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Religion and Politics

A final dimension of the religious ethos and its impact on collective life is the crucial sphere of politics. I will now look briefly at a few examples of how religious traditions play a role in various political orders and movements.

Hinduism and Politics

The relationship between Hinduism and the political sphere is extremely complex in modern India. Religious pluralism apparently thrived on the subcontinent without major disruption until the invasion of the Muslims in the eighth century. The exclusivist claims of Islam, however, were never reconciled with the theologically tolerant Hindu beliefs. Muslim rulers found the worship of the various Gods idolatrous and made their condemnation part of the process of conquering the region. Consequently, a virulent form of anti-Muslim Hindu fanaticism also developed over time and has become a major factor in contemporary political conflict, both inside and outside the country. Ongoing territorial disputes with Pakistan and lingering memories of atrocities on all sides following the religiously based partition of British India at the time of independence have kept the flames fanned.

Despite efforts to establish a secular independent state after a century of British colonial rule, India continues to be racked by ethnic and religious strife, and the relationship between Hindu and Muslim sectors of the population is often the source of political rifts. Until fairly recently, the Indian state was virtually a one-party democracy, ruled by the diverse Congress Party that led the freedom movement and drew on the heroic status of its former leaders (notably Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru) to maintain its control. A breakdown of that rule occurred following the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and again after the assassination of her son, Rajiv Gandhi.

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Ayodhya is a site cherished as the birthplace of the Hindu God Ram. When the Muslims invaded in the eighth century CE, they tore down the temple there and constructed a mosque. In 1990, the prominent Hindu nationalist leader L. K. Advani mounted a campaign to raze the mosque and construct a temple in honor of Ram. The controversy brought down the Indian government in 1990, and a group of Hindus attacked the mosque in 1992, touching off a series of Hindu–Muslim riots throughout the country.

Buddhism and Politics

Buddhist tolerance of other religions and its custom of private worship tended to promote a general lack of specific alliance with political elites. An exception was Tibet, where a theocracy was established around the figure of the Dalai Lama. Even when Buddhism was aligned with the state, however, its lack of exclusivism often had a broadening, rather than constricting, effect on the political culture—that is, it encouraged a tolerant and inclusive ethos that cultivated the lowering rather than the erecting of boundaries between groups.

One of the most interesting early developments in Buddhism was the conversion of the Indian Emperor Ashoka in the third century BCE. After the bloody conquest of most of South Asia, he became a Buddhist. Horrified at the consequences of the wars he had conducted, Ashoka became legendary for his support of Buddhist institutions, his efforts to lead a nonviolent life, and most of all for his "Golden Age" rule, which promoted religious tolerance and high ethical standards. Although not a strict pacifist, Ashoka was opposed to warfare and animal sacrifice and became a vegetarian. Of particular importance is his famous Twelfth Rock Edict, which declared the following:

> One should not honour only one's own religion and condemn the religions of others, but one should honour others' religions for this or that reason. So doing, one helps one's own religion to grow and renders service to the religions of others too. In acting otherwise one digs the grave of one's own religion and also does harm to other religions. Whosoever honours his own religion and condemns other religions, does so indeed through devotion to his own religion, thinking "I will glorify my own religion." But on the contrary, in so doing he injures his own religion more gravely. So concord is good: Let all listen, and be willing to listen to the doctrines professed by others. (Gard, 1962, pp. 18–19)

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Contemporary Buddhists often struggle with modern governments, just as early Buddhism often met resistance from the emperors of ancient Asia. In the past three centuries, European colonial conquerors, then the Japanese, and finally indigenous political movements in China—the Nationalist and Communist parties—have confiscated monasteries or otherwise undermined Buddhist institutions (see Welch, 1972, p. 167ff). Neither four decades of Communist rule in the People's Republic of China nor hostile governments in other parts of the region, however, have eliminated the pervasive influence of Buddhism, either in the broader cultural milieu or in popular practice. In recent years, the repression has lessened, and some temples were refurbished beginning in the 1970s, partly because of efforts to cultivate contacts with foreign governments, especially those like Japan with strong Buddhist traditions. Reforms or a change of governments in East Asia (especially in China) may result in a religious revival comparable to that now going on in the former Soviet states.

Judaism and Politics

Any discussion of modern Judaism cannot fail to mention the two interlinked watershed events of contemporary Jewish history: (1) the Holocaust and (2) the founding of the state of Israel. The Holocaust was a historical event of unspeakable horror: During World War II, the Nazis exterminated 6 million Jews, reducing the total Jewish population of the world by approximately one third. The impact of this brutal violence against a people who had sustained their identity for thousands of years will doubtless affect generation after generation of Jews, who have already incorporated remembrance of the Holocaust into religious rituals such as Passover.

