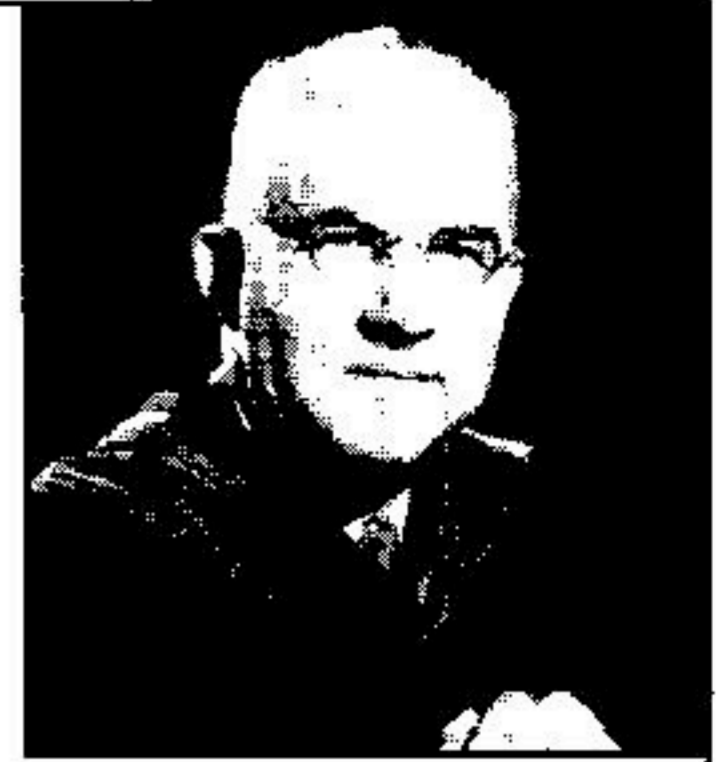


Stanley I. Stuber (1903-1985)¹

ROBERT E. JOHNSON, EDITOR



Stanley Stuber photo courtesy of American Baptist Historical Society

Stanley Irving Stuber earned an international reputation as an advocate of peace, human rights, and goodwill. The list of service organizations to which he contributed is exhausting. He was an official observer at various sessions of the United Nations, edited the daily bulletin of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam, attended the four sessions of the Second Vatican Council between 1962 and 1965, served as executive secretary for the World Relief Committee during World War II, was actively involved in the formation of the National Council of Churches in 1950, chaired the Commission on Religious Liberty of the Baptist World Alliance for 15 years, and served as the executive director for Association Press of the YMCA from 1964 to 1969. He saw himself as an ecumenical Baptist who “got along with people of all faiths.”

Stuber was born in Gardiner, Maine in 1903. In the fall of 1926 he entered the Rochester Theological Seminary after completing a degree at Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. In the second year of studies at Rochester, his first book, *How We Got Our Denominations*, was published. A second entitled *The Living Water* was published the summer after completion of his B.D. degree in 1928. The following year he completed a Master of Theology degree. Other books (a total of fourteen) and articles would follow.

The ensuing list summarizes positions Stuber held and some of the honors he received over the course of his career.

Pastor, First Baptist Church, Clifton Springs, New York (1928-38)

Chaplain, Clifton Springs Sanitarium (1938-1941)

National Secretary for Publicity, Northern Baptist Convention (ABC-USA), New York City (1942-1949)

Honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree, Keuka College, Keuka Park, New York (1946)

Executive Secretary, Japan International Christian University Foundation (1950-1956)

General Secretary, Council of Churches of Greater Kansas City (1956-1960)

Executive Director, Missouri Council of Churches (1960-1964)

Executive Director, Association Press, YMCA, New York City (1964-1969)

Director, Bergen County, New Jersey Council of Churches (1969-1977)

World Traveler for World Relief and World Council of Churches

Stuber was best known for his interdenominational and international leadership. His spirit of humanitarianism, civil rights, world peace, and justice for all people is remembered in the lectureship named in his honor.

I. Materials for this text box were provided by The American Baptist – Samuel Colgate Historical Library, Rochester, New York.



The Global Market: Enclosure and Exclusion Today¹

BOB GOUDZWAARD²

Colgate Rochester Divinity School is a place closely connected with the names of Stanley Stuber and Walter Rauschenbusch, and a place interwoven with the roots of the Social Gospel movement in America. Moreover, this illustrious meeting takes place at a remarkable moment of time: we are standing together at the threshold of a new millennium. This is a wonderful context of place and of time, which invites us all to reflect upon the significance and heritage of all our fore-runners as we stand together at the end of one century and the beginning of another.

