for example, are "as credible as any other" prior to observation, investigation, and evaluation (Bahnsen 1998, 279). Scripture is the canon for such credibility.

There is thus no "epistemic pluralism," as Van Huyssteen suggests. Van Til refutes this as being equivalent to the serpent's temptation of Eve.[xxvii] Because of the fact of creation and providence, purely contingent "open factuality" can be discarded from the beginning (Bahnsen 1998, 383). There is no possibility that any and every contingency can and should be explored. All true data are attached to the total truth-system designed and upheld by the Creator. He creates and defines the only truth framework; the opposite is false and irrational. On a non-Christian basis facts are 'rationalized' for the first time when interpreted by man. But for one who holds that the facts are already part of an ultimately rational system by virtue of the plan of God, it is clear that such hypotheses as presuppose the non-existence of such a plan must, even from the outset of his investigation, be considered irrelevant. (Van Til 1967a, 116). Because there is one God, there is one universal truth found in him. An "epistemic pluralism" presupposes a polytheistic universe with multiple realities, truths, and gods, and an infinite variety of possibilities. However, because of the one true God, what is true is true cross-culturally and across disciplines. The DTTC perspective integrates transcendent and immanent truths into one system, allowing true interdisciplinarity. Hiebert intuitively senses this:

> Juxtaposing different knowledge systems does not assure us of integration [interdisciplinarity]. . . . For integration to take place, the knowledge systems must truly be complementary. This requires first that they both be embedded in the same worldview. Just as it is impossible to integrate a theology based on idealism with a science based on realism, we cannot integrate theology with a science that denies God's existence. We must begin with a biblical worldview and then develop our theology and our science within this overarching framework of givens (Hiebert 1999, 104).

"True truth" (F. Schaeffer) both corresponds to creational realities and coheres to the larger divine truth system. Both empirical evidence and coherence to a theoretical framework are necessary for certainty. A Christian social scientist using the DTTC perspective cannot possess one without the other. Thus DTTC truly integrates the false dilemma between so-called naïve realism and idealism—the one looking upward (e.g., Plato), the other observing downward (e.g., Aristotle).

Lastly, no ethno-culture can exist without using something of the singular Christian truth-system. Hence even unbelievers must use something of true created and providentially upheld facts to exist in God's world. Otherwise they would self-destruct (see Paul's argument in chapters 1 and 2 of Romans).

Therefore, each ethno-culture does not construct a different creation than the one inescapable *uni*-verse created by the one Lord. "Epistemic pluralism" leads to a *multi*-verse, no matter how hard people try to deceive themselves into thinking this may be true since the Fall. A *multi*-verse implies multiple deities and multiple worlds and multiple truths. Because of the one Creator and his singular *uni*-verse and singular truth, there an etic system of classification can exist. DTTC alone allows for an understanding of all lingual-cultures in comparison to others. The one truth of the one God serves as the single transcendent canon and source for comparison. He and his created truth, being distinct from man, serve as the object for understanding. This defines objectivity.

True objectivity

Third, real objectivity does exist in the DTTC biblical system. God has created both objects and subjects to be controlled and interpreted under himself by dependent humanity.[xxviii] Humans, in the biblical worldview, can see the essence of objects and interpret them accurately and exactly, but never comprehensively. This opens the door for true dependent humility and for a listening ear for other witnesses both within one's own culture and those from other cultures. No one eyewitness can see everything. We need one another.

True universality

A fourth deduction is that all immanent truth is created and upheld by God in general revelation. All transcendent truth is derived from the eternal Being of the Triune God. This embraces the principles of logic, including the Law of Contradiction. This means that neither

logic nor any other created immanent foundation for knowledge is autonomous, abstract and impersonal, that is existing apart from the personal and universal Trinity. Three immanent foundations for all knowledge: 1) logic based upon the law of [non]-contradiction, [xxix] 2) correspondence to the data of creation design, and 3) coherence to created meaning systems are universal foundations for knowledge in all cultures. All three, however, presuppose a transcendent foundation, that is philosophical Trinitarianism, the second "T" of the DTTC acronym. In summary, then, both the coherence and the correspondence theories of truth are necessarily true at the same time and that logic is inescapable and founded in God's transcendent nature. In other words, logic and both theories of truth presuppose the triune nature of God. All three depend upon the Creator's Triune and transcendent rationality placed in our being as the *imago Dei*.