Few, if any, Jewish families and communities were untouched by this tragedy, which precipitated the creation of a national homeland for Jews in the ancient Holy Land so closely associated with the religious tradition. When the British ended their colonial domination of the region after the war, the United Nations voted to divide Palestine into Jewish and Arab sectors, and the state of Israel was established in 1948.

The remarkable sociological significance of these events lies in the fact that the ethnic–religious identity of the Jewish community in many countries was used by the Nazis to torture and kill a major population in an attempted genocide and then was used by members of the group itself to win international sympathy for their treatment under Hitler and to establish a modern state on the basis of a religious vision. Unfortunately, one people's homeland was purchased at the price of another's. The Palestinians, who were living in the area before Israel was created, have become refugees in their own land,

pushed out by well-meaning efforts by the international community to provide a homeland for the beleaguered Jewish community. Competing multiple claims by various religiopolitical groups on the same territory—especially the famous Holy City of Jerusalem—threaten to sustain the conflict over many more decades.

Christianity and Politics

The relationship between Christianity and political life is simple in its outline and complicated in detail. Christianity's universalistic doctrines and links with empire expansion facilitated a worldwide diffusion beyond its Jewish origins but also made it a convenient ideology for various world-conquering powers, from the Holy Roman Empire to medieval crusaders, European colonialists, and some contemporary Americans.

After Emperor Constantine's conversion to Christianity in 312 CE, the church became closely linked with Western power elites well into the early modern period. Although the alliance began to unravel with the Enlightenment of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Christian missionary movement helped Europeans solidify their colonial control, first over Latin America and then over large sections of Africa and Asia.

Two events of the past 200 years have particular relevance to current efforts to construct a multicultural ethos: (1) the disestablishment of Christianity in Western Europe (i.e., individual declarations by nations that Christianity was no longer the official state-sanctioned religion) and (2) the separation between church and state and efforts to protect religious freedom in the United States. The second case is significant because it demonstrates how the problem of multiculturalism is forcibly addressed in political discourse when previously separate cultural groups begin to share the same space.

At the end of the 18th century, the nascent American republic was religiously pluralistic, but not everyone wanted it that way. The colonies contained many religious refugees seeking religious freedom who were not about to grant that same freedom to people of other faiths living in their part of the New World.[7] Two mutually exclusive traditions from the Protestant Reformation—(1) Puritanism and (2) Pietism—coexisted uneasily. Puritans (especially in Massachusetts) wanted a theocratic state—literally, a state run by God (as represented, of course, by the political elite). For the Pietists and others who believed religion to be a private matter, the goal of religious practice was not an external social organization but internal religious experience.

Boston was essentially a theocracy at the time of its founding, in which only church members could vote; Quakers were executed for religious dissent

in 1650. In nearby Salem, witches were tried, found guilty, and hanged based on such criteria as not being able to recite the Lord's Prayer in the courtroom without making a mistake (see Erikson, 1966). In neighboring Rhode Island, however, Roger Williams insisted on no political involvement for religious leaders because he believed that the state corrupts the church. In most of the southern colonies, the Church of England was the official church.

In the middle colonies, the idea of combining the religious and secular—the norm for most, if not all, of human history—was questioned. In Pennsylvania, William Penn, a religious Quaker who understood the necessity of religious tolerance, argued against the idea of an established church. This was a radical idea at the time because it raised the fundamental question of basing the state's political legitimacy on religion, a practice common to most societies. Because of competing belief systems, the idea of disestablishing religion was in alignment with the interests of many of the colonial elites. The Great Awakening, a period of strong religious revivalism in the New World in the 1730s and 1740s, challenged established religion by emphasizing individual piety. Massachusetts still collected taxes to pay the clergy, but by 1750, people could designate which clergy would receive their taxes.

During the American Revolution, the theme of liberty became an organizing principle of political culture in the colonies. It originally meant freedom from the English Crown, but minority faiths like the Baptists and Catholics also applied it to their freedom from colonial government. Since their enemy's faith—the Church of England, with the king as its titular head—was dominant in the southern colonies, independence forced a reconsideration of the question of an official state religion. In 1784, a group of evangelical ministers in Virginia gained widespread support to obtain state funds for religious instruction, but James Madison, Thomas Jefferson, and others who feared that this would lead to a reestablishment of the Anglican Church opposed them. In that struggle, Jefferson articulated the principle of religious freedom in a way that framed later debates about religion in U.S. political culture by attempting to create a separation between church and state.

