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Militant and submissive religions: class, religion and ideology*

ABSTRACT

In this paper I examined the relationship between class, religion and political ideology. I proposed to show that religious beliefs and values incorporate elements of class based ideology which then serve to legitimate a militant or submissive world view. Class, in this paper, is defined as a collectivity of individuals who are conscious of their socio-economic status and interests. I distinguish between ascending, retrenching, bourgeois, and the alienated classes. Corresponding to these classes are four types of religions: inclusive and exclusive militant and submissive religions. The religious values which assume theology-like status are as follows. The religions of the ascending classes are primarily inclusive militants emphasizing the values of collectivity, equality and justice. The religions of the retrenching classes are exclusive militants which stress individualism, freedom, and Christian love. Bourgeois religions are inclusive submissive and while they incorporate the values of the above two, they also add the values of charity and decorum. The religions of the alienated classes are exclusive submissive and anti-class although they do manifest a caste-like system with an elitist self concept and a total commitment to the group.

An oft-repeated sociological dictum is that religion is a conservative institution. It is taken almost as an axiom that religion supports the status quo, supports and legitimates the ruling elite, and demands and rewards submissiveness from the lower socioeconomic strata. Empirical findings, however, do not support such a unidirectional relationship. Wuthnow[1] for example, reviewing the literature on religion and politics, concludes that the evidence is unclear, and the relationship between conservatism and politics is an elusive one. His analysis shows that while some research reported a conservative relationship to exist, there were others that found no such relationship, and still others which showed that religion tends to oppose conservatism and to deny

support to the ruling power. Indeed, as Lewy has observed, religion is Janus-faced.[2] While in most instances religion (i.e. the clergy representing their religion's point of view) rejects traditionalism, legitimates and supports the ruling elite, at other times, albeit less frequently, instead of being conservative, religion supports and advocates liberating theologies. The question is: What makes some religions more militant, while others are docile and submissive to power?

CONCEPTUALIZING THE PROBLEM

I would argue that the reason for the inconsistencies in the varied research reports is due to inadequate conceptualization. The two most frequently used approaches in such studies are the unidimensional approach, which includes both the Marxian and functionalist theories, and the multidimensional approach, which surveys dimensions of religiosity. Each of these approaches, in its own way, fails to differentiate the Weltanschauungen associated with a particular belief. Consequently, all of them are unable to understand or explain how different religious worldviews and associated values affect a particular religion's association with the political world.

Both functionalism and Marxism share a common perspective on religion and politics: that religion provides moral and ideological support for the status quo. Functionalists see this as necessary for continued social existence and thus as good ('value neutrality' notwithstanding); Marxists see it as bad. More importantly, both of these orientations advocate the ideas that: (1) religion is an undifferentiated entity, and (2) religion has a single consequence, evident in its relationship with power maintenance (Marxists) or social stability (functionalists). To the Marxist, religion regardless of its theology, history, or size – is part of the Ideological Support Apparatus and as such reenforced the state, which itself is the political arm of ruling class interest.[3] Merton's elaboration of possible dysfunctions aside, a functional perspective is likely to direct our attention to religion away from conflict but likewise (though more positively) to social reenforcement functions.[4] Thus both perspectives enhance an indiscriminate view of religion 'in general' and a theoretical frame which leads people to expect religion to support conservative politics.

In contrast to the unidimensional approach, the multidimensional method advocates a view in which religiosity is conceptualized as sets of different phenomena. The difficulty with this approach is that it is reductionistic on the one hand but still indiscriminate in its generality. A given dimension, for example, is treated as existing with hardly any reference to who or what is believed or worshipped, when, in what context, and so forth. Religion is not seen as something whole, but as a

collection of only-possibly-related parts of general applicability. Although this approach may come close to the nature of religion as lived experience, it obscures the property of emergence; that is, it does not sensitize us to religion as an institution that cannot be fully understood if it is seen only in its separate constituent elements.[5] The impact a particular religion has on an adherent's political view cannot be explained or understood as the consequence of a single dimension of religion. To understand such a relationship we need to approach religion from a modified holistic view – not as an undifferentiated entity, nor as reduced and fragmented by surveys of 'dimensions'. The best model for insight into the relationship between religion and politics is the ideal type: a construct in which are incorporated various features that characterize and differentiate those religions that have a greater tendency toward militancy from those that stress subserviency.

In this paper I propose to develop an ideal-type approach in which class values are expressed as theological conceptions. Values such as justice, love, charity, freedom, and equality, which reflect class interests, also become religious moral values. My analysis, at this point, will be limited to Christian religions with specific reference to the United States. I propose to differentiate between two types of both militant and submissive religions each reflecting a particular social class.

SOCIAL CLASS

It is not my intent to enter into the polemics associated with this concept, but merely to indicate its usage in this paper. Class in this paper will reflect both the Weberian and Marxian definitions. It is clear that if religion is to reflect class interests, then such reflection implies the presence of consciousness, that is, that it is that religion is a part of the human consciousness which Marx argues is necessary for a class to be for itself. The interests that are reflected in their religious beliefs stem from an awareness of its members' life chances. I shall thus distinguish between ascending class, that is a class whose members seek mobility into main stream, retrenching class who seek to reestablish their social status, two types of bourgeoise and the alienated class.

MILITANCY

Most historical and sociopolitical studies of militant religion have focused on situational factors that enhance religious opposition to the ruling elite. But not all religions facing the same political conditions

will respond with militancy. Situation and leadership are also necessary for religious revolution; yet these two conditions are not in themselves sufficient. What differentiates those religions that are militant from accommodative and submissive religions are particular theological Weltanschauungen that arise out of and respond to the class conditions of their adherents.

The classic example of religious militancy is Old Testament prophecy. In the name of YHWH prophets opposed the ruling elite and questioned their power legitimacy. Thus, one aspect of militancy is a political dimension wherein religious leaders challenge the basis of the political leadership's legitimacy.[6] Another dimension that is central to militant religion is a commitment to change. If submissive religions are committed to the status quo, then militant ones are obviously seeking change from it. In this respect, however, militant religions differ. There are those that seek changes to conditions that have as yet not been – i.e., future oriented. By contrast, there are militant religions that are seeking to return to a paradise that has been lost. Finally, militant religions also differ with respect to inclusivity and exclusivity of membership. Religions that emphasize uniqueness and separation are to be differentiated from those whose human commonality is emphasized.

A religion shall be termed inclusive to the extent that it emphasizes human and religious commonality – i.e., ecumenism in the broadest sense. Liberal religions, militant or not, are more likely to stress the idea of commonness. Militant religions, however, will emphasize this ideal in practice to a greater extent. On the other hand, exclusive militants emphasize the singular truthfulness of their religious view, the unique and distinct relationship members of their religion have with the deity, and the 'jealousy' of God. These views justify them in seeing themselves as righteous and thereby in being punitive to those of other persuasions.

RELIGION AND THE STATE

If there is one particular view that differentiates militant from submissive religions it is the legitimacy of the separation of church and state. The idea of rendering unto Caesar and God each one separate dues is the ideological infrastructure of the submissive religions. The legitimacy of secular power and its independence from religion – Pauline doctrine forms the basis for the separation of church and state.[7] These two arenas have clear and distinct functions – one to be concerned with personal salvation in the world to come, the other with temporal concerns of the here and now. The common element of all militant religions is the rejection of this view. To militant religions, religion consists not only of personal faith but also of associated acts.

Both types of militant religions hold a view that social and political life must be subservient to an ethic that reflects the will of a higher authority.