This then provides the reason for the fact of commensurability between ethno-lingual groups. The fact that there is some mutual understanding between ancient and modern cultures also reflects the reality that all lingual-cultural systems depend upon one Triune Creator, one creation distinct from the Creator, one transcendent truth system (which has been actively but never completely suppressed), and one *imago Dei*. The one Maker created the language of every people of earth so that each may grope after and find truth in the one Lord, in whom dwells all the treasures of wisdom and understanding. Though each created language differently categorizes the one external creation upheld by the Logos, each provides a complementary view of that one creation.

No truth is mere human interpretation. All immanent truth has been created by the Creator God who is Triune. Within the Triune Godhead, neither the immanent particulars (the many, particularity) nor the universals (the one, unity) are arbitrary or created by human minds. Meaning and order are not imposed upon a chaotic external reality by human minds. From a transcendent perspective, the statements: "All facts are [human] interpreted facts," and "all factuality is [human] theory laden" is as self-contradictory as "All truth is relative."

Socio-cultural factuality is not a creation of interpreting human minds, which alone impart meaning to chaotic social observations or percepts entering the brain through the senses. The fact that the immanent one and the many are created and presently upheld by God provides the only reason the present socio-cultural and natural order continue for the next millisecond into the future. Only Providence allows for predictability, which is an absolute necessity for the social research. Providential ordering includes both the particularized data and the unifying frameworks.

Man's mind must truthfully relate to the real external world of social experience by bowing to the Creator's prior organization of it. Even mankind's social and individual deviations from God's moral norms fall within his providential planning (see e.g. Ge 50:20; Ac 2:23). Because of noetic and ethical rebellion, humankind's individual and cultural-collective mind can choose to twist, distort, and pervert God's creative-providential meaning order. "It is clearly seen through that which has been made" (Ro 1:20). Humanity can choose to see what it wants to see and disregard the rest. Therefore, man's rationality, even in rebellion, is never autonomous but always dependent. Ethno-humanity must "think God's thoughts after him"

or it will descend into increasing personal and social disorder and perversion (Rom 1:18-32; Jas 3:14-16).

Lastly, the data of human social experience is always connected to other providentially upheld data. No data are autonomous, brute facts awaiting the organizing mind of humans to make sense of and interpret them apart from the Creator's prior interpretation. A Christian social scientist must first understand what Scripture teaches about social factuality, then interpret observed data in that light. All ethno-social facts come to the human mind already organized and interconnected by the sovereign Providence of the universe. This data is found in both created nature and Scripture, which glorify God and his nature (Ps 19; Ro 1:20ff). He alone gives a truthful etic perspective upon human socio-culture. God reveals himself and his truth both in the book of creation and Scripture, without contradiction, and with clarity (perspicuity) (see Van Til 1967b). This allows for a true interdisciplinarity for all truth is God's singular truth.

Contextuality and truth

Since all truth is God's truth, a fifth concomitant of nuanced Vantillianism is that truth coheres to a meaning system created and upheld by the Triune God. Each individual and ethno-linguistic group perverts that singular truth, both data and system, to a greater or lesser extent because of rebellion (Ro 1:18-30). DTTC accepts a single comprehensive system of divine knowledge, but varying ethno-perspectives can be complementary and equally valid since no person or culture's knowledge is comprehensive. DTTC accounts for cultural diversity and differing worldview presuppositions in knowledge of created objects better than Critical Realism. First, the Fall distorts man's accepting of God-ordered truth, not his perception of it (Rom 1:19-21). Each culture is a unique, complex meaning web of distorted truths and ethical rebellion against God. One discovers the meaning of these distorted truths within each culture.

Second, DTTC allows for genuine diversity of complementary perspectives of the one creation, albeit distorted by sin. DTTC thus does not deny the emic and etic distinction. Each cultural-lingual meaning system must be understood within its own context. In other words, the human community possesses multiple cultures, each of which are in fact social meaning systems. Each of these cultural systems consists of a mixture of rebel, autonomous interpretations of God's world based on false presuppositions, and formal meanings borrowed surreptitiously from the common grace knowledge that the Creator has placed in every one.

Every ethno-culture group possesses a unique mix of autonomous meanings and formal, common grace understandings of the divine design-order. Hence when a social scientist or missiologist tries to grasp another culture's system of meaning in terms of his or her culture's system of meaning, there is a necessary measure of incommensurability. However, a researcher can develop an emic perspective of both cultures through using a integrative DTTC interdisciplinary methodology,[xxx] first to understand his or her own culture and then to grasp the unique meaning system of another culture. Only on that basis can he or she make valid

trans-disciplinary, trans-cultural comparisons of an etic[xxxi] perspective and accurately present the Trinity God's scriptural view to the observed culture.