At the constitutional convention in Philadelphia in 1787, representatives artfully avoided discussion of religion because they knew it could jeopardize efforts to create a union. It was not that religion was unimportant but that the Christian denominational pluralism of the colonies prevented any consensus over which single sacred canopy could be erected. Constitutional protection for religion seemed the most pragmatic solution to a seemingly intractable conflict. Accordingly, religion was not mentioned in the U.S. Constitution, except in Article 6, which read as follows: "No religious test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office on public Trust under the United States" ("Constitution of the United States," 1787/1938, p. 192).

The First Amendment, however, tackled the issue head on, insisting, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." At the time, three states still had an established religion. Religion did not disappear from public political life in the United States after this clear rejection of established religion, however; it persisted as a civil religion stripped of its most sectarian elements, as we will see in Chapter 7.

The close-knit alliance between the Christian Church and secular elites began to unravel in the 19th century, and in many places the tradition became a carrier of resistance movements, from Third World **liberation theology** to East European pro-democracy movements and North American traditionalist ("fundamentalist") revolts against modernity. Christianity has also served from time to time as a focal point of conflict between Western and Middle Eastern powers. As the United States emerged as a world power in the 20th century, its economic, political, and military invasions of the world were often accompanied by the church, although perhaps more subtly than in the colonial period.

The process by which religious freedom is protected by law is a significant, though not always entirely successful, experiment. Clearly, citizens of the global village have to choose some form of religious pluralism in which freedom of worship is vigorously protected by the legal structure or risk subjection to authoritarian efforts to impose a single worldview and ethos on the world's 7 billion inhabitants.

Of particular importance in recent decades is the rise of the Christian Right in American politics, an issue I will postpone until a discussion of religious fundamentalism or traditionalism in Chapter 6.

Islam and Politics

Like most NRMs, Islam was born out of conflict. It began as a reform movement by the Prophet Muhammad, who, concerned about the injustice, materialism, and lax moral standards of his society, set out to do nothing less than reform the world based on new revelations from God. Not surprisingly, he encountered much resistance. The idea of the jihad, or struggle, remains a central element of Islam—struggle within each individual and between righteous and evil forces in the larger world. Boundaries between the Muslim and non-Muslim world perpetuate the struggle today, as do the stereotypes propagated by the media, especially in the West (see Said, 1978).

The way in which people within a religious tradition relate to nonbelievers in its formative years prefigures later patterns; a distinctive style emerges that persists over long periods. Today's patterns of Muslim–non-Muslim

conflict—and to some extent, intensive struggles within Islam itself—must be seen within the hostile political context of early Islam, the medieval Crusades, and the colonial experience of the early modern period.

As a prophetic movement promoting justice and resisting the status quo order of its time, it is no wonder that the community that formed around the Prophet faced persecution and was even forced into exile in Medina and became the victims of military attacks by the ruling elites of Mecca whose power they threatened. The Crusades, beginning in the 11th century CE, involved an effort by the religious and secular rulers of Christian Western Europe to expel the Muslims who ruled the Middle East. It may now seem part of the distant past, but this historical episode may be even more important to Muslims now than it was at the time the Crusades took place.[8] Those invasions of Muslim territory by the Roman Catholic Church and its Western European patrons represent a formative event in the centuries-long conflict between Christendom and Islam.

Although intense conflict between Muslims and Christians threatened much of the Islamic hegemony of the Mediterranean regions during the period of the Crusades, Muslims managed to retain (or in some places regain, after losses in the initial Crusades) control over much of the region until the 15th century. This sociopolitical hegemony was significant not only to Islam but also to the European world that later reverted to Christian control. Indeed, much of the great heritage of the West was preserved by the Muslims, including works of Aristotle and classic Greek philosophy and literature that helped to stimulate the Renaissance in Western Europe in the wake of the Crusades. The cosmopolitan centers of learning in Muslim Spain attracted Jewish and Christian scholars, influencing the thinking of Moses Maimonides and Thomas Aquinas. Both the Islamic networks and the ongoing conflict in Christendom led to expanded economic trade and diffusion that prefaced the early modern period.

Although Muslim rule ended in Europe by the 17th and 18th centuries, much of Africa and Asia remained Islamic, and the Muslim influence persists there today. The greatest impact was made during the time of the Ottoman Empire based in Turkey, which ruled Central Asia, most of the Middle East, and parts of the Mediterranean and Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries.

