BUILDING *LOGOS* VIA COMMUNICATION MEDIA:

FACILITATING PEACE THROUGH RECONCILIATION

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Abstract

Developing the means for reconciliation is a necessary context within which peace may be facilitated in post-traumatic societies. This development becomes even more critical among peoples who need to reconcile difference following the affliction of, and the suffering from, great pain and loss. Walking the paths toward peace requires, among other things, that interested parties, assisted by communication facilitators, create and utilise development of participatory communications media, journalistic practices and pedagogy of intercultural reconciliation in which all actors believe that they have meaningful voices and interests. The more we communicate with one another through respectful dialogue, the more we can discover the universality of our own desires; we are, in essence, one in this Spirit. Communication projects in support of reconciliation efforts must go in two directions in order to be most effective: without and within. Reconciliation between individuals and groups (without) can only succeed the degree to which individuals and groups also embrace reconciliation among themselves (within).

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Do not be too quick to assume your enemy is a savage just because he (sic) is your enemy. Perhaps he is your enemy because he thinks you are a savage. Or perhaps he is afraid of you because he feels that you are afraid of him. And perhaps if he believed you are capable of loving him he would no longer be your enemy.
Thomas Merton, *Seeds of Contemplation*

The more faithfully you listen to the voice within you, the better you will hear what is sounding outside. Only he (sic) who listens can speak.
Dag Hammarskjold

There is nothing I can give you which you do not have,
but there is much that while I cannot give it, you can take.
No heaven can come to us unless our hearts find rest in today.
Take heaven!
No peace lies in the future which is not hidden in this present little instant.
Take peace!
The gloom of the world is but a shadow. Behind it, yet within our reach, is joy. There is radiance and glory in the darkness could we but see - and to see we have only to look.
I beseech you to look!
Fra Giovanni

Introduction

Communication emanates from the deeper human process of making and expressing meaning throughout our lives. It is grounded in the Greek idea of *logos*, i.e., the making of meaning (see Frankl 1963, 151-214).[1] In the active creation of meaning, perception, both without and within ourselves, precedes expression. From our time in the womb throughout our lives and on into death, we attempt to comprehend life's problems and challenges, to question them, to share our experiences with one another. Communication is grounded in this quest to ascertain and to share meaning, both within our selves and with each other.

Communication media are the means through which meaning is both created and shared. These media can be anything: people, objects, symbols, signs, our perceptions of our pasts, our telling of stories about who were are, where we come from, why we are here, where we are going. They are whatever comes between us and the locus of our investigation, interpretation and expression. Media, then, are the ways through which we can actively ascertain, and express, the meanings we make, i.e., the *logos.*

Media are the lenses through which we both perceive and share meaning-making with others, and with ourselves, in our life-long journeys "wending through unknown country, home" (Fra Giovanni 1513). As such, fundamental to any active efforts to achieve peace via reconciliation are the means of communication that build upon acceptance, understanding and respect, of each other and of ourselves, in the commonality of our humanity (Hochheimer 2001).

One major benefit of the less expensive, more independent and more accessible media technologies recently available has been that more voices are now speaking and are being heard on a more equal footing than at any time in the past. With greater, more egalitarian meaning-making increasingly possible, we can increase

the possibilities of using media as platforms for reconciliation and peace. They can facilitate conversations within ourselves and outwards with others who are struggling with issues similar to our own. Media can then become platforms for reconciliation toward peace when they are used as tools for dialogue, compassion and regeneration.[2]

Monologic, Dialogic and Polylogic Media

We can identify five such uses of media, reflecting the range of meanings possible through them: *monologic, dialogic, polylogic, pneumologic* and *empalogic. Monologic* media are those through which a single range of meaning is expressed. This is the realm of "mass" or "mainstream" media in that a small group of trained people creates messages to be broadcast to "the masses." These media are typically identified with institutionalised power. Of these we are quite familiar. They have their roots in 18th and 19th century political and sociological philosophy. They can be traced through the earliest western communication research on the effects of propaganda campaigns during World War I. Conceptualising media as monologic grounds the search for media "effects" (see, for example, Chaffee and Hochheimer 1985), persuasion research, public relations, advertising, and, more recently, diffusion and "perception management" (See, e.g., U.S. Department of Defense 2007, revised, p. 407; Francis Marketing, Inc., nd). It is also the central issue around which the debates over the political economy of the mass media revolve, in that who controls mass media, and the interests they represent, are seen to be inimical to broad, robust or equitable public participation and understanding.

Alternative or radical media usually stand in opposition to institutionalised power (see Downing *et al.* 2001), but they may also be subject to monologic structures. They may be expressing an "alternative" range of meaning to the mass audience. Replacing one ideology's monologue with another does not, in itself, provide an alternative means through which people can become actively engaged in meaning creation (Hochheimer 1988).