DTTC Interdisciplinarity in Missiology and Anthropology

The task of Christian missiologists and social scientists taught by DTTC, therefore, is to assemble ethnologies and build a socio-cultural anthropology upon "thinking God's thoughts after him." That thought framework of interrelated presuppositions, paradigms, institutions, values, and meaning (*principia*) is found in an inerrant Scripture.[xxxii] Both the packaging around those truths and the truth itself are truthful. There is no upper-story, lower-story dualism in biblical thought.

No division between fact and value

The Creator does not dualistically separate brute factuality from a human chosen, metaphysical value-system as post-Kantian philosophy does. All ethno-social research must be governed by the Creator's revealed social and individual ethical norms, which flow from his personal character (see Ps 119:137). Certainly the Bible is not a textbook of social science. However, sufficient truth is found in Scripture, in a sufficient framework of exact but not comprehensive *principia,* for man to exercise his dominion task as the vice-gerent of God, in Christ. *Theoria* and *praxis,* knowledge and value, are never separate in the DTTC world-view.

Therefore, a scriptural ethnology and social science must carefully describe man's ethno-cultures as they are, within their own unique meaning system. It must then catalogue and classify these cultural-lingual systems, using biblical *principia* to form an etic perspective. This knowledge must never be abstracted or divorced from the triune God and his divinely enjoined covenant-missiological task and values. He has commanded the new man in Christ to rule and disciple the whole earth, bringing all of its ethno-cultures, peoples, and creatures under his suzerainty, teaching them to do all that the Covenant Lord has commanded. This includes the individual, family, economic, socio-political, and ecclesial spheres. All areas of life including facts, paradigms, and values are bounded and regulated by Scriptural *principia*.

The One

Idealism

Autonomous knowledge
Coherence Theory
Relativism/Subjectivism
Non-Foundationalist
Post-modernity

Every fact is human-theory laden

Kantian Interdisciplinarity
Post-foundational Interdisciplinarity (Van Huyssteen 1999)
Christian Instrumentalist Interdisciplinarity (Kraft 1979)
Clarkian Interdisciplinarity (Clark 1988)

Theistic Critical Realist Interdisciplinarity (Hiebert 1999)
Vantillian Interdisciplinarity (3) (Poythress 1976; Rushdoony 1978)

Vantillian Interdisciplinarity (1) (Bahnsen 1998, see Stoker 1969; 1971)

> *Equal ultimacy of the one and the many*
> *Every fact and the truth system created & upheld by Triune God*
> ## DTTC: Biblical Balance
> *Truth corresponds to data and coheres to divine meaning- system*
> *Transcendent-immanent Foundationalism*

Veridicalist Interdisciplinarity (Hanna 1981)
Vantillian Interdisciplinarity (2) (Frame 1995)

Classic, Common Sense Interdisciplinarity (Warfield, Sproul, et al. 1984)

Empiricist, neo-Thomist Interdisciplinarity
(Geisler 1999, Moreland 1985, 1987, 1989)

Lockean Interdisciplinarity

Correspondence Theory
Autonomous knowledge
Positivism/Empiricism
Absolutism/Objectivism
Immanent Foundationalism
Modernity

Every fact is value and theory free

The Many

Fig. 3: Interdisciplinarity Continuum (Epistemology).

Growth of Ethno-Cultural Knowledge

As the mission mandate is fulfilled, using a DTTC perspective and interdisciplinary method-ology, socio-cultural knowledge will grow incrementally. Paradigm shifts will occur as Christian philosophers and researchers discover that previous attempts to explain observed data are not as accurate as subsequent attempts.

As figure 4 illustrates, a cross, an oval, or trapezoid could be the object which actually fills in the whole picture if one begins only with the individual circles on the page. This is what a theory attempts to do. It predicts what the rest of the data will be when the investigation is complete. The dots of "data" are certain, but the researcher may experience a paradigm shift from a cross, to a trapezoid, to an oval theory in attempting to explain the actual form he is working to discover.