Another Islamic empire was established in the Asian subcontinent, where the Moguls conquered the indigenous Hindus; other small Muslim states were established in Indonesia, Malaysia, Western China, and Africa. This strong political rule of broad territories showed substantial religious tolerance in many instances, although it sometimes destroyed indigenous religious institutions and came into a number of intense conflicts. The Mogul

Empire finally succumbed to the colonial powers of the early modern period after the voyages of Columbus to the Americas and Vasco de Gama around Southern Africa to India at the end of the 15th century led to the colonization of large portions of the world by the Christian Europeans. When some of the colonial entrepreneurs raided West Africa for slaves, they captured many Muslims and took them to the New World, where Islam was silent under the yoke of slavery until the emergence of the Black Muslim movement in the middle of the 20th century.

European colonial expansion renewed resentments lingering in the collective memory from the Middle Ages and resulted in the defeat of Islamic nations by foreigners. Of 42 Muslim countries, only four did not experience direct military control by outsiders during the colonial period (from the 19th century), a humiliating experience for many Muslims in which Islam was derided and Islamic political and social structures were attacked by Western conquerors. Although it may seem like ancient history to some readers, some leaders of the fight against colonial rule are still alive today—this helps to explain some of the tensions between Islam and the West and the ferocity with which some leaders like Muammar Gaddafi attempt to hold on to power. Despite Gaddafi's atrocities, he was still a hero to many even when he was challenged by a popular movement in 2011, because he was the leader who stood up to the colonial powers.

When colonial domination began to unravel after World War II, superpower interventions in Muslim countries followed. The United States took on Israel as a client state in the Middle East and supported that country in its defeat of the Arab armies in 1967, in the devastation of Lebanon in 1982, and in the occupation of the West Bank. The Soviet Union, although less adventurous in the Middle East, was nonetheless a partisan in several conflicts there and actively suppressed Islam in the Central Asian republics. Since the eighth century, Islamic peoples have been subjected to what the Ayatollah Khomeini (in prerevolutionary Iran) called "West-toxification" or "Westomania," which many believed poisoned Iranian culture under the shah, Khomeini's predecessor who modernized the country's economy and society. "The goal of the Islamic Revolution in Iran," Mark Juergensmeyer (1993) claimed, "was not only to free Iranians politically from the shah but also to liberate them conceptually from Western ways of thinking" (p. 19).

Finally, even the sanctity of the Islamic home was invaded by the West in the form of youth culture and the women's movement. This may prove the ultimate insult, especially for some Islamic men, who have seen their way of life degraded and stereotyped, their political system conquered and controlled by Western colonialists, and their religion mocked by "infidels." It is one thing to have outside powers attack one's state but quite another to have

them invade one's home. This new invasion may be the source of much of the anger expressed toward the West by so many Muslims today. The mainstream of most Muslim societies has reinterpreted many of the strict regulations of traditional Islam, relaxed its segregation of women, and adapted to some of the vicissitudes of the modern world, but these developments have simply fueled the flames of those dissatisfied with the direction in which the modern world has pushed them. Many Muslims believe that the authority structure of the family is under siege and that the modesty of women and children is eroding, creating an existential crisis.

Although it is not one of the Five Pillars, the Islamic notion of the jihad is clearly a core belief that emphasizes the sharp boundaries between the sacred and the profane. Faithfulness to God does not come easily because of the sinful nature of the world and one's own sinful nature, so one must always engage in struggle. Two types of jihad are outlined in traditional Islam: first, the **greater jihad**, denoting the internal struggle against one's sinful nature. The greater jihad rests on the Five Pillars and the rituals of the faith to remind oneself repeatedly of what is righteous and to protect oneself from the temptations of the world. The **lesser jihad** is the external struggle that has now made the term so famous.

One Islamic view—taking its cue from ancient Judaism—divides the world into two parts: (1) the "House of Islam," where Muslim law and faith prevail, and (2) the "House of Unbelief," or "House of War." Because it is blasphemous for nonbelievers to rule over the House of Islam, it is therefore a religious duty to overthrow non-Muslim powers if they try to control and persecute Muslims. The Qur'an puts it this way:

> Fight against those who fight against you along God's way, yet do not initiate hostilities; God does not love aggressors. Kill them wherever you may catch them, and expel them from anywhere they may have expelled you. Sedition is more serious than killing! Yet, do not fight them at the Hallowed Mosque unless they fight you there. If they should fight you, then fight them back; such is the reward for disbelievers. However, if they stop, God will be Forgiving, Merciful. Fight them until there is no more subversion and [all] religion belongs to God. If they stop, let there be no [more] hostility except towards wrongdoers. (2:190–193)