For that, we must turn to *dialogic* media. Through them, two or more actors engage each other as equals. All who participate probe and push one another to engage in the pursuit of *understanding*, i.e., the sense that, together, we stand under some greater sense of meaning that exists in the world. Dialogic media require that each side not only speaks but also listens in a mutual sense of compassion.[3] It is, for example, the key component of what Marshall Rosenberg (2005) defines as "non-violent communication," i.e., communication from the heart. "We perceive relationships in a new light when we use non-violent (or compassionate) communication to hear our own deeper needs and those of others" (p. 3). As Koss-Chioino (2006) argues, such compassionate communication is essential in the process of post-traumatic healing which is vital in the search for peace.

While the most obvious of dialogic media may be the telephone or cell phone, we can also see their application in education (Freire 1970; Kazanjian and Laurence 2002; Kessler 2000; Palmer 1999; Richards *et al.* 2001), theatre (Boal 1979; Gumucio Dagron 2001; White 1999), video (Gumucio Dagron, 2001) and community development projects (Hope and Trammel 1992; Richards, Thomas and Nain 2001).

With the relatively recent introduction of the Internet, and the possibilities it provides for the convergence of audio, video, instant messaging and computerised

databases, *Polylogic* (or multilogic) media are just now in their infancy. Polylogic refers to the ability for people to sample each others' works to blend them into the various meanings they are making.[4] Such media provide a postmodern polyglot of voices, but anyone with access can participate.[5] If *mass* media derive from conceptualisations embedded in nineteenth and twentieth century thinking and action, and *radical* media are a twentieth and twenty-first century phenomena, then *polylogic* media are the challenge of the twenty-first century and beyond.

Pneumologic and Empalogic Media

Every human being is a precious part of a greater whole; each person brings unique experiences, talents, and potentials to add to us all. Each of us comes into life as the result of the actions of others. Each of us is connected to a variety of others as we grow. Each of us makes meaning with every thing we see, hear, taste, touch, smell, experience. Each of us provides meaning by acting in, and upon, the world (Freire 1999). We are both solitary and social animals, individual persons making our ways in the world while being linked to one another biologically, culturally, and historically.

The important thing to recognise is that our linkages to others, whomever those *Others* may be, connect each of us to the great chain of meaning and purpose we call life. As James Carey observed, life is like a great, ongoing conversation, which began long before any of us came on the scene, in which we get to participate for a while during our lifetimes, and which will continue long after we are gone. Each of us is a unique part of this conversation, each adding an additional, vital piece to what has come before, and each engaged in transforming the conversation into what it is becoming by our participation in it. Thus, living a meaningful life is, fundamentally, about communication.

The process of communication is a sharing of meaning between sensate beings, about the ways in which we perceive the world.[6] We make meaning from the impressions we have of the world through our minds.[7] We also make meaning from and through the inner voice which speaks through our hearts, for communication is not only a rational process, one of the mind, but it is also a process of filtering what we sense through our emotions, which is the realm of the human heart. Both mind and heart are always interacting as we engage the world, a vital mixture of both "up from the body" and "down from the spirit" experiences (Armstrong 2007). We ignore either at our peril.

This is where the realm of *pneumologic* communication resides. It is predicated on our abilities to *listen* to the voice emanating from *within* as we engage the world outside. This voice comes from the depths of the human heart.[8] The inner listening is much like breathing: I perceive within and I express within and without. It is a back and forth, in and out, experience. To make peace with others, one must first make peace with one's self. The degree to which I can reconcile myself with myself, the more I can listen to the inner voice to find out who I truly am, and forgive myself for being so, then, and only then, can I reach out to you, a similarly flawed, similarly conflicted, similarly hurting and scared (perhaps, scarred) human being.

Among the most noteworthy of the pneumologic media are the sacred texts of the world: the Tanakh, Holy Bible, Koran, Upanishads, Tibetan Book of the Dead, Tao-te-Ching. Others are the sacred poets: Wordsworth, Rilke, Hafiz, Rumi. And

the essayists: Emerson, Teresa of Avila, Hildegard von Bingen, John of the Cross, Meister Eckhart among many others. Each provides lenses through which one may perceive the inner voice, the realm of the spirit that lies within. These, when supplemented by prayer and/or meditation and/or deep contemplation, allow for greater, deeper, wider understanding.

Peace and reconciliation require the process of healing, both within and without. "No justice, no peace" is not only about retributive justice through external reparation; it is also about bringing a better sense of wholeness, a reparation, to the heart. We need not experience this all by ourselves. In post-traumatic situations, we may well look for assistance from someone who has had similar experiences of coping with pain, loss, death, fear. Here is the realm of *empalogic,* i.e., the interposition of the "wounded healer" as a means to facilitate healing through communication with the source of the inner voice. "Spiritual communication becomes the foundation for the healer's capacity for empathy…Spiritual work is based on the emergence of an intersubjective space where individual differences are melded into one field of feeling and experience shared by healer and sufferer" (Koss-Chioino 206, 50).

The engagement of the healer and the sufferer is a medium as well, interposing experience with deep listening, both within and without. Who knows better than one who has lost a child what such an experience is like for others? Who understands more profoundly than one who has lost a spouse to illness or accident, or war the great sense of loneliness, of isolation, even of rage at the departed? Who better to support the grieving of others than one who has acknowledged, and who has experienced, the seemingly bottomless depths of pain that our grief demands we go through before we can move to a richer, fuller, wholer place?

