

On the Symbol in the Technical Environment: Some Reflections

By David Lovekin

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In “Will the Gospel Survive? Proclamation and Faith in the Technical Milieu,” the Reverend Dr. Gregory Wagenfuhr considers whether the messages of the Gospel in which God is revealed can survive in the technical environment that is all-encompassing. He concludes: “The gospel will survive by God’s grace and power alone. It is the responsibility of Christians to recognize the fundamentally different milieu in which we live and the problems it poses for the understanding and transmission of the gospel.”¹ Christians have always faced problems justifying the gospel in any environment because the gospel is not an environment (milieu), it “. . . is not fundamentally social, natural, or technical.”² Only the individual can be reconciled with God and only

. . . through the mediation of the love of God can one love one’s neighbor. Thus, the gospel is, in actuality, radically destructive to a human society whose unity lies outside God, to natural religions and to the technical milieu. The gospel must, therefore, always be Wholly Other, even as it is translated into each new world. The good news is reconciliation to God mediated only by the person of Christ.³

Thus, God’s message, news from the Wholly Other, would in most societies, by definition, be disruptive if heard at all. Christ, God’s incarnation, was viewed as a criminal and as a trouble-maker to be tortured and executed; his message challenges any society not “unified” in relation to God, Wagenfuhr contends. Christ insisted on a radical love, even for one’s enemies, with an absolute freedom often in opposition to conventional restraints in an embrace of the power of the powerless. Convention typically urges hate for enemies and allows strength only in power and wealth made possible by a freedom flowing from political rules and regulations. Could a message be more ironic? Irony is symbolic—one is saying what one doesn’t mean and meaning it—and overturns a literal use of language, which is the staple of technique. Symbol and metaphor, however, are the backbones of the biblical texts that plague the language and the mentality of a technological society. Why is symbolic language threatening to technique?

Wagenfuhr briefly traces the movement of language, which he takes to be essentially social (he uses Aristotle’s theory of four causes to make this point), as it progresses from the natural milieu to the social milieu to the technical milieu. Language and society transform together forming

three environments (milieus). An environment provides, Wagenfuhr states, “the primary source of life, the primary source of death, and therefore also, the primary experience through which all other experience is mediated. The milieu is all-encompassing, but it is this third point, that of mediation, that is most essential. For in mediating experience, the milieu provides symbol and thus the possibility of language and creativity.”⁴ In the environment of nature, both threatening and beneficent, he adds, “Nature mediated experience and thus gave rise to natural society and natural techniques.”⁵ He claims that nature and various techniques were “mediated through society,”⁶ creating the social. The social and the natural environments are then eclipsed and mediated by technique, which becomes the all-encompassing and a new immediacy deaf to the symbolic message of the gospel. How does this take place? To consider this question I will pursue my claim that technology is a mentality that does not know itself as one, and I will take my own path, which may or may not agree with Wagenfuhr. My emphasis will clearly differ. I am concerned with the nature of the symbol from an epistemological standpoint. I will stand the symbol as word against the image as fact, following Ellul’s advice. The true appears from the contexts of the word as it reaches for a whole; the image as a certainty gestures for the real, which is part of the true. These are dialectical tensions that devolve with the mentality of technique.⁷

The tensions between mind/body, image/word, and technical operation/technical phenomenon are the grounds for this dialectic for which separation and distance enable true knowledge.⁸ The natural world, for the Greeks, was full of gods. Nature as a collection of merely physical forces obeying disinterested laws of necessity is the result of symbolic labor. This labor is the background for the technological society becoming a system and perhaps losing any real sense of society. An environment is an expression of symbolic action, which, then, offers further symbolic interaction as it can become an “other” to itself. Water, for fish, is not an environment in this sense. An environment provides a sense of immediacy and protection but provides grounds for change, for transcendence. The natural world can become the social world, as the natural world takes on the character of “other.” Animals are to be tamed. Housing is to adjust to climate and topography. Laws will appear to allow for the distribution of property. Technique, however, is not an environment, Wagenfuhr notes, but is an immediacy that it does not know itself as an environment having transcended the social. Technology, I will claim, does not know itself as making, as facing an “other.” The “other” becomes the made. What technology makes becomes the real thing. The “other” for technique becomes a problem for conceptual control and manipulation according to mathematics-like methods. It becomes the real by becoming rational, and thus produces in whatever case, the thing-in-itself, the absolutely perfect, efficient, object. The distance between subject and object collapses. The implications for religion, art, or philosophy, purveyors of symbolic labor, are dire. They require a sense of an “other” that is a value beyond technical production and understanding, which have become coterminous.