You may know that I am rooted in the Dutch Reformed tradition of Groen van Prinsterer, Abraham Kuyper, and Herman Dooyeweerd. At first sight, this tradition appears quite different from that of contemporary American Evangelicalism and the Social Gospel Movement. Let me therefore begin by presenting you with a small puzzle. I will give you two quotations and ask you to compare them. Can you guess who the authors are?

Here is my first quotation: "Christians almost always tend to stay in the realm of the spiritual, moving around in the same circle of thoughts. But they clearly put aside their task to preach the full Christ,

"...the present process of economic and financial globalization is not as factual and neutral as it seems to be. Rather, it bears the traits of a far too narrow, even spiritually enclosing, worldview.... Our awareness of this should not take away our hope, but indeed can bring it back."

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whose Gospel clearly shows that he wanted to affect deeply even our social life and desired to lift it up to a more holy condition.”³

And here is my second quotation: “Whoever uncouples the religious and the social life has not understood Jesus. Whoever sets any bounds for the reconstructive power of the religious life over the social relations and institutions of men, to that extent denies the faith of the master.”⁴

I hope that you see the deep similarity between these two quotations. But, to answer the puzzle, the first is taken from an article Abraham Kuyper wrote in 1894, and the second is from Walter Rauschenbusch in 1909. And for those among you who are still unconvinced that Kuyper was just as radical as Rauschenbusch—or Stanley Stuber, for that matter—in his critique of the prevailing culture and social structure, I add the following remark from Kuyper to convince you of the opposite: “The social question does not really exist for you, until you are willing to come to an architectonic critique of human society, which is stimulated by the desire for a different arrangement of the social order. Our society is losing touch with Christ; it lies in the dust, bowing down before Mammon.”⁵

But, as interesting as it may be, quoting our common forefathers is not why I am here. Our fundamental question is how to come to the formulation of a social and political vision that is valid for the turn of this millennium. This is not an easy task. It urges us, in my opinion, to do nothing less than to go back to our deepest spiritual roots—the same roots from which the pioneers of our traditions worked and lived. Stanley Stuber, for instance, was present not only in 1945 when the United Nations was founded in San Francisco, but also in the first foundational meeting of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948. This remarkable combination makes clear that it was important for him to live and act as a global citizen. Indeed, he was, so to speak, a global citizen *avant la lettre*. It is obvious that Stanley Stuber tried also to combine these two worlds by placing the world of the “nations” and the world of the “churches” into one common Christian perspective. Do we have the same courage, the same insight today?

Returning to our spiritual roots means, among other things, going back to our historical origins. Therefore I invite you to reflect with me on the conditions which, two centuries ago, led to the start of what we now call “Modern Capitalism.” Karl Polanyi wrote his famous book *The Great Transformation* about that topic. It has always struck me how much room he gave in his analysis to the history of the so-called “enclosure movement,” which also happens to be explicitly mentioned in the

works of Walter Rauschenbusch. The term “enclosure movement,” as you may know, stands for the efforts of especially the British landlords at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century to fence in the commons, which until that moment were present all over the country-side. These landlords took the common meadows away from the people who used them. In other words, these lands were privatized for the exclusive purpose of commercial wool-production. For Karl Polanyi, this was obviously one of the crucial moments in our social and economic history. From that moment on, land and human labor were transformed into marketable commodities. They were “enclosed” in the newly emerging Capitalist market system. Next to markets for produced goods and services, so-called factor-markets now arose. That fact, more than anything else, led to the low wages which triggered the notorious “social question.” And it was this question that aroused such deep feelings of anger and protest in the faithful hearts and minds of Bishop Von Kettle, Abraham Kuyper, and Walter Rauschenbusch, among others.

This social question, of course, still exists in several parts of our present world. This is especially true when and where huge numbers of people have no direct access to land and sources of capital, and lack any recognition of their human social and economic rights—a point so well addressed by Stanley Stuber in his writings about human rights and fundamental freedoms.