The Old Testament prophets who epitomize religious militancy based their right to be critical of the ruling power on their relationship with the supernatural and on the demands of the supernatural, which must be given greater credence than the demands of political rulers.[8] That is, the foundation of religious militancy is incorporated in the idea that all people are first subject to the will of God. In addition to the idea of the will of God, the Western world has also been influenced by the concept of Natural Law. Although rooted in Roman Catholic theology, the idea of Natural Law was given a different meaning by the eighteenth-century *Philosophes*.[9] Nature and the laws of nature have, in some instances, become substitutes for the laws of God. Like the law of God, the law of nature has been accepted as the true and right path on which society needs to be built. In essence, both the law of God and natural law include the idea that above the law that is found in statutes and a society's legal system there is a higher law, which has been given by God or which is part of a grander scheme of things called Nature. The violation of such laws brings various forms of punishment. The violation of God's plan is associated with loss of His favor and subsequent punishments, as depicted in Deuteronomy. The violation of natural law similarly ends in disaster, for no people can subvert that which is essentially legitimate by right of nature.[10] A good example of these perspectives is Jerry Falwell's *Listen, America!*, where he repudiates the idea of separating Caesar's dues from the rest of life and preaches an active political commitment.

The subjugation of politics and civil authority to religion was also advocated by Calvin, who argued that 'civil government has its appointed end . . . to prevent the true religion which is contained in God's law from being openly and with public sacrilege violated and defiled with impunity'.[11] God and his law are the foundation of our civil, moral, and religious life. They are all interconnected, but God's will takes precedence. Thus Calvin held it to be blasphemy for Henry VIII to declare himself Supreme Head of the Church of England. By submitting oneself to the will of God, Caesar's will becomes secondary, and Caesar's behavior thus must be scrutinized, since the welfare of all depends more on the action of a nation's Caesar than any other single individual.

The idea of submission to a higher authority is also part of the liberal and inclusive-oriented religion. The difference is that inclusive religions perceive that the law that should guide people's lives is a universal law or morality. This view is a part of the foundation of nondenominational civil religion. Civil law and civil authority are not independent from higher authority, which is defined as the natural law that reflects the will of a universal and nondenominational deity.

Criticism of civil authority thus is not based on an orthodox view of the law of God with its consequent commitment to a particularistic theocracy, but on a universal humanistic moral code.

CLASS AND MILITANCY

My criticism of the Marxian perspective is based primarily on the over-emphasis of the dominant ideology thesis as articulated in *The German Ideology*.[12] This approach in Marxism has recently been criticized because of its incorporation of various historical inaccuracies.[13] In addition, however, there is a problem directly associated with this view's own political emphasis: Marxist sociologists have used this 'theory' selectively to advocate the legitimacy of their own political agenda. Marx's theory, which is more germane to sociological analysis of religion, is that expressed in the preface to the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of the Right* and the *Eighteenth Brumaire*.[14] Ideology (and from a Marxian view, all aspects of the superstructure) are associated with and reflect people's position in the mode of production and different modes of property.

To understand the nature of religious militancy and the distinction between inclusive and exclusive militancy, we need to relate it to the members' constituent classes.

Inclusive militancy and ascending class

Militant religions espousing an inclusive orientation reflect the ideology of an ascending class. Whereas submissive religions with their other-worldly orientation and emphasis on transvaluation reflect the interest of the ruling class and are by their very nature committed to obedience, inclusive militant religions are committed to the interest of classes seeking ascendancy. By an ascending class I mean those social classes whose members are conscious of their interest and are seeking to gain mobility in the class system.

The relationship between religious militancy and class has been observed by Engels and is articulated in his discussion of the peasant war in Germany. The first feature of this militancy is its emphasis on this world as opposed to an 'other' world. From this religion's perspective, salvation is rooted in human interrelationships and only then with a relationship of a human to God. Reflecting the interest of the peasants, Munzer in his religious revolt saw heaven

> not as a thing of another world . . . . [I]t is the task of believers to establish this Heaven, the Kingdom of God, here on earth. Just as

> there is no Heaven in the beyond . . ., there is no devil but man's lust and greed.

The purpose of religion, at least this ascending class-based religion, is to establish God's Kingdom on earth. By this Kingdom Munzer understood 'a society in which there would be no class differences or private property and no state authority independent of or foreign to the members of society'. Thus, 'all work and all property' were to be 'shared in common, and complete equality introduced'.[15] Engels proposed two distinct qualities to be part of revolutionary religious doctrine: (1) it is to be this-world oriented, and (2) it should emphasize power responsibility and equality.

A this-worldly orientation of militant religion and its commitment to an ascending class was also observed more recently by Gary Marx. In examining the relationship between civil rights militancy and religion, he concluded that those religious individuals who have a temporal orientation are more likely to be committed to civil rights militancy than those who espouse an otherworldly orientation. Reviewing the data, he concludes 'that an important factor in determining the effect of religion or protest attitudes is the nature of an individual's religious orientation, that . . . their religious concern serves to inspire and sustain race protest'.[16] What is important to note is that the examples that Gary Marx cites (e.g., Martin Luther King, Jr.) are people who are conscious of their social class position and are seeking ascendancy.

Similarly the converse is also true. Rokeach reports that an other-worldly concern measured by a commitment to and a concern for personal salvation is negatively associated with a concern for civil rights and for the poor and was in opposition to the student protests of the 1960s.[17]

Inclusive militants and values

Theology not only defines religious beliefs; it is also concerned with and defines moral values. These values, as Marx has indicated in his criticism of Feuerbach, are not independent of the class positions of adherents.[18] Thus, to understand the moral concerns associated with those religions that can be characterized as 'inclusive militants' we need to understand their social class basis. Inclusive militants are by and large members of an ascending class – be they minorities, such as those in the civil rights movements of the 1960s, or the Liberation Theology groups of today. Gutierrez, for instance, sees the new movement to be the church of the 'erupting poor'.[19] The religious moral values that are central to these militant religious reflect their members' social class and their quest for upward mobility. The three values that are central to persons in this position are justice, equality, and collectivity.

The values that are central in the Judeo-Christian tradition are justice and love. Of the two, it is justice that is most often associated with both political and religious liberalism.[20] Inclusive militants, whose political orientation is liberal, are thus more likely to espouse the ideals of justice rather than the more traditional Christian view of love. The religious conception of justice, particularly as it was defined by the Old Testament prophets, is a moral conception that defines the nature of the interpersonal relationship between two or more units in a social system who are in an asymmetrical power relationship. In the name of justice the prophets of the Old Testament, the militant leaders of their day, argue that the moral relationship between the poor and the mighty is one governed by equity. Injustice is the condition of exploitation. Justice exists when power relationships are governed by universally defined privileges and responsibilities that do not permit power abuse. The concern for justice gives the articulators of Liberation Theology and other inclusive militant theologians a prophetic tone. Like the Old Testament prophets, particularly those who come from the lower class (e.g., Micah), like Mary in the Magnificat, the articulators of militant theology demand accountability from those in power, a concern for the poor and powerless.[21]

The second main value with which we are concerned, though in itself it may not have direct religious roots, is equality. Equality, in contrast to freedom, dominates the thinking of the lower class.[22] The idea of liberty, particularly as it developed in political discourses in the last century (e.g., J. S. Mill) stands in opposition to regulation and supports control by the powerful. Freedom, as conceptualized by Mill, serves best the interest of the powerful, rather than those seeking to improve conditions of social and economic ascendancy. It is equality that is thus central to the view of inclusive militant religious groups and their theology. Equality, not freedom, stands in alignment with the idea of justice, that is, against control by the powerful. It is equality that is antithetical to exploitation. Thus, a theology that seeks to support the rising poor in their struggle with their former exploiters is more likely to argue for equality, not only in the eyes of God in the hereafter, but as a temporal concern. Together with justice, it becomes central to their conception of morality and to their temporal future.