For example, with Marshal McLuhan's famous Global Village we have a "space" where no one moves about, talking to one another and interacting. Involvement in this village takes place on the couch with remote in hand and with the eye assembling pixels or some electronic *ephemerata*. This environment is a screen of false immediacy that many do not take as "false." The possibility of "Reality TV" waited upon TV becoming reality. "Globalization" does allow making money and wealth, transformed by technique, for those up the technological food chain. No amount of talking to this screen in words and gestures has any effect. Interaction has become symbolic, at best, although the symbols are pre-made, clichés that express what Ellul calls the technical phenomena that are now the technological system. These *ephemerata* are the ghosts of the society that still haunt sensibility and provide a useful nostalgia of a "village." This needs further development.

I

Fundamentally, as a mentality, I stand before some object of which I am aware. Then, I become aware that I am aware, and my experience is divided in two. A goal for knowledge and meaning, then, is to mediate these two dimensions. I want to know the object before me and I want that knowledge to be true. Language and gesture are basic aids in this process. Language, for Ellul, flows in basically two directions: toward the image as a sensual and visual presence and toward the word as an aural invocation. Both aspects become conflated for technique and then combined such that all meaning is reduced to the visual. The aural, initially, gives us a sense of the "around," of a context of meaning beyond that which is before the eye. As Ellul states, a sound behind necessitates a turn of the head. Sound seeks clarification and clarity becomes increasingly determined by the visual, by that which is a certainty before which we stand. Of course, experience commonly shows that the two dimensions never coincide. As much as we write, as much as we televise, etc., meaning, if carefully considered, is always beyond the outstretched hand or magnified gaze.

In *The Humiliation of the Word*, from which I have been drawing, Ellul maintains that language stemming from the image proceeds according to the ways of logic that posit identities and deny contradictions.⁹ From the standpoint of sight I see that a red apple is not both red and not red at the same time. But to read the apple from the perspective of the word, red apple may also be the apple of temptation. The tempting apple then suggests other aspects, particularly with the understanding that most really red apples in super markets are the results of chemicals and additives. Words, then, may become symbols and open to dimensions that invite contradiction and dispute. There is no contradiction in seeing the red inviting apple as also not inviting, as dangerous to my health. Thus, for Ellul, the symbol opens us to a dialectic between viewer and object such that the object as object is questioned. Its "reality" may demand more "truth." In the technological society logic is used to provide means for manufacture, commerce, and life committed to the image that is not known as mediation. Symbols remind us of what the image lacks. The symbols of the Gospel are cases in point. The Hebrews understood that God could

not be reduced to an image and that even His name was not to be pronounced. God was the Wholly Other against which all “others” stood. Symbolic language and sign language—the language of the image—are both representations given the awareness of being aware that one is aware. The “other” enables this awareness. Thus, ignorance is important for knowledge, allowing it to grow. Even though God cannot be known except through scriptures embedded with contradiction, knowing this is a step toward knowing the limits of knowledge: knowing what one does not know, as Socrates would remind. As such, the technological society does not know what it does not know, having reduced knowledge to what is before it, to that which it has made without allowing such making takes place. How does this happen?

To recapitulate, for Ellul, the mediation that produces an environment involves the encounter of an ‘other’ by a subject, a mentality that evokes a symbol or silence, submission, or avoidance. An environment or milieu is produced through such an encounter with symbolic energy and weight. Ellul states:

Man cannot have a relationship with another save by the intermediary of *Symbolization*. Without mediating symbols, he would invariably be destroyed by raw physical contact alone. The ‘other’ is always the enemy, the menace. The ‘other’ represents an invasion of the personal world, unless, or until, the relationship is normalized through symbolization. Very concretely, to speak the same language is to recognize the ‘other’ has entered into the common interpretive universe; to display recognizable or identical tattoos, for example, is an expression of the same universe of discourse.¹⁰

Thunder and lightning in nature say nothing until they issue the voices of the gods, which in turn lead to social and institutional instantiations directed or observed by the gods. How, then, does a social or natural environment mediate without first being mediated? How does a milieu provide a symbol when it is the result of symbolization? Of course, any aspect of experience can become an ‘other.’ Perhaps this is a matter of definition or perhaps it is a matter of perspective and priority. I believe it is at least an epistemological issue, as I will explain. For example, what is it for something to call out to be noticed and named? How is significance established?