Both try, in short, to understand (which means, literally, "to stand under") a higher sense of knowing and of meaning than they, as human beings, can ever fully comprehend. This encounter compels each of us to recognise and, ultimately to accept that we, each and all of us, can know only part of the greater meaning that is out there and in here, somewhere, but to which we are all connected. Perception as a component of peace building, then, is an encounter both without and within. Perceiving *without* can be defined as "logic" via external meaning-making through formalised rules. The world outside is experienced as sounds and pictures derived from formal seeing. Perceiving *within*, however, means creating the space to listen to the still small voice while seeking connection to the spiritual centre. This is irrational engagement with the world inside as perceived from our connection within.

Thus, pneumological meaning-making is accomplished by perceiving within while listening, seeing and speaking without. Meaning-making is twined simultaneously within and without. Peace via reconciliation can best be built upon the inner and the outer foundations simultaneously. By bringing these strands together we heighten the possibility of weaving more harmonic spiritual chords and more resilient social cords the better to connect people to themselves and to each other.

Reconciliation: Inward and Outward

Reconciliation refers to the restoration of fractured relationships (Adelman n.d., 1), by overcoming grief, pain and anger. It is "a societal process that involves mutual acknowledgment of past suffering and the changing of destructive attitudes and behaviour into constructive relationships toward sustainable peace"

(Brounéus 2003, 5).[9] The path toward reconciliation is a lifelong journey going in two directions: inward, towards discovering and accepting one's self, and outwards, toward recognising and, hopefully, accepting others. It is both an intrapersonal and an interpersonal exercise, each advancing the more deeply a person discovers the reconciliation possible both within and without.

Inward reconciliation may be defined as the effort to come to terms with who one truly is, by acceptance of the fact that whatever life's struggles may be, their recognition and embrace can result in personal growth and harmony. Ideally, inner reconciliation comes as the result of a constant effort to move the socially constructed ego out of the way in order the better to listen to the "still small voice" of truth, sanity and wholeness (Riley 2004). It is an effort to release oneself from the burdens of pain, hate, and quite often the desire for retribution. This then is combined with the act of bearing witness to that effort with others in order to reach some mutual place of growth and support, that is, to act in every way to honour the soul (Palmer 2004, 170).

Inward reconciliation is reached via discovery, reflection and growth while finding one's own path to the Way (to the Taoist), or the release from attachment (to the Buddhist) or to the love of God or Hashem or Allah to the Christian, Jew or Muslim.[10] Inward reconciliation is a continuing effort of prayer, meditation, deep thought and/or contemplation directed toward a level of inner peace and harmony as the individual reconciles him- or herself to acceptance of what has happened that cannot be changed, and of one's own foibles, weaknesses, experiences, shortcomings. It is a forgiveness and acceptance of the self that is central to the message of the teachings of all the great spiritual traditions of the world.

Outward reconciliation connotes a reuniting of community, a restoration of broken relations to friendship and harmony between two or more people. Although there are various factors of reconciliation to be considered – the religious, socio-cultural, economic, political, psychological, and juridical aspects – at its base is the decision to move forward in peace.[11] Inward and outward reconciliation are connected: the more I can reconcile myself with myself fully, the more I reconcile differences with you. The more fully I can accept myself, forgive myself, love myself, the more fully I come to recognise that you and I are fundamentally joined and the more fully I can accept, forgive and love you. If I cannot reconcile myself to my own being, understanding that I am a part of a greater life force in the world, then I cannot reconcile myself with others who are similarly trying to find meaning and purpose in the world. More complete reconciliation means that we engage co-participants honestly and respectfully in the construction of a world through meaningful and faithful relationships.

The most likely, albeit quite difficult, place to begin merging both inward and outward reconciliation is grieving for what has been lost: a family member, a friend, a community, a way of life. "Grief is a part of the human ecology of the soul .... Our grieving affirms life. It is a profound declaration of interdependence; that someone or something has penetrated my heart and my grief is my acknowledgement of that love. The background wash of grief we feel when we stand still for a moment is testament to the fact that the world itself has made its way into our hearts" (Weller 2002). Much of the desire for revenge and for retribution is grounded in the inability to grieve sufficiently, as if meting out similar pain to someone else could somehow expunge what has been lost.

Yet, no level of revenge or retribution is ever sufficient either to overcome the pain, or to wipe away the suffering. Every spiritual tradition in the world teaches us this. The only way to get beyond the pain is to go right into the middle of it, to suffer it intensely, and to recognise that the experience of grief is, fundamentally, an expression of love, as M. Scott Peck (2003) has defined it: "the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth," wherever that may lead. Sometimes Love leads to joy, sometimes to pain or sorrow. But Love in this sense always leads to deeper spiritual understanding and awakening. Were we not able to experience the sense of loss without grieving, we would not be able to have had love, to know love, to experience love for ourselves, for others, and for a spirit of love which pervades and, ultimately connects, us all. Were we able to live without the troubling entanglements of grief, life would seem a lot less complicated. There certainly would be a lot less pain. But, the degree to which we are able to plumb the depths of our pain, to allow ourselves to experience fully the great losses and the disappointments which have and will come to us in life, is the degree to which we are able to probe the depths of our own capacity for love: for ourselves, and for one another.