The last value that is central to militant inclusivists and arises from their class concerns is a commitment to the collectivity. What is significant from this point of view is not individual salvation or the concern for saving the individual or the return of the prodigal son. Instead the commitment is to the group. All features of individualism, which in itself is the product of the Protestant marriage to capitalism, are rejected in favor of collective interests. This commitment in Christian theologies reflecting the ascending classes, goes beyond the notion of 'agape', but it is important as a means by which upward mobility for a whole class of people is demanded and justified. To face

the power of the ruling class and oppose it, the ascending class needs to organize and present a united stand. It is only through collective action and voice that the power of the ruling class can be equaled by the ascending class.

EXCLUSIVE MILITANT

Just as the inclusive militant religions reflect their class position so do the exclusive militants. Frequently these religions are perceived as the 'militant right'. In contrast to the universalist militant religions, those associated in and supporting militant exclusivism reflect concern for their declining status. The exclusivists differ from the inclusivists in that they seek to 'return' to an earlier social and religious condition.[23] No doubt those who are part of this religious movement see the decline of a cherished culture, but they also see the economic and cultural basis of their earlier social status declining. In short they see the way of life in which, they believe, they held relatively higher status, in which their economic future was more assured because of their social position, a world in which their view and politics dominated, also declining. It is this feature of their existence that leads them to commit themselves to a religious view marked by both exclusivism and a past orientation.

The religious perspective of the retrenching class is thus one of sect-like characteristics. They are exclusive to the extent that they perceive religion – that is, one's view of God and what God wishes – to be expressed by their theology alone. A commitment to retrenchment reflects a sense of conflict arising out of the threat of loss of position and their response to this threat, which usually consists of creating a fence around beliefs or worldview. Opposition to the world of modernity and to its new social order is achieved by rejecting the legitimacy of any other perspective that opens the world of ideas and morality to new meaning. Take for instance Falwell's statement

> [F]or America to stay free we must come back to the only principles that God can honor: the dignity of life, the traditional family, decency, morality and so on.

But this can be achieved only through one religion; therefore it is his mission 'to bring the nation back to a moral standard so that we can stay free in order that we can evangelize the world'.[24]

Exclusivist militant religions are by and large past oriented. They see the world as a paradise lost, and the mission of religion is to bring world back to old values, to a world which 'was'. The central theme of the Christian right is 'return' not only to God, but also to a world in which values that supported these peoples' status were operative.

Their honor and social position were determined by these values, and thus to return to them includes a return to the previous social order.

For the most part the social values advocated by exclusivist religion, especially in the USA, place primacy on freedom rather than equality. Exclusivists do no advocate a utopian view of collective sharing, nor to change the system to one that supports the right of others to have equal claim or status and its prerogatives. They, and I am referring primarily to Christian religions, support the ideals of the past, particularly those that have been incorporated into Protestantism: individualism, freedom, love and personal charity as the guiding principle of interpersonal association. (This may not hold true to exclusivist religions dominated by Charismatic leaders, which are more likely to advocate duty and submission.) Unlike the inclusivists, exclusivist militants stress individualism, which supports the right and legitimacy of differentiation and separation. The exclusivist, for example, does not see poverty to be inherent in the social order, but in the individual, in his lack of commitment to work, and the absence of submission to God. Opposition by religious conservatives to collective action on poverty and civil rights has been clearly evident in Rokeach's work.[25] This commitment to individualism and the Protestant ethic is a value rooted in the past and has even been a part of the last century's 'social gospel' movement. Individualism and freedom stand in diametric opposition to the liberal movements that seek change. The retrenching militant religion is opposed to modernity not only because it sees this lifestyle rejecting traditional religious values, but also because it rejects the basis of individual rights in asserting equality over freedom. Instead of equality, then, the exclusive militant groups will emphasize freedom. Freedom, like individualism, supports the legitimacy of class and property differences. The free individual has the right to amass goods and services. 'Competition in business', Falwell says, 'is Biblical. Ambitious and successful business management is clearly outlined as a part of God's plan for His people'.[26] Competition and big business cannot exist unless they are supported by the 'right' of individual freedom.

Commitment to the individual and opposition to class-based action against poverty is diametrically opposed to the ideal of justice in the prophetic sense. The exclusivists pervert justice into vengeance and retribution against individuals; they are opposed to it as the ideal that legitimates the curbing of the power elites. Instead of justice, which is allied with equality, the militant advocates of one-sided love. Chandler, for instance, observes that '[T]he bellicose language of modern Fundamentalism is based on its paradoxical belief that aggression is the best expression of Christian love. . . . Christ saw love as emanating from the strength of domination and power rather than from weakness and effeminacy'.[27] But the importance of 'love' to this theology as a whole is that it supports and accords with both

individualism and freedom: individuals are free to give or withhold love, whereas collectivities promote equality by establishing justice.

It is true that through love one is able to commiserate, empathize, and thus respond to the needs of others. Precisely because of this developed sense of empathy and concern, primary emphasis is placed on treating affected individuals rather than upon preventing problems in the first place. The most common activities of Christian missionaries, for instance, are feeding and healing. But help given to others for the sake of love lacks dependability; it is capricious because it must come as a 'free will' or 'love' offering. Because it leads us to be concerned with the individual and his or her problems, such love detracts our attention from the social system as a whole. The type of love advocated by exclusivists lacks dependability; it is capricious because it is directed to those who are judged to be meritorious of love. Moreover, because it leads us to be concerned with the individual and his or her problem, it detracts our attention from the system as a whole, particularly if the solution to the problem lies in changing the social system. No clearer illustration of this plight can be seen than recent efforts to relieve hunger in Africa, which evinced great outpourings of love into systems so poorly designed (socially, economically, politically, technically) that it remains difficult to assess the benefits.

SUBMISSIVE RELIGIONS

In contrast to the militant religions, most American religions, particularly Christian religions, can be characterized as submissive. They are submissive to the extent that they do not challenge the authority of the state. For the most part, those religions which are submissive perceive their world in dual terms, reflecting the New Testament dicta of rendering to Caesar that which is his and to God that which is His. However, not all religions that in this paper I will consider submissive have similar attitudes and orientations to the state. Most Christian religions that advocate submission to the authority of the state see it as an integral part of their religious belief and justify it by the Caesar parable and other New Testament teachings, particularly those of St. Paul and St. Peter.[28]

There are others, albeit relatively few, whom I will also include in the submissive category, whose submission to the state, unlike the major denominations, is not based on theological doctrine, but is an accommodation to the political powerlessness associated with their minority status. Indeed, if political conditions were different, these religions would, instead, elect to establish a theocracy. This latter group, although in some respects similar to the militant religions discussed elsewhere, differs in the following important aspects. Their

theology does not reflect class interests and class consciousness in the Marxian sense, but reflects instead their political powerlessness. In response to their status they seek, instead of participation and confrontation, to withdraw from the larger society. Another and essential difference among the various submissive religions is their perception of and association with other religious groups. In this respect we need to distinguish between inclusivists, those advocating an almost ecumenical perspective, from the exclusivists.

Submissive-Inclusivist Religions

For the most part, mainline American religions are inclusivist-submissive. They are the religions of the bourgeois and thus reflect the interest of this class. This relationship is also observed by Neibuhr who writes: 'The purely moralistic approach of the modern Church [i.e. American denominations] to politics is really a religio-moral version of *laissez-faire* economics'.[29] These class-based interests are reflected in the submissive-inclusivist religions' theology and are manifest in two major value structures – the supremacy of the state and conservatism. The first is advocated as the separation of church and state and the latter as an opposition to change, an advocacy of the golden mean, and an emphasis on decorum and respectability. These values, although justified on the basis of theology, are not derived from the group's conception of the sacred, but are imposed on religion and its theology by a particular form of class interests. To the extent that the bourgeois influenced theology and religiously supported values are accepted and supported by the majority of this nation's population, and, most important, by those in power, we may therefore refer to it as the 'dominant theology'. More recently, however, the old bourgeois is giving way to the New Class, a social class consisting of those in a variety of white-collar occupations and the professions.[30] Consequently, many churches now, being influenced by the *Weltanschauungen* of this group, have and continue to modify their theology. In the following pages I will outline the way these 'religious' values reflect bourgeois class interests by stressing the ideals of submissiveness and universalism.