But stressing what has not changed should not blind us to what has. Often, the changes have been positive, moving in a good direction. In this connection, I think of the development of the social welfare state in most western countries after the Second World War. But there were also changes in a manifestly unhelpful direction. In the last two decades the income and wealth disparity in the world has increased sharply, and our eco-system has been badly damaged. Moreover, a kind of watershed has been reached in the role and place of the economy in our societies. This change which goes so far and so deep that I dare to speak of it as a *second* “enclosure movement.” The main characteristic of this second “enclosure movement” is that in addition to the human body, the human soul—with all its ways of hoping, believing, and acting—is becoming increasingly “enclosed” in economic reality. The human mind is so highly influenced by the dynamic economic processes of our time that the independence of our spiritual life is now threatened by the all-inclusive claims of the new global economic and financial reality.

This may sound like an overstatement. So let me give an example. Recently, both the World Trade Organization in Geneva and Shell (one of the leading transnationals) accepted a new slogan: TINA. This literally means "There Is No Alternative." No alternative for what, you may ask? According to this slogan, "there is no alternative" for any nation in the world but to adapt itself strictly and fully to the demands of the global competitive market-economy. The economies of countries that do not believe or have faith in these new global competitive realities will simply perish. "There Is No Alternative." And this appears to be, on the face of it, an objective and factual truth. And how can anyone fight against the facts? Well, that is one way of understanding things.

Another way of viewing this development is to discern a clear expansion of the economic domain into the mental and spiritual realms. An obviously non-neutral political statement such as TINA is cloaked in a seemingly objective, but spiritually compelling, announcement. It reminds me of the statement of the postmodern philosopher, Michel Foucault, who wrote in his *Archeology of Knowledge* that in our present world the human subject is at the point of vanishing because the economic, technical, and financial objects themselves do set the rules. This implies that even our Christian faith may be transformed into in a kind of "spiritual support engine" for what the new objective reality demands.

Let me illustrate my point further within the context of the present debate about globalization. There is growing a common awareness, and I think correctly so, that far more is at stake in the globalization process than an opening up of national economies, an expansion of international markets, or even an outburst of new worldwide technologies. Many Multinational Corporations are now turning into Transnational Corporations. This means that they are becoming "foot-loose" and no longer maintaining standards of loyalty in relation to any nation, including the nation of their origin. The same is even more true of what is now called "global capital." This is a very flexible kind of capital without any sense of belonging. It may leave your country overnight if there are speculations about a possible depreciation of your national currency, or if higher financial rewards are expected elsewhere. Such a rapid departure of capital can push entire nations to levels of deep economic disarray and uncontrollable social tensions, as in the recent case of Indonesia. Capital now circulates around the world in unbelievably huge quantities. In one and a half-days, the amount of money that circulates around the world is equivalent to the sum of the international debts of all Third World countries. Therefore, in my

opinion, we can no longer avoid the conclusion that global capital has now begun to rule the world. Today the realm of financial speculation guides to a large extent the future of the world's real economies. And this, of course, creates deep concern and even fear among the nations. They are all wondering: What will the financial markets do in the coming months or years?

Fear, however, is not an innocent word. It relates to what we feel and know in our hearts. Fear is always related to one or another kind of domination, either physical or spiritual. I believe this confirms my previous hypothesis that the world of economy and finance has now begun to extend itself into the spiritual realm and is busy transforming our ways of living, hoping, and thinking. Just look at how national governments behave in their public policies these days. Most governments have become so deeply aware that a substantial part of the capital within their borders may leave their economies within days or even overnight—capital which they need for further growth and investments—that they are now competing with and trying to overbid each other in order to get the favors of global capital. All want to increase their so-called competitive advantage. So we now see all over the world a growing public-policy trend that decrease taxes on capital and profits, diminishes social premiums by cutting social expenditures, and removes environmental levies and restraints. All this to become more acceptable in the eyes of our new big brother, "global capital." The former managing director of the IMF, Johan Witteveen, even warns openly against what he calls "the increasing tax competition" between nations. He has predicted recently that the "tax-sovereignty of countries will be substantially eroded in the coming years, because all national tax regimes will be made more favorable to investors."⁶ And all because of fear.

I come now to an interim conclusion. Worldwide economic and financial processes are now taking place which obviously lead to a growing dependency of all governments and citizens. A general fear has grown for what the financial markets can and will do. So politicians and economic managers in our time see that there is no other choice than to adapt and conform to the new economic and financial realities. This adaptation seems inevitable even as it moves us near to the edge of an abyss. This is the abyss of the growing economic exclusion of the South and an environmental destruction and social fragmentation of the North. But is not that strange, indeed, very strange? It reminds me of that old story of the children of Hamelin who were led away from their city by the flute-tones of an unknown piper, not knowing at all where

he would bring them. A second “enclosure movement”—and indeed this seems the correct name for what is now going on—is seemingly equipped with its own powers of suggestion, mental seduction and intellectual weaponry. Thus, global economic processes encircle and enclose the mind and spirit in fear.