For example, when studying ethnicity, the dots may represent certain bits of ethnographic evidence gained by participant observation. Varying theories give differing explanations for the meaning of the evidence with respect to what ethnicity is and how it functions. In actual ethnographic research, many of the "circles" are already in place in Scripture, and can first be discovered there by exegesis and the hermeneutical spiral as described above. This is aided by using insights from the whole inter-ethnic Christian and non-Christian community. Both DTTC and Hiebert's theistic critical realism note this need for an inter-ethnic, interdiscipli-nary common search (see, Hiebert 1999, 78).[xxxiii]
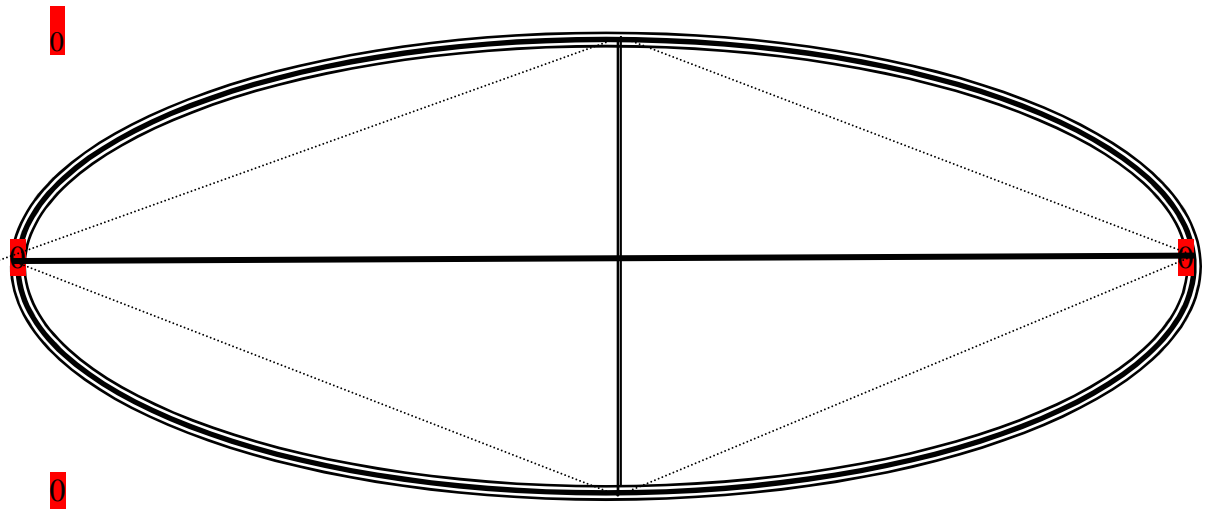

Fig. 4: Growth of Ethnographic Knowledge.

In summary then, progress in ethnographic knowledge occurs when observations increase and data gaps are filled in within the prior presupposition of the DTTC truth paradigm dis-covered in Scripture. As each observation is cross-checked and verified, a clearer perspec-tive on the Creator's design is discovered.[xxxiv]

Missiology, Anthropology, and Interdisciplinary Methodology

"The appropriate method of study is generated by careful consideration of the research questions" (Rudestam and Newton 1992, 60). Therefore, a DTTC study of anthropology with an interdisciplinary methodology leads to the development of what Creswell calls a "middle-range theory"[xxxv] (Creswell 1994, 83). Interdisciplinarity lends itself well to an interaction of (1) missiological observations and theories (e.g., Homogeneous Unit Principle and Church Growth observations and studies), (2) social science theories of anthropology, (3) exegesis of Scripture, (4) philosophy of science insights, and (5) field research data.   All of these can be interpreted using a common worldview paradigm (DTTC) just as Hiebert suggests. For interdisciplinary integration to genuinely occur, "knowledge systems must truly be complementary" because they share "the same worldview." DTTC research on anthropology "begin[s] with a biblical worldview" and then develops the ethno-science "within this overarching framework of givens" (Hiebert 1999, 104).

Glossary of Terms

Correspondence Theory of Truth (Christian version): Messages about the external world, received by human senses must match to the measurable data of creation to be accurate and true yet at the same time cohere to the system of truth springing from the Triune God.

Coherence Theory of Truth (Christian version): Messages about the external world, received by human senses, must cohere to the transcendent and created meaning system, which is upheld by divine providence, to be true; yet at the same time must correspond to what is actually occurring within the created universe.

Commensurability: (opposite is *incommensurability*): The quality of being measured or understood by the same standard or scale of values and rationality. (In other words, there is common ground between human groups that allows them to understand each other).

Critical Realism: According to P. Hiebert (1999, 68) this theory "strikes a middle ground" between empiricism, with its naïve realism and emphasis upon a neutral and autonomous truth that anyone can perceive and know, and "instrumentalism, with its stress on the subjective nature of human knowledge." Ian Barbour and Charles Kraft hold a more radically subjective form of this theory.