Church and State

Perhaps the single most significant political characteristic of the inclusivist-submissive religions is the advocacy of the separation of church and state – with the latter to have primacy in matters of this world. Unlike the militant religions or the submissive exclusivist religions, to be discussed latter, submissive inclusivist religions have followed an example set by St. Paul – who considered the welfare and the survival of the church and the interests of constituent members of

the church ahead of theology.[31] Thus, unlike the militant religions the submissive-inclusive religions do not posit any authority, at least in regards to this worldly affairs, to be superordinate over the state. Accepting the supremacy of the state, these religions echo bourgeois interests and thereby eliminate possible conflict of interest between themselves and their adherents. Submission to the state is the church's public declaration of support of the constituent members' class interests. Their position is, that economic and political affairs are not governed by religious moral concerns, particularly those enunciated in the Old Testament. Salvation becomes the primary, if not the sole, concern of religion, and its achievement is independent of one's behavior in the business world.[32] Although the church may give up some of its independence, at the same time, submission to the state's power brings the following rewards: it grants the churches exemptions from economic constraints placed on other institutions (i.e., taxation) as well as political protection.

The church's willingness to relinquish its control over this world and its unconditional surrender to Caesar is not new. It was strongly advocated by St Paul. His intent, as I proposed elsewhere, was to reduce the hostility and punitiveness experienced by the early Christians.[33] But it was not until the rise of the bourgeoisie that this separation, at least in its present form, achieved theological importance. The separation of the domains of the church and state, at least in the USA, has been argued to be the consequence of religious pluralism. No doubt, religious pluralism and privatization, the religious form of political and entrepreneurial individualism, may have contributed to it. However, the *raison d'etre* was that the state, and only the state, as a rational form of government, rather than the church or business themselves, could best protect the ideals of private property while at the same time granting individuals freedom from the church's attempts to subjugate and control the individual.[34] The state doesn't have to support the religious ideal of particularism and could instead be pragmatic – i.e., be concerned only with what is good for business. Unlike religion, the state, moreover, is less likely to change its political-economic pragmatism to become a prophet-like moral arbiter.[35]

Social Values: Status Quo – The opposition to change

Although militant religions reflect the diverse interests of their constituent members, they share one common feature: They seek social change and consider themselves, moreover, to be in a struggle against the existing social order. In contrast, the religions of the bourgeois seek to retain the existing social order in which the members of the class occupy high status and accompanying power. Thus those social conditions that are most likely to reduce strife and

conflict and that are perceived by the bourgeois as the instigators of change, and which historically are associated with conditions detrimental to private property, the *sine qua non* of bourgeois life, are elevated to become religious and moral values. I propose that the dominant values in submissive/inclusivist religions include those that retard change and maintain the existing social order. Clergy in the mainline religions will, for instance, emphasize the ideals of the Christian notion of peace (particularly the Christmas theme) and the love of fellow man – values which enhance the status quo. It is this characteristic which endows religions with the aura of political conservatism.[36]

Love and Charity

Among the dominant values in the mainline religions that reflect what generally are considered to be the fundamental moral principles of Christianity enunciated in the New Testament, are above all, the ideals of love and charity. These two ideals are clearly interdependent. In this paper, I propose that the reason these values have gained predominance in the bourgeois religion, is precisely because they reflect bourgeois interests. It is not my wish to propose that both love and charity were absent from Christianity prior to the advent of capitalism, particularly in its bourgeois form, but rather, that love of the individual and the emphasis on personal giving to others, as individuals, is now given greater importance than before. The reason is that both love and charity support the ideals of private property and the maintenance of the status quo.

Reinhold Neibuhr, perhaps the most eloquent spokesman for Protestantism perceives love to be the infrastructure not only of Christian Ethics but also the ideal foundation for law. 'The problem of politics and economics' he writes, 'is the problem of justice'.[37] These areas because of their competitiveness are least likely to respond to the Christian ideal of love. But from his perspective,

> the law of love is involved in all approximations of justice, not only as the source of the norms of justice, but as the ultimate perspective by which their limitations are discovered.

Moreover Niehbur proposes

> The principles of equal justice are the approximations of the law of love in the kind of imperfect world which we know and not principles which belong to a world of transcendent perfection. Equality has no place in such a perfect world because this principle of equality presupposes competition of life and *seeks to prevent this competition* from resulting in exploitation, by advancing and defending the claims of one life with equal *force* against every other life. Since the law of love demands that all life be affirmed, the principle

> that all conflicting claims of life be equally affirmed is a logical approximation of the law of love in a *world in which conflict is inevitable*. (Emphasis ours.)[38]

Although Niebuhr recognizes that in the past both religion and its morals served class interest, he proposes that the law of love transcends such previous interests. But is love a universal moral principle because it eliminates the function of corecion and fear? Or, does it under the guise of universalism serve a new master – the bourgeoise? It is my contention that the law of love and associated value of charity reflects the interest of the ruling class and is hence part of its ideological system. That love as a mechanism of appeasement, accommodation and means of elimination of conflict inherent in the bourgeois economic and political system is the central mean for transvaluation.

Love, as I have elaborated elsewhere reinforces individualism as a value.[39] Similarly, charity, at least the Christian notion of it, is defined as the voluntary giving of private property, and this view of charity helps to maintain the social and political status quo. Durkheim, for instance, observes that the political and economic theories of his time (and perhaps ours too) recommend 'as a remedy for the evils suffered by present societies, a greater development of charitable and provident institutions (not only private, but public).[40] Moreover, Durkheim recommends that establishing welfare projects alongside of economic life does not bind the recipient of charity to public life. In his view 'charity organizes nothing. It maintains the *status quo*; it can attenuate the individual suffering that this lack of organization engenders'.[41]

Charity, as I interpret Durkheim's argument, changes nothing. Charity fosters the idea that the system is fine and therefore there is no need to be concerned with its condition. Poverty reflects merely the unfortunate condition of a few individuals, and private charities and individual contributions will ameliorate their condition.[42] It is the function of religion, in this perspective, to encourage private charity, and by so doing to discourage critical evaluation of the system which made charity necessary in the first place. Another effect of charity is that it reinforces the legitimacy of private property. The underlying idea in charity is that each person, out of empathy, will freely give from one's own property. In short, charity reinforces the legitimacy of personal and private property by stressing that it is the right of an individual because of his own choice to give or not to give, to control one's own property even when such giving or withdrawal can affect another's life.[43] Charity reinforces the bourgeois values of personal freedom in that it is an act of free will: it cannot be legislated, it must be an act of love.[44]

Love and charity are the mechanisms by which the New Testament ideal of *agape* is maintained in the church, and by stressing this value

the church becomes symbolically an American ideal – a gemeinschaft community. In a world governed by rational and contractual relationships, the church remains, symbolically at least, the Christian community – an association of individuals founded not on rational principles expressed as legal obligations, but on empathy and love.