Since reconciliation is an outcome of compassion (i.e., of "suffering together"), the degree to which any of us can acknowledge our own grief, our own loss, is the degree to which we can recognise and acknowledge similar losses in others. As we share our grief with others, we allow our public masks to come down in order to reveal who we truly are to ourselves and to each other. As our masks start to come down (and we allow ourselves to touch one another's' experiences), we are better able to support one another in their right, indeed in their necessity, to grieve.

At this point there comes a sense of support in mutuality when we allow ourselves to accept the common experience in our grieving. It is the accompanying, aching aloneness that keeps us apart, isolated. It is the embracing of how everyone has had times of loss and suffering, and acknowledging them with each other, that provides us with a great gift with which we can hold one another in the bosom of our embrace. This, too, is a manifestation of love in the world, if only we can allow ourselves to accept it in ourselves, and in each other.

Because the flip side of coming to terms with our common humanity is the root of oppression and intolerance: when we cannot acknowledge our own pain and loss, and when we cannot embrace the commonality with others of our mutual experiences with grief, then we become less tolerant of the pain of others, and less compassionate. We can all-too-readily begin to look for ways in which "he" or "she" is not like "me," that "they" have not suffered like "we" have, and that the grief experiences of the Other is of less consequence than is our own. If I think "their" grief is less than "ours," then I can accept more readily "our" ability to afflict "them." As Mayan shaman Martin Prechtel has pointed out, anger is the suppression of pain over loss. Without allowing ourselves to grieve for our own loss, the pain reappears elsewhere, in hatred, jealousy, affliction of pain upon others. This is the foundation of the "oppression of the oppressor" of which Paulo Freire (1999) wrote so eloquently, in that "(e)ach of us is both spider and fly in the web of human experience" (Hochheimer 2005).[12]

Communication Media and Reconciliation

Communications media are lenses for creating, perceiving and sharing meaning between individuals, groups, cultures, nations, who and which live in disparate places and times. Through them are both expressed and perceived the meanings within ourselves[13] and of others. Media can be used to find or to deny truth, of course. But, there can be real gaps between what we tell ourselves and what we tell others, gaps between what we think to be true and what we allow others to know. This has been the world of the propagandist, which is a world of exploitation of pain and fear, of deception, and of the denial of truth.[14] As we know all too well, the manipulation of truth via media has had many tragic consequences.[15]

Yet, critical to the enterprise of reconciliation is a commitment to telling truths, painful truths, as perceived through the experiences of the various victims and perpetrators. These truths comprise the ways in which media depict, describe, enact the very real grieving, anger, hostility, suspicion that are the natural aftermaths of violent loss. Critical, too, are the roles that media practitioners – journalists, catalyst communicators, media teachers – play in constructing the ways in which grieving and reconciliation are portrayed, covered, analyzed, actively engaged in the process of building a new civil society.

The sharing of grief can provide the gift of compassion. One such example is The Compassionate Listening Project (TCLP), of Bainbridge Island, Washington. It is a dialogic effort to bring together victims of the Holocaust in Europe with its perpetrators, as well as the children from both sides of the Holocaust generation. Together they explore their twined experiences with pain, grief, shame. They collect stories of inner conflict and resolution as a means to build bridges between participants.

TCLP is running similar projects aimed at reconciliation between Jews and Palestinians in the Middle East. They also produce documentaries on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, grounded in the process of Compassionate Listening to overcome the fear of reaching out to others who are similarly conflicted.

TCLP is a prime example of *dialogic media* in which people both challenge and nurture each other as a necessary condition to overcoming hatred and the will to recrimination. It also demonstrates *empalogic media,* in that the wounded healers are reaching out to support one another's grief and loss in order to set the foundations for reconciliation and peace (Siels n.d.).

A similar project is the Vietnam Friendship Village where U.S., Vietnamese, Australian, Canadian and British veterans of the Vietnam conflict have come together to build a residential facility for the care of orphan children and elderly or disabled adults, especially those who had been disabled by the use of Agent Orange as a weapon. The mission of the Vietnam Friendship Village Project is to cultivate reconciliation and heal the wounds of the Vietnam War by uniting veterans and caring citizens through international cooperation in the building and support of the Village of Friendship, a living symbol of peace. The motivation for the construction of this village were, in the words of founder, George Mizo, "The horrible experiences during the war and the suffering on all sides inspired me to do something that would be a symbol of peace, reconciliation and hope" (Mason n.d.; Mizo n.d.). Thus Mizo describes *pneumologic* uses of media in action toward reconciliation and the foundations of possible peace, while facilitating *empalogic* means to work with

Vietnamese veterans and survivors to create a more peaceful aftermath of the war together. While showing a film should be considered *monologic,* it is in its presentation of meaningful dialogues, with examples for others to engage each other in post-war peace-building, that the dialogic foundations for peace can best be laid.