Dualism: Any theory, or system of thought or belief, that assumes a double ultimate principle, double ultimate being, or double ultimate force, etc., rather than merely one (e.g., as opposed to *idealism* and *materialism*). "The doctrine that mind and matter exist as distinct [and opposed] entities. . . . The doctrine that there are two independent principles, one good and the other evil. (based on http://dictionary.oed.com/). Often dualism presupposes that unity, spirit, and ideas are good, whereas diversity and matter are evil.

Empiricism: The theory which regards sense experience (i.e., received either directly or through instruments which can extend the reach of our senses such as telescopes, microscopes, etc.) as the only source of certain knowledge (based on http://dictionary.oed.com/).

Epistemology: The sub-branch of philosophy which attempts to discover the definition and method for discovering certain knowledge.

Fideism or Fideistic: The theory which teaches that all human knowledge is based upon unjustifiable foundations which are solely founded upon a subjective feeling of certitude. In other words, no one can know anything for certain, yet one can feel a certitude called "faith," which substitutes for certainty.

Foundationalism: A theory which teaches that all basic premises must be justified (known certainly), using human observations and based upon objective and neutral human reason. These foundations are based on self-evident truths that are inescapable and non-resistible, and therefore are not justified *by other beliefs*. "Foundationalism is simply a less tendentious term for modernism" (Raschke 2004, 24).

Immanent Foundationalism: Equivalent to "Foundationalism."

Non-Foundationalism: A theory related to post-Kantianism and postmodernity which teaches that any phenomenon from the external world is always perceived through a grid of various worldview beliefs. All facts are interpreted facts, that is, all facts are interpreted in the human mind and no one can see anything in itself. (Note that the statement: "All facts are interpreted facts" is self-contradictory).

Transcendent Foundationalism: The teaching that agrees with immanent Foundationalism upon the necessity of a certain beginning point for all human knowledge. However, that beginning point is not found within the observable creation and does not begin with neutral human observation or neutral human reason. All true thought begins within a commitment to the invisible Creator and His total truth (both as a system and as diverse data points). All such data that comes into human senses (e.g., the eyes, ears, and etc.) are not ordered by the human mind but by God's Mind. The triune God (and His wisdom) is thus the transcendent foundation of all truth for every individual and every culture. All true data thus must also cohere to the system of truth which God is in Himself and then expresses in His creation and providence (Jn 1:1-3; 14:6; Col 1:15-17; 2:3, 8; Heb 1:1). Humans perceive data and can discover their coherency within the divine truth system, but sin and finiteness distort this information. The Holy Spirit unbends and heals the distortion caused by sin. The Scripture (and indeed other culture's Spirit led reading of Scripture) helps limit our human finiteness. There are then "facts" which humans can perceive which are not first interpreted by human minds. The reason is that God is the original interpreter. Humans must think God's thoughts after Him to know certain truth.

Idealism: "Any system of thought . . . in which the object of external perception is held to consist, either in itself, or as perceived, of ideas [or spirit]" (http://dictionary.oed.com). Or the belief that all things can be reduced to universal unity or universal spirit. (akin to monism)

Post-Kantian, Critical or Transcendental Idealism: The perceiving mind and the whole contents of our experience, consists of ideas organized solely within the individual. These ideas are known to the individual, but not necessarily as the object of perception actually is "in itself."

Instrumentalism (or pragmatism): See "pragmatism" below.

Interdisciplinary: An integration of two or more academic disciplines or schools of learning; or a study which contributes to or benefits from two or more disciplines. "Interdisciplinarity" is "the quality, fact, or condition of being interdisciplinary" (http://dictionary.oed.com/).

Metalevel: Christian perspective: A connecting aspect of created truth above the concrete bits of data. Both the data pieces and the connecting truth have been created by God and are presently upheld by Him. *Oxford Online Dictionary*: "A level or degree (of understanding, existence, etc.) which is higher and often more abstract than those levels at which a subject, etc., is normally understood or treated; a level which is above, beyond, or outside other levels, or which is inclusive of a series of lower levels" (http://dictionary.oed.com/)

Missiology: The scientific study of Christian mission with an interface of theological and social scientific methodologies.

Modernity: A movement begun within Western culture which presupposes the autonomy of human reason and a neutral, empiricist method along with functional materialism for discovering any truth. The basic assumption is that autonomous humans, beginning with some sense related data can discover certain and universally valid truth about an external reality by the inductive method.