But if all this is true, it might pose for us an unexpected religious difficulty. Our Lord Jesus once said, almost two millennia ago, that we should not fear since the future of the world lay in his hands. What does that mean? What does that imply for us today? Let me say it even more sharply. I was invited here to speak about visions for the coming millennium—visions of justice and solidarity. All this has a nice ring to it. But is there any substance to these visions? Do they have stamina? Or will they instead wilt and just fade away as soon as they begin to engage the real world? Can we really go on with hope and vision in a world full of common fears based on undeniable facts? If we take that question in utmost sincerity, then we have no choice but to prove, or attempt to prove that this current way of seeing is too limited, even false. Only if we can demonstrate this falsity will visions be able to break through the climate of skepticism which overtakes them.

In my opinion that proof is possible. It is available for all of us. But it asks for a specific kind of openness, especially to what is not going well. I want to illustrate this by drawing your attention to the remarkable growth of a number of strong, factual (and therefore undeniable) paradoxes within our modern market-societies. For societal paradoxes, according to Jean François Lyotard, are not only interesting as such, they also call attention to the possibility that what we have here are distorted views or ways of thinking.

The first paradox I want to mention is that of growing poverty. Poverty now grows even in the richest societies and the most rapidly growing economies. This is a real paradox, since the prevailing opinion is that the creation of more wealth increases a society’s potential to abate poverty and creates more opportunities for people to find work. Nevertheless, in the United States, one out of four children has a direct experience of hunger and the average life-expectancy of a child born in Harlem is now even lower than that of a child born in Bangladesh.

A second, also very notable, paradox is that of diminishing care. Economic theory interprets an increase of the general income level as an increase of so-called discretionary buying power, which leads almost automatically to a higher level of service- and care-related expenditures. Instead, we all see around us diminishing care. Elderly and sick persons of an average or low income receive less personal care and

attention today than ten years ago. Furthermore, the care for nature and for the preservation of our cultural heritage is constantly plagued by a lack of money. How do we explain that?

A third paradox that I want to mention is the increasing lack of time in our modern culture. Mainstream economic theories predicted that economic growth would lead to more leisure. But today our culture is without doubt a culture full of haste and many overworked people, as recently and eminently described by Juliett Schorr.

Three paradoxes in a row: growing poverty, diminishing care, and increasing haste. And their number can easily be expanded. Consider the paradox of decreasing health under increasing health provisions, the paradox of higher government deficits under a regime of higher taxes, or of the paradox of our decreasing control of the environment while our technological expertise is growing. But let us not make things too complex and bewildering. Let us just ask ourselves this simple question: Do paradoxes like these have something in common? Do they have similar traits and characteristics? These questions could help us understand better why and how they came into existence.

In relation to these questions, two elements strike us immediately. The first is that all these paradoxes have *economic* traits. In one way or another they are all fundamentally connected with the dynamic economic forces of our time. The second common element of these paradoxes is that they all can be framed in terms of a tension or rupture between what moves and what cannot move, between what expands and what cannot expand, between realities which are dynamic and static. For example, neither our natural environment nor time expands. So we run into problems with nature and time if we think and act merely and purely in terms of a dynamistic, expansive universe. Likewise, activities of care and personal help have a smaller growth in productivity than most other economic activities. So they will become increasingly costly and therefore form an irritating burden (just like the whole of government expenditures) in a world in which everyone and everything has to be productive. Modern poverty too has, as we all know, its basis primarily in the fact that poor people (or poor nations) are left behind, stay behind, or just are pushed behind. Poor people are usually people who are just not able to "fit in" enough to cope with the requirements of a highly dynamic society.

I hope that you can see the general conclusion I am heading towards. Hard, painful, and very real paradoxes are now growing in the midst of modern societies. But this is not because of fate. The causes can be traced to human choices. In one way or another, it is because the

dynamic, economic aspects of our life and culture are overvalued and possibly even absolutized. All these paradoxes are born in the cleavage between what moves fast forward economically and what cannot follow at the same pace socially, naturally, or temporally.

This analysis of the problem implies at least two things. The first is that those persons and powers who suggest that there is only one factual and objective economic reality to which we all have to adapt and should adapt are wrong. Their worldview is obviously shortsighted because they underestimate the great value (even in economic terms) of the part of reality that is more static or less dynamic. Remarkably, but maybe not accidentally, this is the part of reality that is not produced by us, but is simply given to us by our good Creator.