One of the roles that journalism and journalists can play in this process is the linking of the personal with the public, the use of inward communication in the process of constructing outward communication media as tools for reconciliation. This linking of the inner and the outer has been called "intimate political reporting" by E.J. Graff (2005), which he defines as:

> *first-hand reporting that focuses on the personal emotions and experiences that roil behind (and ultimately create) the headlines about political turmoil. Intimate political reportage is a necessary counterpart to the kind of parachute journalism in which reporters land in a war zone and relay news about weapons, warriors… These approaches need to be supplemented with reporting that shows what happened not just from the outside in, but also from the inside out* (Graff 2005, 66-67).

Graff writes that a key challenge to journalists hinges on basic human decency:

> *not about what politics or religion you follow, but rather, how you treat the starving deportee who unexpectedly knocks on your door, the social pariah who desperately needs medical care, the widow who demands that her good name be restored. Is your response honest and sensible, or fearful and full of excuses? From that, all else follows* (Graff 2005, 69).

This leads to a more compelling form of journalism than the usual liberal/conservative or gay/straight or Tutsi/Hutu or Jew/German dichotomy that typically defines the parameters of discourse. Instead, Graff argues, we should ponder a far more compelling pairing: humane or inhumane (p. 69). Reconciliation becomes possible in what Heda Kovály (1997), a survivor of the barbarism of both Auschwitz and the Stalinist tyranny of post-war Czechoslovakia, calls "the spontaneous solidarity of the decent."[16]

One outstanding contemporary example of this intimate political reporting comes from former Yugoslavia: the Videoletters project of Dutch filmmakers Katarina Rejger and Eric van den Broek. Since 1999, they have created a series of television programs seeking to reconcile separation between old friends or neighbours separated by the conflicts of former Yugoslavia.[17] In these "letters" they demonstrate the desire of many old friends and other acquaintances to reconcile their differences to re-ignite their close relationships. For example, they recorded a message from a Serb, Ivana Nikolić, to a Muslim boy, Senad, with cerebral palsy whom she had informally adopted. The boy had fled a hospital in the Serbian capitol, Belgrade, after fighting erupted. Rejger and ven den Broek found Senad in another city, showed him the tape from Nikolić, and then filmed his reaction to seeing it. They then filmed their subsequent reunion, and then mixed all of the tapes into one program. Another program depicts two childhood friends from Pale, one Muslim, the other Serb, who were forced to separate due to the war. The Serbian boy, Saša, reaches out to his old friend Emil via video letter, but Emil suspects that Saša has killed another Muslim during the war. The film, "Emil and Saša" depicts

the accusation, Saša's denial, and their meeting to discuss the issue face to face (Prodger 2005). The mayors of Pale and Srebrenica have also recorded and sent letters of reconciliation to others throughout the former Yugoslavia (Riding 2005). Here are *dialogic* media being utilised in the active creation of reconciliation.

Another example of intimate political reporting is the film *Sarajevo: The Living and the Dead*, by Radovan Tadić (1994). In this hour-long documentary, Tadić takes us into the homes of people living in Sarajevo during the siege of the early 1990s to see how war is being experienced by the people on the ground in a way "so that we could get to know them." We see women, men and children trying to keep some semblance of a normal life as they dodge bullets to fetch water, as they find firewood in an old theatre, as they try to celebrate life and death and birth even amidst the growing nightmare of the seemingly endless siege of the city. A woman marries her man *in absentia* although she does not know he has already been killed in a prison camp. An emergency room doctor tells of interrupting an endless series of amputations to give birth to a baby. "Even within all of this death, all of this pain," he says, "here is life crying out, demanding to be heard."

Media of this sort can help inculcate respect for what most people desire: food, safety, security, love, a nice home, good time with family and friends, a measure of happiness and peace.[18] Thus such "intimate political reporting" can become humanitarian supplements to more traditional modes of political reportage in order to assist people on the ground struggling to interrupt the cycle of violence in pursuit of reconciliation by elevating each other and themselves (Villa-Vicencio 2001, 10.).[19]

This elevation begins in the realm of the human heart, meaning that the foundation of reconciliation comes not from without but from within. "My work is about linking personal peace to global peace," writes Virginia Swain (n.d.), Director of the Institute for Global Leadership, "and the hope, love and compassion I found that led to reconciliation at all levels of my life." Based upon what she found, Swain began a global mediation and reconciliation program grounded on ten years of service in the United Nations. The Institute for Global Leadership brings her vocational and professional skills – her inner and outer learning – together. Through her work, Swain describes her experience with going inward ("the contemplative life to find my inner voice and learn how much I've loved"), combined with going outward ("the way of compassion to be with others") in order to "to offer a hopeful framework for a systemic and participative approach to global injustice and human rights." In this way, she argues, "Power is redefined from the politics of self aggrandisement to the politics of spiritual evolution and enlightened leadership."

How can such journalistic and other media enterprises be used to facilitate the dialogue necessary to stimulate reconciliation? As Villa-Vicencio (2001) writes:

> *The reconciling process needs honest, blow-by-blow reporting, which conveys the emotion, atmosphere and the angst of the moment. It is important not to underestimate the will and the ability of the reader or viewer to make intelligent and informed decisions about what the next step may be in the pursuit of reconciliation. The question with which I find myself left, is whether there is not room for more sensitivity in the media for "good news" stories that keep alive the possibility of reconciliation—the interruption and quest for human wholeness…* (Villa-Vicencio 2001, 10).