The intensity of Islamic thought reflects the hostile environment in which it was formed and the single-minded intensity with which Muhammad and the early Muslims struggled to establish their religious community in the midst of strong opposing forces. Still, there is room within most interpretations of Islamic doctrine for religious pluralism as long as the ummah can thrive without persecution, and the mainstream Muslim leadership has

explicitly denounced terrorism as contrary to the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet (see Chapter 8). I will look in more detail in Chapter 6 at the Islamic revival of recent years as a protest against the control and invasion of the West. This movement is sometimes called Islamic fundamentalism, although many Muslims object to the use of that term; I will refer to it instead as **Islamic traditionalism.** It is a cry of resentment against the negative stereotypes of Muslims perpetrated by Western media and the development of secular nationalism as a mode of political organization in the West that many Muslims feel is being imposed on Islamic nations in much the same way as colonial rule was in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Islamic revival is an effort to reassert a positive individual and collective identity, to declare the beauty of the Islamic faith in the face of non-Muslim invasions.

The Ethic of Love

In a remarkable event in January 2002, Pope John Paul II met with 200 world spiritual leaders in Assisi, Italy, the birthplace of St. Francis, where they pledged not to use religion to promote violence in the world. They prayed and worshipped together in an unprecedented act of respect for each other's faiths and commitment to a peaceful world.

In spite of the remarkable frequency with which our news reports are filled with stories of religiously inspired or excused violence, religious institutions also remain the one major space in the world where one can talk about loving others without being embarrassed. Indeed, the world's scriptures are quite consistent in promoting love not only of one's neighbor but even of one's enemies (see http://origin.org/ucs/ws/theme144.cfm; A. Wilson, 1991). According to tradition, the Buddha (*Dhammapada*, n.d.) declared the following:

> "He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me!" In those who harbor such thoughts hatred is not appeased.
>
> "He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me!" In those who do not harbor such thoughts hatred is appeased.
>
> Hatreds never cease through hatred in this world; through love alone they cease. This is an eternal law. (pp. 3–5)

Similarly, Jesus tells his followers this:

> You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you just as God sends rain on both the just and the unjust. (Matthew 5:43–45)

The scriptures of Taoism, Confucianism, Sikhism, Judaism, and Islam have similar passages. Although saying or even believing in such advice may be easier than following it, the cultural space provided by such ideas is rare in contemporary political thought, and the faith traditions are bound by their own canons at least to consider the possibility. It is as a consequence of such teachings that the Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh was able to respond to a question regarding what he would say to Osama bin Laden if he met him face to face by saying, "I would listen."

The ethic of love provides a countervoice to the pursuit of profit as the foundation principle in the economic sphere and the protection of national interests as the basic ethic of the political realm. It may not always be heeded in the process of global decision making, but it is a force nurtured by the faith traditions.

The Ethos of the Global Village

Justice is what love looks like in public.

—Cornell West

People sharing the same geographical area must develop some agreement on rules of engagement that permit coexistence and promote justice, unless one group is going to commit genocide against the others, even if the norm is to let various cultures exist in relative isolation and autonomy. The more groups are drawn together, through either conflict or cooperation, the more comprehensive must be the norms regulating cross-cultural interactions.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the pull of economic benefits from participation in a global economy (at least for elites in various cultures and subcultures) is combined with the availability of technological means for increased interaction, thus dramatically altering the extent to which everyone's fate is shared throughout the world. As we have seen, the global village is governed not by a unifying ethos or a single sacred canopy but by a marketplace of competing worldviews and corresponding ethical systems that are colliding in many spheres of life in various regions of the world.

We have much to learn about how the process of cross-cultural ethos construction unfolds; we scarcely understand the nature of the religious marketplace in the much-studied American scene, despite important work in that area by a number of scholars (see Finke & Stark, 1988, 1992; Iannaccone, 1991; Sherkat & Wilson, 1995; R. S. Warner, 1993; among others). As Sherkat and Wilson (1995) have noted, religious preferences, like other consumption choices, are developed "not only on the

basis of what we want, but how others will be affected by our choices, and how others may react to them" (p. 26). Individuals making a decision to switch Christian denominations, for example, will take into account the potential response not only of members of new groups that they might join, but also of people within their current religious communities, their parents, friends, and so forth.

If there is any truth to Marx's contention that the dominant ideas of any age are those of the ruling class, then we can expect the ethos of the postmodern world order to be disproportionately influenced by the tone of international capital, the owners and managers of multinational corporations. Certainly, the value of material gain promoted by capitalist modes of production has already pervaded much of the world's cultures—not so much because it is imposed from the top (although mass advertising certainly influences popular tastes) but because the appeal of consumer goods and mass-produced entertainment has its own internal logic.