But there is also a second implication. It is that broader visions of reality do matter. It is not true that an objective reality has grown, which is stronger than all human views and visions, for this so-called objective view *itself* is nothing more than a short-sighted vision. It may well be that in our present moment only a broad biblical perspective on culture and nature will be able to move us out of the impasse of these growing paradoxes. But if a biblical vision will move us, it is not because it presents a refined and high-tuned form of idealism. Just the opposite: It is because in a culture that is too narrowly idealistic, a biblical perspective could be the only remaining access for us to a practical, workable, broad realism.

Let me say it in another way. Politicians, economists, business leaders, and journalists today who refer only and continually to the flows and streams of a dynamic economy and who deplore it when the economy goes down and get excited when it goes up, are, in most cases, victims of a kind of mental distortion. Their minds are obviously caught in the enclosure of a closed economic system, while the broad totality of life escapes their purview. It is like sitting in a high-speed space ship and looking out of the window. Every static thing outside will appear to be moving backwards or to lag behind. The same is true for the prevalent view in our modern society. It is so intrinsically dynamic that it treats the elderly, the poor, and the unemployed simply as inactive people, and sees the surrounding nature primarily as something that limits our achievements. It tends to turn time into an enemy that persecutes us, and looks to the ancient cultures of the Southern Hemisphere as nothing more than “under-developed nations.”

But how long will this viewpoint remain possible? Already now, at the turn of this millennium, several painful paradoxes are making themselves heard, forcing themselves into our awareness. It is comparable to

the witness written on Belshazzar's palace in the time of Daniel, which said that he had been weighed and found to be too light or too cheap. Our own culture looks as if it has been far too superficial, far too light in its appreciation of God's good gifts, whether God's gift of community and nature or God's wonderful gift of time and rest.

I hope that in this article two things have become clear. The first is that the present process of economic and financial globalization is not as factual and neutral as it seems to be. Rather, it bears the traits of a far too narrow, and even spiritually enclosing, worldview. The second is that our awareness of this should not take away our hope, but can indeed bring it back. For this narrow and dynamistic worldview is the very basis of a whole number of painful paradoxes which need to be resolved. But resolution of these paradoxes is only possible if a broader, more realistic view of life and society comes to the fore and wins our hearts. And why should that not be the biblical vision of reality as it is expressed in the Scriptures, as it found its way in the teachings of Jesus, and inspired the pioneers of the Christian Social Movement? We here are challenged to live up to our faith in the present moment of time, a time when other forms of faith also try to conquer the human heart and, indeed, our whole civilization.

Our main challenge, then, is to deal with the extreme dynamism of our time in such a visionary way that alternative paths of development become visible. Addressing the short-comings of an excessively dynamistic vision by recourse to a conservative or restorationist approach will, of course, not help. Such an approach would mean that out of fear of dynamism we turn in reaction to the static side of things and refrain from any form of renewal of our present economies. Our present society needs, rather, a *new* harmony, a *new* balance between the static and the dynamic. Most fundamentally, we need the Spirit of the resurrected Lord, because only the Spirit can make visions live. To the risen Lord, our first brother, be therefore the glory, instead of all "big brothers" of our age.

NOTES

1. This article was originally presented as a lecture in the 1999 Stuber Lecture series on "Faith, Justice and Economics: Vision for a New Millennium" at Colgate Rochester Crozier Divinity School on April 21, 1999 [Editor's note].

2. Photo credit Citizens for Public Justice (www.cpj.ca).

3. Abraham Kuyper, *Christus en de sociale noden*, blz 53, geciteerd in W.F. de Gaay Fortman, *Architectonische critiek, fragmenten uit de geschriften van Dr. A. Kuyper* (Amsterdam: n.p., 1956), 19 [my own translation].

4. Walter Rauschenbusch, *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1907), 48.

5. Abraham Kuyper, *The Problem of Poverty*, ed. by James W. Skillen, original text from the 1891 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1991), 51.

6. H. Johannes Witteveen, "Economic Globalisation in a Broader, Long Term Perspective: Some Serious Concerns," in Jan Joost Teunissen, ed., *The Policy Challenges of Global Financial Integration* (Fondad, The Hague; Forum-FONDAD@wxs.nl), 26. In the same publication Witteveen also adds another concern, namely that "present globalisation tends to remain unbalanced and strongly weighted against the environment" (p. 28).