The emphasis on love and charity has arisen as a consequence of industrialism and reflects the interests of the bourgeois. It serves to replace the medieval forms of relationships based on superordination and subordination and the principle of *noblesse oblige* with 'contractual' relationships reflecting the new modes of production. In the earlier system interpersonal relationships were based on reciprocal obligations associated with the medieval mode of production and served to legitimate exploitation as a God-ordained duty and loyalty to the collectivity and its leaders. To facilitate and legitimate exploitation in the modern productive system, duty has been replaced by individual freedom and contract. Evangelists who in the past have preached the gospel of duty and loyalty have now added and sometimes exchanged it for the themes in the entreprenurial ideology of self-dependence and self-responsibility.[45] The lower classes, according to this ideology as preached by the Methodists clergy serving the working classes, no longer owe loyalty to the superior classes, but only to themselves. At the same time they also can no longer seek or expect relief from the upper classes.[46] Yet the earlier system, even though it was based on subservience, had elements of close and personal 'gemeinschaft' like relationships. For the most part this form of relationship gave way to impersonal relationships of contract which bring about the subordination to a principle.[47] Duties and obligations governed by personal reciprocity (like gift giving etc.) have been replaced by associations governed by free market forces. Under such conditions it has become very important that primary associations, in a gemeinschaft-like community, be preserved. Since this cannot occur in the business community, the church has remained the last bastion of *gemeinschaft* associations. It is in this sense that Spencer, the spokesman of the bourgeois, supports love and particularly charity because they ennoble the giver.

Respectability and Decorum

The relationship between membership in a denomination and respectability, particularly in the USA, has been observed by Weber.[48] However, not all religions serve this function, that is, to endow the member with middle class respectability. Sects with an emphasis on non-rational mode of worship and orthodox beliefs, especially when there is an additional emphasis on the experiential dimension of religiosity do not endow its members with the aura of bourgeois respectability.

A fundamental characteristic of bourgeois religion is its commitment to orderliness, the absence of emotional display and above all else the display of rationality. I will argue that the emphasis given to decorum and the elimination of the experiential religiosity dimension in the major denominations reflects, as Weber argued, a commitment to rationality associated with modernity. No doubt this is true. However, were anti-sectarianism and anti-experientialism simply reflections of modern rationality, it would not explain why contrary behavior is assumed to be indicative of lower class disrespectability. To pray loudly, to shout amens, to speak in tongues, brands an individual and the church which permits its practices as reflecting a lower class and hence disreputable position. Sklare, points out that Orthodox Jews seeking middle class respectability in the United States had to change their sect-like orthodox religion practiced in Eastern Europe to one reflecting the middle class spirit. He writes

> . . . since traditional Jewish worship is *actually* characterized by so many patterns which are, according to American norms, typed as being lower-class, the identification of Orthodoxy and social inferiority has been pronounced.

The changes required to elevate the religion to respectability were

> (1) changes in the status of *women*, (2) introduction of *decorum* at services, and (3) 'reduction' of '*commercialism*' during worship.[49]

Bourgeois concern for respectability is more than the mere reflection of modernity. It has its roots in and reflects an attempt at incorporating the values and behavior that characterized the nobility. To be noble, even in today's view, is to have manners, that is, to be civilized.

This process, Cuddihy points out, began when the coarse feudal baron was being refined into a gentleman. It continued in the nineteenth century as the

> peasant or the 'young man from the provinces' comes to Paris or London or Dublin: his 'urbanization process' requires urbanity, his entry into civil society civility. For the first time, perhaps, he must differentiate relations in private from relations in public places.[50]

The age of civilization as Boulding remarks, is 'characterized by the elaborate integrative systems of religion, politeness, morals, and manners'.[51]

Moreover, decorum is also an expression of stability, non-militancy and predictability. In short, the practice of etiquette and manners marks the individual as belonging to a particular status, and hence having the right to associate with his peers. The acquisition of etiquette enhanced the mobility of the former tradesman into a higher bourgeois status. Introduction of civility and morality was perhaps equally as central in Methodist teachings as was theology during its rise

in industrializing England. It was the inclusion of new moral and ethical standards by which the working class Methodists sought to prove their civility and claim the right to enter the bourgeoise.[52]

An over-emphasis on otherworldliness and above all on piety, as Weber has already argued, is contrary to the bourgeois emphasis on this-worldly rationality. The 'other world', the world of salvation and emotion should be a private matter, but the affairs of this world are to be governed by rationality and must be predictable and controllable. Symbolically this is manifest through etiquette and decorum. To become civil is to acquire private/public differentiation.

Opposition to Extremism

Extremism, rebellion and revolution are closely associated. Once the bourgeoisie has become the dominant class, anything which encourages rebellion is to be shunned. Thus, 'prophetic' religions and charismatic clergy who, like Old Testament prophets, are zealous advocates of causes are considered undesirable and unacceptable. Niebuhr comments

> [A] prophetic religion which tries to reestablish itself in a new day without appropriating what was true in the Age of Reason will be inadequate for the moral problems which face our generation.[53]

Instead, the bourgeois prefer 'cultic' religions with a 'priestly' clergy whose primary concerns are ritual and orderly prayer. Bourgeois religion discourages zealousness and the agitation of behavior or spirit. All forms of excessiveness, be it in prayer or in political views, is not acceptable. The latter is best expressed by Dr. Mathews, a spokesman for the Evangelical movement, 'The Christian principle of love applied to economic groups stands over against revolutionary coercion'.[54] *Aura medium* is the key slogan – the golden middle road a point of view which stresses neither individualism nor collectivity, freedom nor equality, love nor justice, but a little bit of each. It is this bourgeois concern which led to value universalism, which is evidenced in one of the characteristics of bourgeois religion – privatization – namely the legitimacy of combining divergent beliefs and points of view.[55] It is a form of value cooptation through which the aggressive tendencies of the dialectical process of change are reduced – perhaps even eliminated.

Religious extremism which includes an overemphasis on particularism, that is, that a particular belief is the sole bearer of the truth, can also be seen as a divisive force. A consequence of bourgeois concern for stability, I propose, was religious ecumenism, that is, according all religions (at least those that also advocate and practice the bourgeois values) equal status as legitimators and bestowers of respectability.[56] The ideal perspective as Wuthnow suggests reflects the words of the

hymn 'One in hope and doctrine, one in charity'.[57] American denominational ecumenism stressed the ideals of common faith in God, ethical commitment to goodness and love and a charity. This views association with the bourgeise values is seen by one of its champions John D. Rockefeller Jr. In addressing an audience in New York City, Wuthnow reports he 'appeared to express a prevailing sentiment when he envisioned a truly universal church that would 'see all denominational emphasis set aside'.[58]

I am not suggesting here that religions have given up their view of their own theological superiority. In spite of public pronouncements of ecumenism, each religion believes itself to be superior to others. However, such conceptions of superiority have been limited to matters of salvation. But in regard to religion, as enunciators of morals and guides toward interpersonal relationships, they are perceived to be functionally equivalent.[59] For instance, many Christians will accept Judaism's moral teachings (ten commandments etc.) to have equal validity to Christian teachings, but only the latter have the true approach to God and thus assures salvation. This form of ecumenism, or perhaps more accurately called religious rational-pragmatism, is alluded to by Weber. Among Protestants, Weber proposes, intense piety has not interfered with rational business decisions, so that 'Fredric William I tolerated the Mennonites as indispensable to industry, in spite of their absolute refusal to perform military service'.[60] In the USA this form of bourgeois religious ecumenism is a form of deism also known as Civil Religion.

The 'New Class'

While traditional bourgeois entrepenurial values are still the dominant ones in most denominations there are new influences that challenge the old moral-religious values. These arise out of the 'New Class' of bourgeois-professional interests which stands in a dialectical relationship with the old religious values. For the most part the New Class places collective responsibility ahead of bourgeois individualism, prophetic moralism ahead of faith and rights ahead of duties. These changes are subsumed under privatization and universalism and give the appearance of 'religious liberalism'.