Monism: Any worldview or system of thought that presupposes that all things within reality can be reduced to one substance rather than more than one: Either diversity or matter (e.g., Materialism), or unity or invisible spirit (e.g., Brahmanism).

Paradigm: "A constellation of concepts, values, perceptions and practices shared by a community which forms a particular vision of reality that is the basis of the way a community organizes itself" (Kuhn 1970). In other words, a paradigm is an integrated framework of presuppositions or beliefs through which a person or group interprets both internal and external phenomena.

Postmodernity: An emerging worldview in Western cultures which denies the existence of any universally valid "master narratives" or "metanarratives" holding all human cultures together and providing a common foundation for communication and development (see e.g., Martin Heidegger, Jacques Derrida, Jean-François Lyotard). Therefore, each community (and ultimately each individual) lives within its own communal paradigm or individually developed world of meaning. "What Kant held in common with Derrida and the deconstructionists was a simple side glance that perceived reality [is] not as we naively perceive it, but as a system of signs and sign-relations and part of a rational architecture serving somehow to explain everything we know and see (Raschke 2004, 38)

Pragmatism (or instrumentalism): A philosophy which distinguishes between external reality as it is in itself and our knowledge of it. There is no certain knowledge of anything in itself. However, in a concession to what actually happens through the development of technology, the philosophy teaches that any manipulation of the external world which produces positive results is good. The meanings of the terms "good" and "positive" are taken surreptitiously and illogically from the surrounding Judeo-Christian culture.

Presuppositions: The basic foundational axioms of a person's or of a group's worldview.

Realism: "Belief in the real existence of matter as the object of perception (*natural realism*); also, the view that the physical world has independent reality, and is not ultimately reducible to universal mind or spirit. (Opposed to IDEALISM 1.)" (http://dictionary.oed.com/).

Naïve Realism: "the belief . . . that a perceived object is not only real but has in reality all its perceived attributes." (http://dictionary.oed.com/): The problem with this view is not that the external reality is not actual, nor that our senses cannot see photographically that world

and that minds create order out of the chaos of the external world, but that humans are easily deceived by mirage, illusion, demonic deception and human sin.

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End Notes

[i] Unfortunately, Van Huysteen does not see the logical contradiction. He "knows" (a universal truth claim) that all knowledge is interpreted merely within a parochial group.

[ii] "Can there be a life of committed Christian faith after moving beyond the absolutism of foundationalism and the relativism of antifoundationalism? I believe a . . . helpful, postfoundationalist model for theistic belief can be found in a carefully constructed critical realism" (Van Huyssteen 1997, 41; see 1989, 143-197).

[iii] To view one or more disciplines using the rigid epistemological axioms of another, see Klein 1990, 55; Gelwick 1983, 426. This is similar to what linguists and anthropologists call an etic perspective.

[iv] "Essentially additive not integrative" and "not interactive" (Klein 1990, 56). Disciplinary groups work in conjunction with one another.

[v] Disciplines are related in parallel ways but without coordination (Klein 1990, 68; Gelwick 1983, 426).

[vi] A high degree of cooperation between disciplines, mutually enhancing epistemologies (Klein 1990, 66).

[vii] Even postmodernity which denies any metanarratives and foundations must begin with this GUT, as an ontological presupposition.

[viii] Noumenal is the theory or concept tying the phenomenal or those perceptions of the senses together.

[ix] Dualism either breaks down to the monism of radical individualistic materialism leading to anarchism, radical Libertarianism, and nihilism, or it breaks down into the monism of spiritual-idealistic holism leading to various collective totalitarianisms, e.g., Fascism, secular humanism, racial socialisms [e.g., Nazism]; revolutionary humanisms [e.g., Maoism, Marxist-Leninism]; and an emerging New Age or cosmic humanism (see Rushdoony 1971, 1978a).

[x] Corresponding to axiology and ontology (or metaphysics in Van Til's terminology).

[xi] "For the Christian, the ultimate unifying principle is the self-sufficient, eternal, sovereign, personal, and triune Creator of the heaven and earth. And within this Creator there is an equal ultimacy of unity and plurality. . . . The impersonal, particular, and causal feature of the physical universe are subordinate to this God . . . in the Christian's comprehensive scheme of knowledge" (Bahnsen 1998, 326, n. 131).

[xii] See *Radical Orthodoxy: A New Theology* (Milbank, Pickstock, and Ward 1999), a noble yet flawed attempt.