The human appears in a world that is separate from view, from understanding. Another world apart from the world that appears requires the ability, “. . . to imagine a dimension other than that of the immediately sensible—a universe of which he is the constituent and where he continues to reinterpret and to institute new things—he becomes also the master of the real world.”¹¹ We can then reconfigure Wagenfuhr’s three environmental conditions: life, death, mediation. We have awareness and a sense of being, and then a sense of non-being or threat, or Otherness, and then perhaps a mediation with possible symbolization. The imagination and memory are crucial in Ellul’s account, making an historical interpretation and reinterpretation possible. Mediation obviously requires separation that, in turn, provides a history and narrative beyond mere fact, the domain of the image. Facts are made and not simply given. Indeed, *Factum* means making.

Ellul states: “I have demonstrated that the aristocracy in primitive Rome could not have emerged except by the process of symbolization.”¹² Against the materialistic claim that money, physical courage, and power established hierarchy for patrician families, Ellul contends that hierarchy was tied to “some primordial ancestral hero celebrated for his excellence.”¹³ Further:

his great deeds were collected, transformed into an epic *account*, and then reconstructed in such a fashion as to become symbolic. At this moment, a double movement is produced: one moves towards the heights, further from the origins, as the eponymous ancestor becomes the concentration point of symbols and is attached to a higher symbolic origin. This results in a god—goddess or demigod who is established symbolically as the true origin and as the explanation of the progenitive power of the ancestor.¹⁴

Thus, a double movement produces a present that is connected to a past that constructed it. The Roman present was constructed by the symbol, which surrounded their present. Materialistic explanations of the past beg the question of meaning and environment that is established by technique where the true is reduced to fact, a present with no meaningful past, no transcendental ground of explanation, a bad infinity, which I will later develop.

Roman society, Ellul observed in his *L’Histoire des Institutions*, was built upon a “sacral ground” where all was of an undifferentiated piece: “The Roman sacred is at the same time both religious and magical. It is religious in that it worships the transcendental powers and it is magical in that it utilizes these powers which are immanent.”¹⁵ The gods were not true others but were located in nature that was, nonetheless, transformed to give a symbolic meaning that opened up the social world with formative and creative language beyond the merely representational. The strong man or woman attained strength through ancestral myths and stories. These stories are not true because they are factual but are true because they involve the making of the fact and the recollecting of that making. The true has not become a simple narrative but is a part of it like the fact.¹⁶ In this way a whole precedes a part but is then part of a larger whole, and so it goes. The notions are in some degree relative but not wholly so.

The triad of Jupiter, Mars, and Quirinus provided a locus for Roman institutions and values. These gods and goddesses were found in nature as well. Jupiter was the god of light and the god of trees, as well as the god of Roman law. Mars was the god of war and strife who established the military. Quirinus was the god of fecundity, the god of earth, water, and plants who established agriculture. These gods are true symbols in the above sense, having double and triple significance. They help to provide the true inclusive of facts of Roman civilization.¹⁷ Jupiter was not merely the god of mere lightning—a flashing in the sky. Ellul writes:

It is not because there is thunder and lightning that man invents the sacred. Man made the thunder the source of meaning and of limitation because the world has to have an order,

because action has to be justified. With a spontaneity, an “instinct,” as inescapable as those he could have for hunting and fishing, man “knew” that he could not justify himself, that he could not tell himself that he was right . . . neither can he say to himself that it is he who establishes an order in the world whereby he can locate himself.¹⁸

The true is made by the human out of parts, of certainties given in experience without meaning and direction. The symbol makes these meanings and quests for meaning possible. It is no surprise, but is ironic, that materialistic accounts arise in a technological culture in denial of the symbol that made technology possible. The sacral world where all is of a piece and rife with symbolic making involves an imaginative separation and account of that unity that produces irrevocably a diversity. And this suggests that an environment is never simply a given. Or rather, a given is, by definition, that which is yet to be named, to be represented.

The myths that established past societies are taken as falsehoods. The dictates of “reason” and efficient methodology take precedence with the transformation of objects, means, methods in the production of technical phenomena, which, like clichés, suspend and obviate the symbol and its crucial labors while leaving a vacuum, a great absence, in their wake. The technical phenomenon is the result of reducing objects, means, makers, and made to the schemas of logic and method that destroy the possibility of true critique, analysis, or creation. The possible is replaced with the necessity of progress achieved only by the accumulation of moments trapped in a vicious immediacy. The maker no longer stands before the made. The true becomes the made, only to flounder in the immediate, a present with no past, no context, and thus no true meaning. In brief, and metaphorically speaking, Coke becomes the real thing, as those with memory know; reality is what technology makes.