It is not my intent here to describe this New Class; suffice it to say that they constitute by and large the highly educated professional group.[61] They differ from the old bourgeois in that their social position is not based on ownership of property but on their professional status which is determined by training and education. To the extent that the New Class' position is based on knowledge and education they also constitute the New Intelligentsia, but unlike the old one, described by Mannheim, they are not a free floating intelligentsia but a class-based one. This class' religious values reflect

the transition from the earlier capitalist society to a post industrial one. This class' religious views can be labelled as prophetic-moralism, which places primacy on the collectivity's duties to the individual, moral privatization and moral universalism. It is important to note that, on the one hand, by expanding the definition of morals from purely individual obligations also to include collective ones, they induce a closer tie between religion, representing biblical prophetic moral teachings, and the state. On the other hand, they continue to stress the state's political independence from the church. In order to understand this seeming paradoxical relationship let us now turn to the New Class' religious values.

Prophetic-moralism

In describing the New Class' social conscience, Hargrove writes

> The New Class is, at least in economic matters, populist. Members do not think it appropriate to seek personal advancement in ways that will disadvantage others; their ideal is not the zero-sum game of cutthroat competition but rather the double-sum game that assumes an ever growing affluence that can be extended to others without cost to themselves and that can allow their own increase without cost to others.[62]

The New Class' religious perspective makes acts, that is moral-ethical behavior, more important than faith. Morality for this social class, unlike the earlier bourgeois class, is not exclusively seen as an individual's but also as the collectivity's action in respect to the allocation of rights and justice to all. The function of religion and the church is to legitimate these moral concerns and become the *avant garde* of the new moral stress. Both the theme of morality and the stress on the collectivity rather than the individual gives the New Class' religion the aura of the Old Testament prophetic teaching. In this religion's perspective it is not enough that individuals should be moral but it is equally important that the collectivity, as a *sui generis* entity, also be moral. Similarly, the New Class perceives sin to be not only an act of an individual but also as the property of the whole. This perspective is quite evident in Fowler's conceptualization of level of faith.[63] It seems to be his assumption that faith development is *ipso facto* moral development, that is, while the achievement of highest level of faith is independent of belief in a specific religious conception of a deity, it is dependent on one's acceptance of the universal principle of justice.

Privatization and Universalism

Whereas the older bourgeois religions have stressed individualism,[64] the theological point of view of the New Class is privatization. We need

to distinguish between these two concepts. Traditional Protestant individualism while proposing that all individuals, on their own, have a personal relationship with Christ and God nonetheless proposes that this relationship is also contingent on an acceptance of a collective's moral point of view and a common and prescribed theology. In contrast, the New Class' religion redefines individualism to include the right of selection and interpretation of theology. The meaning and content of belief should be the function of each individual's own endeavor.[65] At the same time, the developmental level and the adequacy of one's faith is reflected not in fervency of prayer and declaration of belief, but in the universality of one's moral interpersonal relationship.[66] The move thus is from 'prescriptive certainty' to 'interpretative relativism', that is, from conservatism to liberalism.

What brought about this change? The trend toward liberalism, in Wuthnow's view, is primarily due to increased levels of education. The fact cannot be attested that those with higher education are also theologically more liberal, that is, they are more likely to emphasize a moral theology.[67] However, we would be amiss were we to seek the answer in increased education alone. We must consider the possibility that increased education and liberalism are epiphenomena of changes in the mode of production which then has a direct bearing on the relations of production. Changes in the productive system may have produced new realities between super and subordinates, and these should have had a direct impact on the perception and definition of justice and morality.

Changes in technology have produced concomitant changes in the mode of production – from earlier to latter forms of capitalism, that is from private ownership to centralization, both of production and distribution of goods and services. These changes themselves are part of the changes in technological levels that have also brought an increased need of expertise. In short, technological change has a variety of ways in which it impacts society. First, it increases levels of surplus which then, according to Lenski will also decrease levels of inequality.[68] Second, we accept it as maxim that changes in technology will alter both social values and the nature of consciousness. Lenski writes 'inequalities in power and privilege seem usually somewhat *less* pronounced in mature industrial societies than in agrarian'. In short, *the appearance of mature industrial societies marks the first significant reversal in the age-old* evolutionary trend toward ever increasing inequality. The greater sharing of surplus, Lenski proposes, is due to the ever increasing interdependence between the superordinate (owner or manager) and the experts of production and distribution. It is this reality, he contends, that had a direct impact on 'the rise and spread of the *new democratic ideology* which asserts that the state belongs to the people'.[70] Such changes, it seems, had to impact on religion by democratizing it. Religious democracy has two components. First, it is

evident in the breakdown of the separation between the religious elite and laity.[71] Second, it is evident in an emphasis on religious morals as an expression of its concern for the 'common man'. More importantly, just as political democratization has changed the definition of the state, religious democratization has changed the concept of the church. In short, the church is now defined as the instrument in the service of the people whose task is prophetic advocay of the new conception of morality.[72]

In sum, submissive inclusivist religions reflect the occupational and technological changes this country in undergoing. The old bourgeois mode of production and its ideology is changing, and as Wuthnow has observed, these changes are reflected in the dominations' liberal-conservative schisms.[73] These different perspectives, the liberal and conservative, exist simultaneously not only in the same denomination, but also in the same church. The new views while having their roots in the earlier views of the bourgeoisie, and hence are similar to them in some respect, but far more moderate. In some ways they reflect the prophetic tones of the militant inclusivist religions. Let us now turn to the next religious category – the submissive exclusive religions.

Submissive-exclusive religions

In contrast to the other forms of religions discussed above, the values often found among the submissive-exclusive religions neither reflect nor arise out of a particular social class – at least in the Marxian sense.[74] They do constitute, however, a different class – the alienated class. I shall include in this category those religions whose members have become alienated and estranged in the past and maintain and perpetuate their alienation as well as those whose members' present day disenchantment led to the formation of new religions. For the most part the religions which fall into this category consist of Christian communes and sects particularly those which by Wilson's description are 'Conversionist' and 'Introversionist'.[75] Zablocki, for instance, found that it 'was not loss of status but loss of self' a loss of sense of order that led people to join communes, including religious ones.[76]

Quite frequently the submissive-inclusive religions resemble monastic communities. However, to the extent that these religious groups reject the dominant social values and substitute their own, they are in Merton's terms rebellious. They are alienated to the extent that they experience a loss of meaning and that they are unable to accept or identify themselves with existing institutions including religions. The following interview excerpts are good examples of this loss of meaning.

> I felt good about life in general, but sensed that something was missing.

> Something was lacking. What was important in life was not being confronted.
> Before I came here, it was like living in a dessert. No one knew I was alive and no one cared.[77]

These religious groups are submissive only to the extent that they do not challenge the power of the state. However, their's is not a true submission in the sense that they do not accept the state's right to have primacy in this-worldy affairs. Rather, their submission is a withdrawal from a world from which they feel estranged. Instead of challenging the secular power and their ideology, members of these faiths frequently withdraw from the secular world over which they have no power and control. They seek to create their own world, one that is set apart from others around them, in which they can participate in a way of life they consider appropriate, but which frequently is in conflict with the rest of society. They see the secular world as corrupt and committed to wealth rather than salvation. This view is frequently expressed as opposition to the American value of success and competition is well illustrated the following comment by a commune member

> I got good marks in school; always on the honor roll. One day I went to the principal's office and told him I didn't want to be on the honor roll any more.[78]

Zablocki's survey of values show that respondents in communes selected loving and inner harmony as the most important values and relegated ambition and social recognition as least desired values. Their primary commitment is to their community – in which love and brotherhood govern interpersonal relationships. Their separation from the world at large can be inferred from the fact that justice in their eyes was a secondary value.[79] This view may have its roots in the teachings of St. John, who declared

> Do not love the world or the things in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of live, is not of the Father, but is of the world.[80]