[xiii] An excellent example of this singular methodology is the principles given for legal research in Dt 13:12-14; 19:15-18; 25:1-2. The Creator provides the epistemological meaning framework and upholds all the data details to be discovered by the judges.

[xiv]This truth is objective, because it is created and given by a Transcendent Creator who sees all things as they comprehensively and truly are in themselves. Further, he is distinct from his created objects and has created each object distinct from each other. Only this creation-based, biblical perspective can make sense of the world as it is.

[xv]"Whether in theology or the sciences, the classical model of rationality clearly always requires some form of foundationalism. Foundationalism . . . requires the foundationalist propositions must be self-evident and indubitable. Since, however, there are no grounds for believing that there exists a body of self-evident or given propositions that will allow us to justify our beliefs, foundationalism ultimately fails" (Van Huyssteen 1999, 124).

[xvi]Kraft's earlier view (1979) could even be termed "Christian Instrumentalism" (Kreitzer 2000).

[xvii] Critical Realism seeks the "middle ground between positivism, with its emphasis on objective truth, and instrumentalism, with its stress on the subjective nature of human knowledge. . . . It affirms the presence of objective truth but recognizes that this is subjectively apprehended" (Hiebert 1999, 69). "Like instrumentalism, critical realism distinguishes between reality and our knowledge of it; but like positivism, it claims that that knowledge can be true. Critical realism also assumes, ontologically, that the world is orderly and that that order can be comprehended, in some measure, by human reason" (Hiebert 1999, 71).

[xviii]Very possibly also Bosch (1991).

[xix]Kraft, also denying that any knowledge corresponds with the external world, agrees that it is always an imposition of the human mind: "The fact that as human beings we see reality not as it is but always from inside our heads in terms of such models means that 'no direct comparison of model and world is possible' ([Barbour 1974]:38). We cannot, therefore, take our models . . . literally or absolutely" (Kraft 1979, 29). Science is a subjective model of the external world. Meaning and knowledge are intra-cultural and cohere to a cultural system of meaning with no necessary correspondence to any transcultural form (Kraft 1979, 23-28). Applied to Scripture, it is impossible to have an inerrant book and an accurate doctrine of inerrancy. Like Van Huyssteen (1988, 179ff), Kraft explicitly rejects inerrancy (Kraft 1979).

[xx]Knowledge involves the human mind ordering sense percepts into "an interpretive whole" (Hiebert 1999, 77). Hiebert further states: "It is the configurational nature of knowledge that gives meaning to uninterpreted experiences. It gives to knowledge a coherence and comprehension that makes sense out of a bewildering barrage of sense data entering our mind" (Hiebert 1999, 78).

Question: What gives coherence to the barrage of data bombarding the senses: Man's mind or God's mind? It must be the Creator, who has designed and orders all data, which are external to man and are created objects to be observed. Furthermore, God placed meaning categories in man's mind by creating and providentially upholding languages. Lastly, he has given capacity to all humans to perceive and understand because of the rational aspect of the *imago Dei*.

[xxi]Closer to Bahnsen 1998 and Stoker 1969; 1971; than Frame 1995 or Poythress 1976.

[xxii]Hiebert, however, is very close to consequently rejecting human autonomy in knowledge. "We begin with a biblical worldview and then develop our theology and our science within this overarching framework of givens" (Hiebert 1999, 104).

[xxiii]See Van Huyssteen's discussion of the multiple rationalities view (above): "Ironically, extreme non-foundationalist relativism turns out to be a direct continuation of the classical model of rationality" (Van Huyssteen 1999, 127).

[xxiv]How often, have even those who claim biblical, non-autonomous wisdom actually not acted with the loving knowledge they claim to have (see 1Co 8:1-2)!

[xxv]Barbour, Kraft, Van Huyssteen, and Hiebert all deny this. However, the statement, "Nothing can be known exactly or accurately" purports to be an exact and accurate statement, contradicting itself. It is meaningless.

[xxvi]At this point Barbour, Van Huyssteen, and Kraft all agree. Because they do not self-consciously begin with the truthfulness of the complete biblical worldview, they begin with mental neutrality (autonomy).

Hiebert is one who struggles to reject this autonomy: "Faced with disagreements, positivists attack one another as false, instrumentalists smile and go their own ways, idealists split, and critical realists go back and search the Scriptures to test their different points of view" (Hiebert 1999, 103; see citation from 104 above). However, he fails because he does not reject up-front the Kantian presupposition that all facts are human interpreted, that is, all facts are [human] theory laden.