Technique is a mentality that pursues absolute efficiency with a mathematics-like method. It becomes an absolute in the denial of absolutes. Ellul states:

This rationality, best exemplified in norms, and the like, involves two distinct phases: first, the use of “discourse” in every operation [under the two aspects this term can take (on the one hand, the intervention of intentional reflection, and, on the other hand, the intervention of means from one term to the other)]; this excludes spontaneity and personal creativity. Second, there is the reduction of method to its logical dimension alone. Every intervention of technique is, in effect, a reduction of facts, forces, phenomena, means and instruments to the schema or logic.¹⁹

The technical mind stands before a technical operation like cutting a tree, like paddling a boat, and asks: how can this action be perfected? First, the tension between mind and body is cancelled. Too many variables intervene. The strong can cut faster and deeper, can row faster and harder. A mathematics-like method produces the way of subverting difference in all ways. A cannot be both A and not A. Perfection will require producing identities. A language of

logical discourse intervenes grounded in Aristotelian logic. A motor will undermine bodily difference to fell the tree and to power the boat. With the use of such techniques the distance between mind and body lessens. No longer are the objects of nature directly at hand. Attention is now shifted to the device, and a sense of body is co-opted.²⁰

Soon, the distinction between the natural and artificial disappears. Coke becomes the real thing. Choices are made automatically on the basis of quantity become quality. More is always greater. Devices proliferate as operations and objects are subjected to “perfection.” A trip down a soap aisle in a supermarket shows how many ways emulsification can be made more efficient by the laboratory and by advertising. In one sense all are identical with the difference that some are newer and in different packages. Clichés announcing such perfection and progress abound. Moral and ethical judgments are summarized simply: that which can be done will be done. Cultural difference like bodily difference goes the way of all other forms of symbolization. Zen temples are as strange and disorienting to Japanese citizens as they are to visitors from other countries. At this point of technical development, Ellul states, technique becomes the sacred. It can no longer distinguish what it has made from what it has not made.

As objects become concepts, concepts become objects with no limit. The technical society embodies what Hegel called the bad infinity.²¹ Perfection, an absolute, and an infinity, requires members. But how is membership determined? If perfection is the absolutely efficient, which is defined by mathematical method, then new methodologies and products are required: the value of “the one best way” prevails. But, the one best way is always a step away. Either efficiency is a term with no content—never achievable—or an abstraction that always requires a new member. There is no criterion for membership that stands apart from the series. This problem besets most attempts at conceptualizing any infinity. The idea of the counting numbers must go beyond one more counting number, for example. $N + 1$ reaches for that understanding. An infinite series of counting numbers cannot be just one more number. Further, the infinity or the absolute must not merely exist outside the group as an empty class concept. Number could not mean a class of no number at all. This would explain nothing of the particulars it pretends to group. The notion of number must include any number without being exhausted by it. As Kurt Gödel showed, a mathematical system cannot be complete and consistent at the same time. Once determined, a member of an infinite series cannot define the series because some member will always be left out. This problem infects concept formation of all kinds. Consider the well-worn theological problem of how a God can be an infinite Wholly Other who is a creator of that which is and a being who provides the creation meaning and yet be totally outside of that creation. If God is simply what his creation is not, He is meaningless to that creation beyond being an absolute negative, an empty class concept. For Ellul, God’s meaning and message is ongoing and is one that invites human participation, but how is this possible given the above framework? If God is Wholly Other, how is this otherness even “other” as meaningful beyond being merely negative. An account or theory is meaningful in terms of what it includes and does not exclude (apologies to Leibniz).

Ellul understands that his God, albeit unknowable, has to be known to be so. The contradictions of biblical literature provide symbols being symbolic. They require constant interpretation. Neither God nor the truth change but our views of them do. Wagenfuhr's question of whether the Christian gospel survives begs the question of which gospel we have in mind. Ellul indicated the need for the gospel to be interpreted continually, but he also insisted that this occur individually with a belief continually seeking faith. The Gospel, or any holy text, invites reduction to the sacred. The Bible is not a machine, Ellul insists. Faith, for Ellul, indicates a totality surrounding any belief that can swerve, correct, and amend errors of elisions. Belief remains alone until it seeks substance, context, and coherence. The whole, or a totality, precedes the parts in logic, in experience, in theology, and certainly, in philosophy. Analysis of any kind is always separation.