Social Class and Ideology

Unlike the other religions whose values reflect the social class of their constituents, the values of submissive-exclusive religions may be perceived as being contra class – if by class we mean an association of individuals who share the same position in a hierarchy of power, privilege and prestige. Indeed, quite often the selection of an occupation is based on communal tradition. Yet, in spite of sharing the same occupation and class, it is religion and not class which becomes

the infrastructure of their collective or individual consciousness. Thus, in opposition to Marx's assumption, it is not their position in the mode of production which determines their consciousness or the nature of interpersonal relationships, but instead their ideology is a rebellion or a 'reaction formation' against existing class-based ideologies. They reflect Merton's rebellion as a mode of adaptation to anomie.[81]

As a rule submissive-exclusive religions deny the legitimacy of class system and its associated system of stratification altogether. Justice, in their Biblical interpretation, is the absence of stratification and the presence of equality among the brotherhood of believers. Injustice is the opposite, it is the use of power over another for personal gain. In their view, the secular world is dominated by injustice and corruption. Justice is also couched in terms of distributive justice, the duty of each for the welfare of all. Kanter,[82] describing the conception of brotherhood in utopian, communities writes

> In order to bring about such harmony, utopians believe that it is necessary to remove the 'artificial' barriers between people that cause competition, jealousy, conflict, and tension, and prevent 'natural' relationships. Utopian communities attempt to erase these barriers by substituting for individual possession community of property, of work, of lovers, or families.

While nonreligious and religious communes seek to establish ideal communities they do so for different reasons. The first seek to re-establish the 'natural' community as perceived by the eighteenth century philosophes, i.e. as unspoiled by the undesirable features of civilization. The latter seek to carry out their view of God's will to establish a sinnless society. Both religious and non-religious utopian communities share this view: modernity with its stress on material possessions and competition is the root for the loss of the good, gemeinschaft-like, community. The central aim in establishing religious communes is to create a community of brotherhood in the Biblical sense, that is, each individual becomes the other's 'brother's keeper', and sinlessness is facilitated by removing temptation, and in this sense, the lust for money. While for members of the non-religious utopian communities brotherhood is an end in itself, for those in religious communes the end is salvation. But to achieve salvation one must follow the righteous path, a way of life which is governed by a total and comprehensive value system in which there is little or no room for a secular perspective.[83] This quite evident among the Hutterites who

> take enormous pains to train their children and themselves in egalitarian patterns and in the repression of self-seeking and other

> individuating tendencies. Likewise they seek to repress all destructive forms of social cleavage.[84]

Zablocki reports that among the Alabama Avenue Charismatic movement the

> autonomy of individual personality was not valued at Alabama Avenue. On the contrary, it was seen as an obstacle to the personal emptiness needed for the emergence of Christ's personality within oneself. It was felt that this emptiness could be cultivated through the sharing of emotional lives and goods. This led to an initial focus on developing deep relationships among members of the commune. At times these relationships became so intense that the personalities of some seemed to melt into those of others.[85]

Submission to the group

Submission to authority is, however, an important feature of their values and theology, particularly submission to the will of the leader and, more importantly, to the collectivity. The leader legitimates his authority through charisma and in most instances claims the right to power by virtue of his relationship with the supernatural. For this reason, leaders claim that each person owes total allegiance and unquestioned loyalty to him. Questioning the authority of the leader is tantamount to questioning God. 'The primary goal' writes Zablocki

> of this commune [Christian Ranch] was to overcome pride and submit to the will of the in-dwelling Holy Spirit . . . The Supreme value of obedience was also reflected in the commune's child rearing philosophy. Children were raised strictly with the intention of 'breaking the spirit' and inculcating the proper Christian submissiveness and willingness to subordinate individual ego to the collectivity.[86]

In short, the values of this group are similar to the militant inclusivists, namely, they are based on an emphasis on the collective, equality and justice. These religions in their own way are in some respects militant. They differ, however, from those we designated as militants in that they are aware of their powerlessness vis a vis the larger secular world and for this reason they seek to withdraw from it. Yet, in spite of their withdrawal they nonetheless manifest militant characteristics. I mean by this that they act aggressively and in an authoritarian manner within their own community towards the members of their own community. The ideal-typical form of this relationship is best examplified in the Bruderhoff with such practices as shunning and public chastisement.

Elitism and caste system

The idea of a chosen people, as for instance being a nation of priests, is an integral part of the perspective of submissive-exclusive religions. Their separation from other is in part rooted in their elite self-image: that is, they see themselves as the chosen ones who have a particular relationship with the deity and therefore they alone will merit salvation. This self-conception becomes a fundamental reason justifying separation from others. Their relationship with others assumes caste-like characteristics. This includes the idea for the need to separate their sacred and pure selves from the impure others. This priestly conception of self necessitates separation in order that they may keep themselves apart and free from contamination. Contamination and separation are key conceptions which affect their relationship with the world. The form of stratification based on religion stressing the separation of the holy from the profane, the meritorious from those without merit, the chosen from the not chosen, and the ritually clean from the unclean is the caste – not unlike that in India. Such an emphasis on ritual cleanliness not only keeps the group separate from the larger world but keeps them from proselytizing.

Wilson[87], describing the Old Colony Mennonites writes

> To maintain group purity, the Old Colony Mennonites segregated themselves vicinally, provided their own education, practiced endogamy, allowed few visitors, made many activities communal, and restricted contact with the outside world . . .

The special relationship that Mennonites have with God was based on their view that they are God's suffering remnant. Their story included the idea of their rejection, suffering and persecution and the idea of faithfulness to the heavenly vision of the 'unspotted and unblemished people'.[88] While not all religions which are part of submissive-exclusivist' group lay equal stress on elitism, such a view is necessary to legitimate and justify their stress on separation.

CONCLUSION: JUSTICE AND LOVE

In this paper we sought to demonstrate the interrelationship of class-based ideology and religious beliefs. We proposed a Marxian-Durkheimian view. Religion, as a collective representation, reflects a moral point of view which specifies the point of view that should guide interpersonal relationship. This analysis led me to postulate the existence of four types of religious perspectives – each reflecting a particular class consciousness. Central in these ideologies are perspectives based on love and justice as moral infrastructures.

The commitment to 'love', particularly as it is defined in Protestantism, is a legacy of the sociopolitical conditions of the early

Christians, when access to effective political participation was essentially nil. But love, and all that it implies, enhances conservative ideology. In the name of Christian love, we place the burden of welfare on the individual and on the individual's emotional response. Love does not challenge the system that makes doing charity necessary in the first place. It is this value that characterizes submissive religions and is at once perverted and exalted by exclusive militarism. At most, love ties one individual to another; it demands no responsibility to or from the collective.

Justice, by contrast, is most often associated with social change. It is this value by which religions claim the right to reflect upon and criticize the ruling power. The problem that faces religion in the West is its overemphasis on the ideal of love and, with it, 'saving' individuals rather than a commitment to justice and significant social and economic issues. Poverty and attendant social problems are moral issues that should not, and from a sociological point of view, cannot be relegated to the free will offerings of individuals. They are problems of injustice. If we love one another, we must thus seek justice for one another. Even more, however, true love is founded upon justice; so I read in Bereshit Rabah: When God decided to create the world, He was contemplating whether He should create the world based on justice or on mercy. Were He to create the world only with justice, the Angels argued, who could withstand the purity and rigidity of that state alone? On the other hand, were He to create the world with only love and mercy, then no order would be possible. Therefore, He decided to create the world with justice tempered by mercy. Of the two thus justice is still considered to be the foundation of the social system.

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NOTES

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24. R. C. Chandler, 'The wicked shall not bear rule', in Bromley and Schupe, *New Christian Politics*, Macon, Ga., Mercer University Press, 1984, pp. 41–62.