The role of religious traditions in forming an ethos for the human community is an empirical question not easily tested. At this point, we may be able to do little more than identify the questions that must be asked. All of the world's major traditions have a basic norm of compassion for others that sets moral boundaries around behavior that is harmful to others, especially within one's own society. The way in which those ethical teachings have been interpreted and enforced have varied so widely, however, that they provide no secure basis for our common security. Indeed, religious communities in many places around the world are now, just as they have been throughout human history, using their ethical standards to justify widespread slaughter and exploitation, and half of the world's population remains malnourished. The fact that religious institutions have failed to raise global consciousness about the scandal of child malnutrition reaching Holocaust proportions is not an encouraging sign. UNICEF (2010) estimated that more than 8 million children died annually, which exceeds the total 6 million Jews murdered by the Nazi regime in the Holocaust.

Because religion is so closely linked to social life, it is important to assess the implications for ethical systems of ongoing social transformations. Durkheim's (1893/1933) observation that the world system is becoming simultaneously more unified and diverse is instructive. As the world changes, so will the various ethical systems taught by the religious traditions; the ethical transformations may be as riddled with contradiction as the social: We are coming together, but resistance to the globalization of human life is as fierce as are the forces of unification.

The related human rights and democratic movements since World War II, coupled with the dismantling of the European colonial empires, offer some

measure of hope in a world torn with strife. As democratic revolutions swept the globe and the Cold War ended in the last two decades of the 20th century, these developments seemed almost inevitable. Just as important, however, are the movements of resistance to globalization, whose participants sometimes see the values of human rights and democratic politics as another attempt by the West to impose a secular nationalism on non-Western cultures still chafing from colonial bonds.

Juergensmeyer claimed that a new cold war is emerging between the "secular nationalism" of Christendom, which promotes Western models of democracy and human rights, and non-Western religious communities. Significant sectors of the world, he argued, see in these latest trends an effort to thrust Islamic, Buddhist, and other global civilizations under the aegis of Christendom.

> From this vantage point, it is a serious error to suggest that Egypt or Iran should be thrust into a Western frame of reference. In this view of the world they are intrinsically part of Islamic, not Western, civilization, and it is an act of imperialism to think of them in any other way. (Juergensmeyer, 1993, p. 19)

The current ethical crisis of the global village is not a product simply of the late 20th century, however. It began in the ancient mists of prehistory, when the ethos of today's religious traditions were born in story form and continued as various localized traditions diffused, collided, and were transformed over the centuries. Although we are always in danger of overemphasizing the importance of our own historical epoch, as the result of the dramatic transformations of society and culture precipitated by the industrial and postindustrial revolutions of the past two centuries, human history seems to be at a critical juncture in our time. To those events, I now turn my attention.

was the application of reason to every sphere of life, but it had serious unintended consequences. Murray (2004) put it this way:

> The paradox of Western civilization [is] the dialectic of the Enlightenment. The rationalizing impulse that led to the liberation of the modern subject from tyrannical faith in myth, superstition, and sovereign power, and their embodiment in the objective world, is according to Adorno and Horkheimer, also responsible for its negative by reducing it to the status of that objective, or natural world from which it was trying to liberate itself. (p. 15)

The very process of liberation from the tyranny of the ancien régime may lead to a new entrapment—not only the "iron cage" of the modern socioeconomic order about which Weber wrote but also a myopic intellectual inquiry that provides only certain kinds of answers and neglects other forms of inquiry that science, narrowly defined, might not understand or have the capacity to address.

Although the modernist crisis certainly affected U.S. culture profoundly and the battles have not completely subsided, the working compromise establishing some boundaries between religious and political spheres instituted at the founding of the republic, as well as the forced multiculturalism of American culture over time, has mitigated the polarization between religious and scientific perspectives and among various religious traditions.

The Modernist Crisis and the 21st Century

Not only is religion alive and well in the world's most advanced industrial society, but it is thriving in many other areas of the world. Along with the creation of new religious forms, we are now witnessing some dramatic revitalizations of traditional forms of religious life. The growing interdependence of the various human cultures, along with the economic and social webs woven across thousands of former boundaries, is creating an unprecedented series of changes in the nature of human theology. On the one hand, the very notion of religious belief has been called into question by the secular nature of thought in industrial society. On the other hand, the idea of a tightly woven, nearly seamless sacred canopy has clearly become obsolete (if it ever truly existed) as people from various strands of religious thought encounter ideas from other traditions. It is virtually impossible for any believer in the world today to live in isolation.

Each religious tradition faces a similar dilemma, although it is more acute in those that are more exclusivist in their theology: How can they

encounter the ideas of another faith expression, and indeed interact with people from that community on a regular basis, without losing the integrity of their own faith? The idea of religious traditions encountering one another is, of course, nothing new. The process has occurred again and again over the centuries, as we saw in our tour of the world's religions. The scale and significance of those encounters are new. Members of every major religious tradition now, in a sense, meet one another on the street and must decide whether to kill each other, pass by indifferently, or somehow engage one another.