II

The important dialectic between image and word, fact, and meaning, collapses. Meaning considered above involves a tension between members of a continuum and the notion that defines it. If the notion becomes just one more member, it loses meaning. The symbol, however, absorbs the space between the meaning and meant as a presence of absence. The absent is the concern for the symbol.²² The image, a totality before the viewer, supports the Aristotelian logic that empowers the technological rationality of logical self-identities. God could not be both imminent and transcendent from this strictly logical point of view reinforced by the visual world, a strict logic of exclusion. Inclusion will be made up in a bad infinity where a meaning is produced by adding members. Repetition is not imitation, which suggests a transcendent, a type and form, a meaning outside the meant.²³ The creation of the technical system involves the linking of techniques such that no one technique is the cause of any other. The system predominates making a social reality impossible.

As I stated earlier, technique cannot be symbolized because it cannot know itself as other. As Ellul states in *The Empire of Non-Sense: Art in the Technological Society*,

Technique cannot be symbolized for three principle reasons. First, it has become the universal mediator, and because it is itself a means . . . it is not the object of symbolization but rather it is also, by its power, outside of all other systems of mediation. It is, in the second place, a producer of a communal sense. The communal act today no longer relies on the support of the symbolic but rather on a technical support (the play of media, for example). Simply technique establishes a non-mediated—an immediate--relation with man, who, in the past felt a strong need to distance himself from nature, but technique seems not to require such a distance. It seems to be the direct extension of the body. Who has not heard it said that the tool is merely an extension of the hand? Thus, we pass from an organic world, where symbolization was an adequate and coherent function in relation to the milieu, to a technical system where the creation of symbols has neither place nor sense. What symbols are necessary are produced out of technique itself.

Television or advertising offer abundant symbols of technique but those come from the very working of technique itself. Therefore, the technical milieu is never understood because symbolization is excluded. And, from this fact, art, the foremost minion of symbolization, finds itself chaotic and torn between its “vocation” and that to which it can no longer aspire: an environment made up of discrete pieces belongs to structuralism but not to symbolization.²⁴

Technique, then, is self-mediating, which is no mediation. Meaning reduced to structure renders meaning meaningless. Change becomes mere change, repetition. The time of the digital clock, a series of nows. In ten minutes I can drive to the market, I can brush my teeth, comb my hair, and lotion my body; in ten minutes I could get a civil service wedding, and I could wish, while dying, friends and lovers goodbye. All mean the same by the clock in the space of technique.

III

We cannot step into the same river twice, as Heraclitus said, until we named the river and understood it to be a metaphor for time and experience as flux (*panta rhei*).²⁵ We could step and run and step and run until we ran into the Aegean Sea and drowned. With the notion of *panta rhei*, everything flows. Ellul commends Heraclitus with this phrase for being near the truth.²⁶ Instead of claiming the truth to be relative as the flux metaphor might seem, Heraclitus inserts the power of the *Logos*, the word, a meaning that conjoins opposites. Ellul states, “If truth is truth even beyond the limits of our grasp and our approximations, it *exists*. And that settles it. In observing vanishing reality, Heraclitus says something that does not vanish, and his statement falls within the scope of truth.”²⁷ Thus, before the symbol a presence is portended, a finite to be woven from symbolic cloth, to be conceptual about it. To be more existential, a river extends over rocks, that in Norman Maclean’s hands, become words:

Then in the Arctic half-light of the canyon, all existence fades to a being with my soul and memories and the sounds of the Big Blackfoot River and a four-count rhythm and the hope that a fish will rise.

Eventually, all things merge into one, and a river runs through it.

The river was cut by the world’s great flood and runs over rocks from the basement of time. On some of the rocks are timeless raindrops. Under the rocks are the words, and some of the words are theirs.

I am haunted by waters.²⁸

On the river, soul and body are one in a two count rhythm of loading and unloading the fly rod; this count is not clock time but the time of becoming one with mind, body, water, and sky, all the elements. In the pre-Socratic world in which Heraclitus lived, nature and the elements were

spiritual, embodying *physis*, far removed from our ideas of physics and the physical. Heraclitus's nature as *physis* also expressed *Moira*, destiny and fate. The gods were still in all things, as Thales proclaimed. Nature was not the field of dreary natural law and necessity.²⁹ Maclean evokes this sense of nature where words and rocks correspond and evoke the great flood, a tragic retribution. Maclean's beloved brother Paul, an artist with the fly rod, was beaten to death, perhaps over a gambling debt. His brother could not appreciate his value as an artist, and Norman realizes that he could not understand him, not understand his father, not understand the many people he lived with and loved. And then he understands that this is why he wrote this story with words reaching out to the beyond.