25. Rokeach, *op. cit.*

26. Chandler, *op. cit.*, p. 49.

27. Falwell's view is that 'Christ was not a lamb, but a ram'. *Ibid.*, p. 46. Similarly, Billy Sunday is quoted to have said: 'Lord, save us from off-handed, flabby-cheeked, brittle-boned, weak-kneed, thin-skinned, pliable, plastic, effeminate, ossified, three-karat Christianity'. Hofstadter *op. cit.*, p. 119.

28. *The Holy Bible*, King James version, Paul: 13 and Peter: 2. I must enter here the following caveat. For the most part when we think about major denominations in the USA we include the Catholic Church. The Catholic Church in the USA has assumed enough Protestant-like attitudes to give it the appearance of a denomination, rather than the ecclesia that it is. Still, when it comes to submission to the state the Catholic Church differs from Protestant denominations. Given the church's history as a political power, it still harbors images of political dominance. (Perhaps this is well exemplified in its attitude towards political figures who support the right to abortion.) In spite of its low status beginnings, the Catholic Church has for a long time existed as a political power in its own right. Not so with Protestants, who often had to rely for protection on military leaders (as in the case of Luther) which in turn has inculcated a submissive attitude.

29. Reinhold Niebuhr, *An Interretation of Christian Ethics*, New York, Harper Brothers, 1935.

30. B. Ehrenreich and J. Ehrenreich, 'The new left: a case study in professional managerial class radicalism', *Radical America*, 1977, pp. 7–22; Alvin Gouldner, *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class*, New York, Seabury Press, 1979; B. Bruce-Biggs, *The New Class?*, New York, McGraw Hill, 1973, and B. Hargrove, *The Emerging*

New Class: Implications for Church and Society, New York, The Pilgrim Press, 1986.

31. E. Schoenfeld, *op. cit.*, 1989.

32. It is not accidental that Luther would have liked to exclude James from the New Testament, because James stressed acts as equally important to faith in matters of salvation. Among all the apostles, James is closest, both in tone and content, to the Old Testament prophets.

33. E. Schoenfeld, *op. cit.*, 1989.

34. E. Durkheim, *Moral Education*, (Wilkson and Schnurer trans.) New York, The Free Press, 1961.

35. It is precisely this struggle that we now observe in regard to abortion in the USA.

36. Religious conservatism is fostered not only by the churches' historical dependence on the ruling and wealthy classes but also by their emphasis on the belief in eternal and immutable truths. It is obvious that when one holds a point of view that states that all truth has already been revealed there is little, if any, room for change. Indeed, change may be viewed as blasphemous to the revealed truth. It is not our intent here to elaborate, merely to note, this complex relationship.

37. R. Niebuhr, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

38. *Ibid.*, p. 149.

39. E. Schoenfeld, *op. cit.*, 1974.

40. E. Durkheim, *Socialism*, (W. D. Halls trans.) New York, Collier Books, 1962.

41. *Ibid.*

42. For an in depth treatment of Durkheim's view of charity see E. Schoenfeld and S. Mestrovic, 'Durkheim's concept of justice and its relationship to social solidarity', *Sociological Analysis*, 1989, pp. 236–45.

43. Although charity in some instances may assume the characteristic of duty (in the Old Testament sense) but for the most part, charitable giving is encouraged by stressing empathy and love.

44. It is not accidental that both former president Reagan and President Bush who are both advocates of modern laissez faire economic philosophy stress voluntarism as a primary means by which to ameliorate economic and social problems.

45. Some of this is developed in E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, New York, Vintage Books, 1966.

46. For an excellent analysis of the rise of the entrepreneurial ideology and the legitimation of working class exploitation see R. Bendix, *Work and Authority in Industry*, New York, Harper Torchbooks, 1956, particularly chapters 1 and 2 and Thompson, *op. cit.*

47. G. Simmel, *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*, (K. H. Wolff trans.), Glencoe Ill., The Free Press, 1950.

48. M. Weber, 'The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism', in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, (Gerth and Mills trans.), New York, Oxford University Press, 1946, pp. 302–22.

49. M. Sklare, *Conservative Judaism: An American Religious Movement*, Glencoe Ill., The Free Press, 1955, p. 85.

50. J. M. Cuddihy, *The Ordeal of Civility: Freud, Marx, Lévi-Strauss and the Jewish Struggle with Modernity*, New York, Basic Books, 1974, p. 12.

51. *Ibid.*

52. Thompson, *op. cit.*

53. Niebuhr, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

54. *Ibid.*, p. 175.

55. S. Hart, 'Privatization in American Religion and society', *Sociological Analysis*, 1987, pp. 319–34.

56. One of the best early examples of the idea of functional equivalence is G. E. Lessing, *Nathan der Weise*, Boston, D. C. Heath, 1894.

57. R. Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II*, Princeton N.J., Princeton University Press, 1988, p. 80.

58. *Ibid.*

59. See Herberg's thesis on civil religion. In it Herberg proposes the existence of a non-denominational belief which accords Protestantism, Catholicism and Judaism equal status. W. Herberg, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*, New York, Anchor Books, 1960.

60. Weber, *op. cit.*, 1958, p. 44.

61. Hargrove lists them as 'engineers, managers, college faculty, accountants and auditors, government officials, administrators, inspectors, editors, reporters, and persons in social, recreational

and religious organizations other than clergy'. Hargrove *op. cit.*, p. 21. Recently questions have been raised whether this educated white collar group constitutes a social class in the Marxian sense. (S. Brint, 'New-class and cumulative trend explanation of the liberal views of professionals, *American Journal of Sociology*, 1984, pp. 30–71). Although it may be true that members of occupations who are assumed to constitute this 'New Class' may have as yet not developed a consciousness, at least, have not yet articulated it, nonetheless, data presented by Wuthnow (1988, *op. cit.*) and Brint (*op. cit.*) show the existence of ideological diversities between this group and the old bourgeoisie.

62. Hargrove, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

63. J. W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, San Francisco, Harper and Row, 1981.

64. N. S. Abercombie, S. Hill, and B. S. Turner, *Sovereign Individuals of Capitalism*. London, Verso, 1986.

65. Hart, *op. cit.*, and T. Luckman, *The Invisible Religion*, New York, Macmillan, 1967.

66. I am suggesting that it is the New Class' point of view which has affected the rise of ecumenism.

67. Wuthnow, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

68. G. Lenski, *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification*, New York McGraw-Hill, 1966, p. 85.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 308.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 317.

71. I am referring to the vernacularization of prayers, the breakdown of sexual barriers.

72. It is impossible to give an adequate and in-depth analysis of the religion of the New Class in this short space. However see Hargrove, *op. cit.*

73. Wuthnow, *op. cit.*, 1988.

74. Although, in a Marxist sense, most members of any of these religious communities should be considered as members of the same class because they share the same occupations and thus stand in the same position in the process of production (R. B. Kanter, *Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1972).

75. J. Wilson, *Religion in American Society: The Effective Presence*, Englewood Cliffs, N. J., Prentice-Hall, 1978.

76. B. Zablocki, *Alienation and Charisma: A Study of Contemporary American Communes*, New York, The Free Press, 1980.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 98.

78. W. M. Kephart, *Extraordinary Groups: An Examination of Unconventional Life Styles*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1987, p. 276.

79. Zablocki, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

80. *The Holy Bible*, I John: 15–16.

81. R. K. Merton, *op. cit.*, pp. 209–11.

82. R. M. Kanter, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

83. An excellent example of such militancy are the Hassidic communities in Williamsburg. See S. Poll, *The Hassidic Community of Williamsburg: A Study in the Sociology of Religion*, New York, Schoken, 1962.

84. Zablocki, *op. cit.*, p. 304.

85. *Ibid.*, p. 215.

86. *Ibid.*, p. 216.

87. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

88. C. Redkop, *Menonite Society*, Baltimore, The John Hopkins University Press, 1989, p. 317.