[xxvii]"Eve was obliged to postulate an ultimate epistemological pluralism and contingency before she could even proceed to consider the proposition made to her by the devil. . . . Eve . . . assume[d] the equal ulti-

macy of the minds of God, of the devil, and of herself. And this surely excluded the exclusive ultimacy of God" (Bahnsen 1998, 152-153)

[xxviii]"If the Christian position with respect to *creation*, that is, with respect to the idea of the origin of both the subject and the object of human knowledge is true, there is and must be objective knowledge. In that case the world of objects was made in order that the subject of knowledge, namely man, should interpret it under God. . . . On the other hand if the Christian theory of creation by God is not true then we hold that there cannot be objective knowledge of anything. In that case all things in this universe are unrelated and cannot be in fruitful contact with one another. This we believe to be the simple alternative on the question of the objectivity of knowledge. . . . If God has an absolutely self-determinate character, then the universe also has an 'objectivity' to which the mind of man must submit itself. Then man cannot by the power of his logic determine the nature of God. And that is what he, as a sinner, wants to do.

"To seek to control reality, to be the source of 'objectivity,' is not the ideal of the modern idealists only; it was the ideal of classic realism just as well. . . .

"Even in observation of facts the subjective element enters into the picture. There is not the least harm in this. It is a purely metaphysical and psychological fact. It is not the fact that a subject is involved in the knowledge situation that makes for skepticism. It is only when this subject does not want itself interpreted in terms of God that skepticism comes about" (Bahnsen 1998, 305-306; emphasis added).

[xxix]Each created fact is distinct or diverse from every other fact or object in the creation yet is interrelated with every other fact. This is reflected in both the ontological and epistemological forms of the law of [non]-contradiction.

Ontological: "Personal A is not personal non-A" demonstrates that A and non-A are distinct, i.e., I am not you. "I" is the distinct subject; "you" is a distinct nominative object in the predicate position. Every English sentence with a subject and object presupposes this. This is true of the Godhead and the Creator-creature distinction. I am not God. He and I are distinct. Within the Trinity, the ontological principle is best illustrated. The Son is not the Father or Spirit and the Father is not the Son or the Spirit, and so forth. Yet, contrary to Kantian dialectical thought, the law of contradiction does not teach the absolute separation of subject from object "out there," creating brute factuality. Though the Son is not the Father, they are still one personal essence.

Epistemological: "A is not non-A." This demonstrates both true distinction between "A" and "non-A" and yet also unity because the whole phrase is meaningful only as a unity. Again this flows from the nature of God.

[xxx]A DTTC interdisciplinary methodology integrates a DTTC-based philosophy, wholistic covenantal theology, and a participant observation process founded upon both.

[xxxi]For definitions of an EMIC perspective and an ETIC perspective, see the glossary.

[xxxii]Contrary to what Raschke (2004) and Bosch (1991) and others have been claiming, inerrancy is not necessarily bound to naïve Realism and modernity. Postmodern views of truth and rationality are not the way forward. Indeed, the Scripture itself teaches its inerrancy. Hence this doctrine is founded upon humanity's total dependence upon the wisdom and understanding that flows from the transcendent foundation who is the personal Triune Creator God (DTTC)!

[xxxiii]Hiebert's view, as demonstrated in the case of Barbour, Kraft, and Van Huyssteen, inevitably leads to neo-orthodoxy, something I am convinced he would want to avoid. The critical realist explanation of truth as a "model, map, and blueprint" (Hiebert 1999, 76-81), when applied to Scripture, is Barthian. For example, "Every map purports to give us true information, but only about some parts of reality. . . . The truthfulness of a map is not measured by the accuracy of its extraneous information but of the information it claims to present truthfully" (Hiebert 1999, 80). This seems to be open to the "form-content" dualism as developed by existentialist theologians. For example, the proto-history (Ge 1-11), crucial to discovering a scriptural DTTC theory on ethnicity is merely saga rather than real history because it presents "extraneous information" (see e.g., Buytendach 1972).

[xxxiv]This process applies to all social and natural scientific issues. An example is the difference between the Tychonian, Copernican, or Einsteinian views of the universe. Differences between them are paradigmatic and need a transcendent DTTC presuppositional basis to sort out.

[xxxv]"Grand theories attempt to explain large categories of phenomena and are most common in the natural sciences (e.g., the theory of evolution). Middle-range theories fall between minor working hypotheses of everyday life and the all-inclusive grand theories. Substantive theories are restricted to a particular setting, group, time, population, or problem" (Creswell 1994, 83).