Words are God's gifts, Ellul stated:

God speaks. Myth is born from this word, but rarely is it heard directly and never conveyed just as it is received, because human beings cannot speak God's words. Myth is the analogy that enables us to grasp the meaning of what God has said. As discourse constructed to paraphrase the revelation, it is a metaphor that should lead the listener beyond what he has heard.³⁰

With our words we try to say what we mean; if we knew fully what we meant, we would neither speak nor write. Because we do not know we use the symbolic language best suited toward that purpose. We try to understand what we can barely understand hoping that others will hear, will read, and will help us. And, in so doing, we embrace the divine as it is, to us, available.

¹ Gregory Wagenfuhr, "Will the Gospel Survive? Proclamation and Faith in the Technical Milieu," *Ellul Forum* 57 (2016), 11.

² Wagenfuhr, 11.

³ Wagenfuhr, 12.

⁴ Wagenfuhr, 12.

⁵ Wagenfuhr, 12.

⁶ Wagenfuhr, 12.

⁷ I first developed the notion of a technical mentality in David Lovekin "Jacques Ellul and the Logic of Technology," *Man and World* 10 (1978): 251-272. More fully, this examination continues in David Lovekin, *Technique, Discourse, and Consciousness: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Jacques Ellul* (Bethlehem, PA and London and Toronto: Lehigh University Press, 1991), 82-116, hereinafter cited as *TDC*.

⁸ I discuss more fully the technical operation and the technical phenomena in *TDC*, 152-187.

⁹ Jacques Ellul, *The Humiliation of the Word*, trans. Joyce Main Hanks (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), hereinafter cited as *Humiliation*. I discuss the problem of the image and the word more fully in *TDC*, 188-220.

¹⁰ Jacques Ellul, "Symbolic Function, Technology, and Society," *Journal of Social and Biological Structures* (3) (July 1978), 210, hereinafter cited as "Symbolic."

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- ¹¹ Lovekin, *TDC*, 97.
- ¹² Ellul, “Symbolic Function, Technology, and Society,” 212.
- ¹³ Ellul, “Symbolic,” 212.
- ¹⁴ Ellul, “Symbolic,” 212.
- ¹⁵ Jacques Ellul, *L’Histoires des Institutions*, vol. I, Lovekin translation. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1955), 220-221.
- ¹⁶ *Humiliation of the Word*, 123.
- ¹⁷ *L’ Histoires des Institutions*, 220-221.
- ¹⁸ Jacques Ellul, *The New Demons*, trans. C. Edward Hopkin (New York: Seabury, 1975), 55.
- ¹⁹ Jacques Ellul, *The Technological Society*, trans. John Wilkinson (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1965), 78-79. I have amended Wilkinson’s translation with a phrase in brackets that he left out.
- ²⁰ See Lovekin discussion of the characteristics of technique discussed here and following in *TDC*, 152-187.
- ²¹ I discuss this at great length in *TDC*, 98-105.
- ²² See *TDC*, 97-98.
- ²³ See Samir Younés, “Jacques Ellul and the Eclipse of Artistic Symbolism,” in *The Empire of Non-Sense: Art in the Technological Society*, trans. Michael Johnson and David Lovekin, with Introductory Essays by Samir Younés and David Lovekin (Winterbourne, Berkshire, UK: Papadakis Press, 2014), 7-19, hereinafter cited as *Empire*.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 66. Also see my discussion of technology, art, and the symbol in “Looking and Seeing: The Play of Image and Word—The Wager of Art in the Technological Society: A Revision,” *Bulletin of Science, Technology, and Society* 32 (4) Fall, 2012, 273-286.
- ²⁵ *Humiliation*, 39.
- ²⁶ *Humiliation*, 40.
- ²⁷ *Humiliation*, 40.
- ²⁸ Norman Maclean, *A River Runs Through It and Other Stories* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1976), 104.
- ²⁹ See F. M. Cornford’s marvelous *From Religion to Philosophy: A Study in the Origins of Western Speculation* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1965).
- ³⁰ *Humiliation*, 106.