A part of the answer to Villa-Vicencio's challenge is to see the roles of media in service to reconciliation as being about much more than journalism. It also involves approaches to media and journalism education and dialogue facilitation in which teachers foster a sense of connectedness among their students with the worlds from which they came, and the worlds in which their readers/listeners/viewers live. Such *media of reconciliation* posit reporters and audiences in the same way that the problem-posing approach of Freire's pedagogy considers teachers and students, or White and Nair's (1999) *Participatory Development Communication* (PDC) considers the Catalyst Communicator and the community. Each approach poses communicators as animators who provide frameworks for posing problems, and for thinking, reflection and action among creative, active students (or community members) who then consider common concerns, drawing upon their own historic and cultural resources to find solutions among themselves. "Problem-posing education is prophetic, and as such is hopeful, corresponding to the historical nature of human beings. It affirms people as beings who transcend themselves, who move forward and look ahead … for whom looking at the past must only be a means of understanding more clearly what and who they are, so that they can more wisely build the future" (Freire 1999, 57).

The primary thrust of PDC has been to provide forums and places of dialogue for disparate people to reconcile their differences of the past in order to create a more hopeful, a more fruitful place to live and work, together. By supporting each other to do the necessary work of inner reconciliation while working together to forge new means of reconciling differences between them, people can work together to use participatory media to promote progressive change. In the words of Anne Hope and Sally Trammel at the beginning of their three-volume field manual on transformative praxis, "development and education are first of all about liberating people from all that holds them back from a full human life" (Hope and Trammel 1992, 3).[20]

The underlying unity of all humankind is both a foundation and a goal in this process. The inner and the outer realms of experience are twined parts of a greater sacred unity of all being. Our new media, and the greater levels of awareness they make possible now give us the ability to discover and to share meaning in unprecedented ways. In so doing, we can explore, and reveal, our essential sacred humanity to ourselves and to each other. As Palmer writes, "(b)y recovering the sacred, we might recover our *sense of community* (emphasis his) with each other and with all of creation, the community that Thomas Merton named so wonderfully as 'hidden wholeness'" (Palmer 1999, 27).[21]

What is needed is an approach both to media and to education in which teachers foster a sense of connectedness among their students with the worlds from which they came, and the worlds in which their readers/listeners/viewers live. "In educational terms, it would require the training of teachers in democratic principles and pedagogy, and a radical change in what is taught in schools based on democracy, interculturalism, tolerance and education for peace" (Davies 2004, 32).

The degree to which these dialogues might succeed in helping to reconcile difference can best be realised when there is a sense of trust and mutual respect among and between actors. Developing trust and respect between differing cultures through dialogue over time is vitally important both as a means toward reconciling

grievances and as a means to create democracies, because they provide the foundations for political order and stability. Mediated dialogue between engaged others *is* the very centre of any intercultural exchange. Here is where media have their most critical roles to play in the reconciliation of difference (see Hochheimer 2005).

But, media of reconciliation also speak to people's hopes and aspirations, to their dreams for their future and to the future they imagine for their children. It is inclusive, not exclusive, in that it seeks to build bridges between people. This can only be done through dialogue, mutual respect and understanding. Sometimes, "hope" can come merely from the ability of media to provide a respite from misery, from boredom, from pain, from despair. Such is the function of such organisations as Musicians for World Harmony and of FilmAid International. Musicians for World Harmony was created by performance artist and musician Samite Mulondo, a Ugandan refugee now living in the United States. "Samite of Uganda" (his stage name) uses the organisation to bring together musicians throughout the world to perform their music to promote peace, understanding, and harmony among people with a special emphasis on the displaced or distressed who could benefit most from the healing power of music.

They have produced a film documentary, *Song of the Refugee,* about musical performances of songs of peace to survivors of Liberia's civil war, genocide in Rwanda, and many years of strife in Uganda. The film also documents the responses of children and adults, who were moved to sing, dance and play musical instruments. The goal of the project has been to utilise music to be able to help refugees recover their songs and begin to heal themselves both from within and in harmony with each other. This sets the foundation for hope (MusiciansforWorldHarmony.org 2005).

To do this, *Musicians for World Harmony* sponsors musicians visiting and performing in refugee camps and resettlement communities. Additionally, they identify musicians among the displaced and distressed whose music can aid in the healing process. They do this to encourage community-wide response to performances to enable people to recover and revive songs and dances. They then record all performances in order to produce audio, video and print materials for distribution throughout the world in order to enable the music and messages of hope and peace to reach the widest possible audience.

Sometimes, "hope" can come merely from the ability of media to provide a respite from misery, from boredom, from pain, from despair. Such is the function of FilmAid International which screens both informational documentaries (such as on HIV/AIDS awareness, sexual/gender based violence and conflict resolution) and entertainment films (such as *The Wizard of Oz, Mandela,* and various Charlie Chaplin movies, *The Magic Flute,* etc.) to long-term inhabitants of refugee camps in Kosovo, Tanzania, Kenya, Afghanistan, and elsewhere (see Richardson 2004; and http://www.filmaidinternational.org/about.htm).