One important consequence of these encounters, however, is the rediscovery of the rich diversity each tradition embraces. From within one's own small corner of a faith community, the canopy might appear relatively uniform and seamless. When we look closely at any sacred canopy, however, we discover that it is not uniform at all but a patchwork of contradictory ideas stitched together over the centuries. The great prophets and seers of the planet emerge from the profane order of human existence at times of crisis, when the canopy is ripped apart by wars and invasions, social or economic ferment, and natural disaster. The power of the prophets and the Gods comes from being able to restore the canopy so that it can once again be taken for granted. Recognizing the affinities between their interests and the ideas of a particular religious perspective—or even an antireligious belief system—various social strata and classes struggling for a position in a new social order also attempt to seize that power.

The Western Enlightenment worldview, which in essence called for the substitution of religion with modern science, became in effect another competing sacred canopy with its own arbitrariness, contradictions, and truth claims that legitimated a new system of social exploitation. Against those secularizing worldviews and the global military–bureaucratic structures they legitimated arose a series of protest theologies, sometimes from the Left and occasionally from the Right, but almost always from the bottom up, reaffirming sacred frames for explaining and ordering the world.

Not all responses to the modernist crisis involved either efforts to substitute religion with science or simply to have religion retreat into private spheres as public life became secularized. Other efforts to cope with modern and postmodern life involved the revitalization of traditional forms, the creation of new religious movements (NRMs), and the formation of quasi-religious systems such as civil religion and nationalism. Let us look now at these permutations of religion in the wake of the challenge that followed on the heels of the crisis of modernism: the crisis of multiculturalism and competing religious beliefs, rituals, and institutions.

The Crisis of Multiculturalism

As modern cultures emerged in the West around the time of the 18th-century Enlightenment, profound changes occurred in the religious sphere of life as in all other spheres. Religious impulses pushed toward an all-embracing sacred canopy that pervaded everyday life and linked it with the broadest theories of the cosmos. The pluralism of the modern world, however, has created a contradictory impulse that limits religious spheres of influence as multiple traditions conflict with one another. New forms of religious life have taken shape out of competing tendencies of the world's religions to provide a sacred canopy for all elements of life on the one hand and resistance from alternative traditions to the monopoly of any such system on the other hand. The tension between opposing forces precipitated the privatization of religion and a differentiation of spheres of life in the modern world. Even as people's religious traditions continue to guide their private ethics, a wall of separation has emerged between religion and politics, religion and economics, faith and education.

In a structurally differentiated society, every institution has a specialized task; the task of religious institutions is to tend to spiritual and ethical issues. Religion intrudes on all other spheres, however, because its ethics generally apply to all areas of life. A modern society compartmentalizes institutions, but we cannot compartmentalize people.[2] The cultural life of the global village is a product of an interaction of religious traditions among themselves as well as between each tradition and the multitude of others within which they came into contact as the global society emerged. In itself, this is not a new phenomenon; each major cultural tradition is, after all, a product of multicultural encounters. In both form and content, moreover, our 21st-century multicultural crisis is similar to the modernist crisis more than a century ago. What *is* new is the scale and scope of the process.

When cultures collide, the sacred canopy of each tradition competes in a cultural marketplace and is thus open to the scrutiny of potential consumers. When new Gods arrive on the scene, we often react in much the same way as King Kadmeus did when Dionysius was said to have appeared in Thebes in ancient Greece—we pull out our swords for battle. Multiculturalism creates a crisis but also an opportunity. We can learn from the successes and failures of the past and, with a sociological imagination, construct new religious traditions in the next centuries. It is not a question of *whether* we will do it, but *how*, and *what kinds* of new traditions will emerge. The construction of new social and cultural forms is never a simple process, however, and the crisis of multiculturalism, following in the wake of modernism, has precipitated culture wars around the globe.

Besides the responses to modernism already discussed—the substitution of religion with alternative ideologies and the secularization of public life—efforts to deal with these crises helped to forge a transformation of religion in the following outcomes:

1. Antimodernist movements such as the protest theologies of Christian and Islamic traditionalism (fundamentalism)
2. Liberation theologies from Latin America and the women's movement
3. New religious and quasi-religious forms, such as individualism and consumerism, civil religion, and nationalism
4. Religious syncretism, the development of religious movements that bring together elements of various religious traditions in a new (and often controversial) manner

I will examine each of these developments briefly in order to provide an understanding of contemporary trends and future possibilities for religious life in the global village.