People who have suffered great pain and loss, especially, know all too well what it means to be treated as objects. The catalyst communicator becomes a person who "acts as a development facilitator putting people together in order to make things happen, to catalyse thinking, motivation, interaction, action, reaction, reflection" (White and Nair 1999, 38). In a more holistic sense, this participatory communication is a process of "establishing and strengthening interpersonal commitment and trust" through alliances of people who have grievances against each other.

> *A growing sense of interdependence enhances feelings of self-worth, trust and common cause. Out of this sense of interdependence can come a sense of excitement, adventure and hope which motivates and renews faith in self, other, and community producing cohesion of purpose. When a sense of possibility based on a collective vision for the community's future emerges, true empowerment becomes a reality* (White and Nair 1999, 49).

Conclusion

No one model fits all circumstances, of course. Each approach to using media as tools for reconciliation needs to emanate from the cultures and locales at issue, as well as from local historical experience. For example, whereas racial reconciliation is the primary concern in South Africa (along, of course, with the reconciliation of class difference), religion and the history of colonial exploitation is a more central concern in Northern Ireland or in the Middle East.

Ultimately, the twinned processes of inward and outward reconciliation are at their most robust when they help to give voices to our hopes and our fears, to the struggles that separate and to those that unite us in the common experience of being human. We can use media both to listen and to speak, to engage in the unfolding dialogue of our souls speaking with ourselves, as Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, as Serbs and as Croats, as women, as men, as oppressors and as oppressed, as universally flawed creatures engaged in our unending journeys toward home, toward wholeness, toward peace.

"Movements start when individuals who feel very isolated in the midst of an alien culture come in touch with something life-giving in the midst of a death-dealing situation" (Palmer 1993, 31). They come in touch with this life affirming force both with themselves and with others in the common search for meaning. The various uses of communication media outlined here can serve to help create meaning within and between those who wish to reconcile their grievances.

Looking back on "The War to End All Wars," and seeing the rising tides of hatred and suffering to come due to the widespread refusal to reconcile its legacy of pain, Albert Schweitzer wrote:

> *The difficult problems with which we have to deal, even those which lie entirely in the material and economic sphere, are in the last resort to be solved by an inner change of character. The wisest reform in organization can only carry them to a little nearer solution, never to the goal. The only conceivable way of bringing about a reconstruction of our world on new lines is first of all to become new men (sic) ourselves under the old circumstances, and then as a society in a new frame of mind so to smooth out opposition between nations that a condition of true civilization may again become possible. Everything else is more or less wasted labor, because we are thereby building not on the spirit, but on what is merely external* (Schweitzer 1929, 60).

By using the media at our disposal, as well as our by developing abilities to communicate both without and within, we can listen to each other and to ourselves in the process of sharing truth as it is revealed to us in our hearts.

> *The search for truth is a collective enterprise, in which we learn from each other. As a truth-finding strategy, this is objectionable on the grounds that it is vague and slow; as a political prescription, it can be criticized for endorsing*

wooly minded "community politics." But it has merits which so far have been insufficiently praised: it is humane, undogmatic, solidly rooted in tradition, optimistic and, in effect, good for the individual who practices it and the society which benefits from it (Fernández-Armesto 1997, 222).

By remaining dedicated to truth, we can cross the threshold into our new age by constructing and utilising media to foster the sharing of meaning, both inwardly and outwardly. By using all media at our disposal—*monologic, dialogic, polylogic, pneumologic and empalogic*—we can facilitate the unfolding of personal and societal reconciliation and reconstruction in our never-ending search for peace.[22]

Notes:

1. "Life," writes Frankl, "ultimately means taking the responsibility to find the right answer to its problems and to fulfil the tasks which it constantly sets for each individual. These tasks and, therefore the meaning of life differ from man to man (sic), and from moment to moment" (1963, 121).

2. "With new, inexpensive and ubiquitous media of communication at their disposal, ever-greater numbers of people have the ability to enter into dialogues with one another as they seek to reconcile their desires. The more we communicate with one another through respectful dialogue, the more we can discover the universality of our own desires; we are, in essence, one in this Spirit. A new, globalised democratic ethic will be based, therefore, on the mediation of these unifying desires in the myriad ways in which we experience the world. We can imagine a new foundation phrase for the globalised democratic experience: "De unus pluribum" (Out of One, Many). In so doing, we can emerge from the fear of the Others as potentially hostile forces to embrace them as our equals in their ability for laughter, fear, pain and joy. "Each of us has a unique path in the realization of these desires, but all of us must work together to mediate our actions to their attainment" (Hochheimer 2005).

3. They build upon Martin Buber's contention that, as we move from an "I-It" perspective (in which we treat others as "objects") to an "I-Thou" series of relations (in which we treat others as "subjects" who are as fully equal of love, pain, suffering, struggle, spiritual transcendence, and mutual respect as we are), true "communication", i.e., the sharing of meaning between equal actors becomes more possible. This is "the highest form of love, which is intimacy that does not destroy difference" (Keller 1985, 164).

4. Such media are derived from the multi-media recording, performance and radio projects of the 1950s and1960s and beyond (Hochheimer 2006).

5. This is not to minimize very real differences in media access due, primarily, to economic inequality (Fraga 2002).

6. From our places in our mothers' wombs, we try to derive meaning from the world around us. The fetus can hear and process sound and, most likely, experiences dreaming (Armstrong 2007, 15-30). Once born, the child makes meaning from everything it sees, hears, tastes, touches, smells.

7. See Walter Lippmann's discussion of "The World Outside and the Pictures in Our Heads" (1922/1997).

8. It is the subject of conjecture, analysis, introspection and faith that has been written about and practiced within all faith traditions for many centuries. While people have attached different names to this voice, its presence, and the similarities of its encounters across cultures, is too vital to be ignored (Kamenetz 1994; James 1902; Turner 2006).

9. As Dyzenhaus (2003, 345-6) asks: "Is it better for a society composed of groups which have done terrible things to each other in the past to confront as fully as possible past atrocities or to suppress the memory of atrocities and get on with the job of living together? Who gets to pose the question? Negotiate and frame the answers? Upon whose terms will the parameters of dialogue and reconciliation be considered? What might justice look like in a society which is undergoing transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one? To whom?" And, what are the appropriate roles for journalists?

10. This is not meant to exclude the atheist by any means. One's dedication to a life of honesty, truth, justice, love, peace and/or compassion can come from within no matter what the person regards as the source.

11. "Contrition where we have wronged, and forgiveness where we have been offended, may have their own rewards in an inner peace, a lessening of bitterness and struggle, the relief of aligning our behaviour with what we know to be right. In the most dire circumstances, we have the inner freedom to choose our own response" (Green 2004).

12. It also provides the foundation of prejudice, racism, colonialism, empire.

13. "Conversation with oneself, while admittedly vulnerable to error, is also crowned as the site of our best proximity to truth" (Denise Riley 2004, 66).

14. Indeed, "It's in th(e) exploitation of the gap between the inner voice and the outer voice that the lie lies." Riley 2004, 68.

15. Media have been used both to create and to exacerbate fear, hatred and anger as precursors to violence and genocide as they can be means of their resolution. The stories of pain and hatred handed down from parents to children, from teacher to student, from government to citizenry can take place for centuries constituting a primary part of a society's mythical sense of itself. One need look no further for examples than from Nazi Germany (Bytwerk 2001; Giessen 2003), or from Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, and former Yugoslavia (Gardner 2001) Indeed these stories contributed greatly to the rationale for the outbreak of war in Kosovo in the 1990s. See Nadle 1999. As recently as July 2005, Serbian media drew upon these conceptions in the ways they depicted the tenth memorial to the massacre of more than 8,000 Muslims in Srebrenica (Popham and Zimonjic 2005).

16. This, of course, begs the question of what to do where there seem to be no decent people among those who committed the mass killings, such as in Rwanda, or Cambodia, or Kosovo. It is a question that remains open. Sometimes the answers come only after the conflict is over as has been reported by various Truth and Reconciliation commissions.

17. http://www.videoletters.net/article-1030.106821-en.html.

18. See also footnote 4 above. It should be noted that the Videoletters series was produced by a team of 25 participants who had come from outside the region. They are able to maintain a sense of distance from the issues and feelings involved. Yet to be explored is the possibility of Bosnians and Serbs, Christians and Muslims from the region producing such programming for themselves, and what obstacles and opportunities this may create in the future.

19. Other media in the genre of "Íntimate Political Reportage" include such books as Goboda-Madikizela (2003), Henderson and Marek (2001), Faderman (2003).

20. Development, liberation and transformation are all aspects of the same process. It is not a marginal activity. It is at the core of all creative human living.

21. Journalism and communication education have typically been defined as the means to teach students the norms and processes of news work in order to provide them with the skills they need to succeed within the journalism industries. It poses the students as blank slates to be drawn upon; they are seen as people with no previous knowledge into which the teacher will pour relevant facts and skills, which the student is obliged to learn in order to succeed. As Paulo Freire (1999) has pointed out, however, education is either about maintaining the existing order by imposing on people the values and cultural perspectives of the dominant classes, or it is about liberation, i.e., about helping them to find their places in a free and open social order. To take an objectivist position in the face of human struggle is to deny any connection with the people involved in that struggle. The degree to which students (as reporters) are turned into objective observers is the degree to which they are also turned against the very humanity which they are charged to represent. Objectivity is, as Remen (1996) suggests, that which "separates us from the life around us and within us ... In the objective stance no one can draw on their human strengths, no one can cry, or accept comfort, or find meaning, or pray. No one who is untouched by it can really understand the life around them either" (p. 78).

This perspective also turns the news media into vehicles which further distance community members from themselves and from each other; it acts to break down connection between people

and their past, between each other as they face their present conditions, and between men and women in their abilities to work together in the future.

22. This leaves open the question of justice, which often is meant to be compensation for that which has been lost, or stolen, or destroyed. This is too large a subject to be addressed in this article, but it needs to be a necessary focus for future work.

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