Culture Wars and Protest Theologies

Multiculturalism (the product of sustained encounters among the various religious traditions of the world), along with modernism (the critical force of modern secular thought), fuels ongoing culture wars in virtually every corner of the globe.[3] These wars are, in part, a result of what Jürgen Habermas (1975) called a "legitimation crisis."[4] Many religious movements struggle against the hegemony of modern cultural centers and the invasion of materialistic, relativistic, and hedonistic culture from these centers. These movements, based upon traditional indigenous cultures, have a variety of political agendas, often with diametrically opposed implications for reorganizing society in the global village. From the liberation theologians of Latin America and Africa to the Islamic and Christian traditionalists ("fundamentalists") of the Middle East and North America, however, all share a common characteristic. Religious frames empower the participants in their struggles against the oppressive structures of what Weber (1904/1958) called the "iron cage" of the modern socioeconomic order and what Simmel (1908/1971) called the growth of "objective culture." In the contemporary world, the family and religion are viewed as enclaves of "communicatively structured interaction"—that is, interaction is based on who people "are" rather than on what they are "worth," in some market sense. When even that terrain is invaded, people resist (see Habermas, 1987, p. 393). Fields (1991)

ntended that this social context helps explain the current rise of traditionism in the United States; it can no doubt apply to other traditionalisms as ell. "After years of withdrawal," Fields (1991) argued, traditionalist groups e now resisting:

> Thus, the major thrusts of the ideology of activist fundamentalism . . . involve a reduction of state intrusion into the economy and the family coupled with state promotion of religious doctrine as the basis of law. While seemingly contradictory, institutionalization of this ideology would produce a shift in the relationship between subsystems and the lifeworld, while political discourse would become more "substantive" than "formal" or "technical." (p. 185)

This two-pronged effort to eject the modern world from private life and t the same time to transform public life so that the gap between private alues and the cultural ethos is less striking lies at the core of traditionalism. his dual development appears in various conservative subforms around the orld, as well as in the emergence of liberation theology among the poor, specially in Latin America.

Cultural cleavages in the global village sometimes fall along the lines of he religious traditions. In recent decades, for example, movements in the slamic world used centuries-old themes of Muslim–non-Muslim divisions as vehicle for expressing their discontent about the invasions of their lives by Christians from the West, Marxists from the Soviet Union, Hindus from Delhi, and the like. Protestant–Catholic cleavages in Northern Ireland reflect economic and political divisions that parallel deep religious differences. In many instances, however, new lines of conflict cut across old ones, reflecting competing impulses toward orthodoxy and progressivism or modernism (see Hunter, 1991). These conflicts involve the question of how to set standards in all social spheres—the family, law, art, education, and politics. They concern, as Hunter (1991) put it, "allegiances to different formulations and sources of moral authority" and "how we are to order our lives together" (pp. 118, 50).

These culture wars are sparked by the interaction of diverse worldviews in the global village. Widespread dissatisfaction with the way the world is ordered and the ways in which it is changing fuels the conflicts. Moreover, interpersonal, intertribal, interethnic, interclass, interregional, and international conflicts are often framed in religious terms, intensifying them and giving them a significance to participants that transcends the mundane struggle for survival, wealth, and power. These battles, framed as religious conflicts, take on larger-than-life proportions as the struggle of good against evil.

First, the cultural dimension of the crisis involves the assault on religious traditions by the interaction of various religious orientations and secular critiques, undermining each system's legitimation. Second, advanced capitalism is in a state of crisis, precipitated, Habermas and others argued, by the inability of political and economic systems to meet expectations about delivering material comforts and economic stability. Finally, these broader [illegible] result in what Habermas (1984) called the "colonization of the lifeworld"—that is, the welfare state and the public realm in general have invaded the private sphere of lived experience, including the family, which is now subjected to the imperatives of advanced capitalism—"consumerism and possessive individualism, motives of performance and competition" that shape behavior. Everyday life is thus squeezed into a "purposive-rational action orientation [that] calls for the reaction of hedonism freed from the pressures of rationality" (Habermas, 1987, p. 325). Habermas was writing primarily of the world of advanced capitalism, but elements of his analysis are applicable to other parts of the world as well. The lifeworld of the poor in the Third World, for example, has been colonized by the advanced capitalism emanating from the West in such a radical manner that many have organized with the only cultural tools they had available—that is, those from their Christian tradition.

People often perceive the culture wars of the modern world as strictly moral conflicts, but they also have a basis in social organization. Orthodoxy thrives in sociologically simple (small, homogeneous) communities and modernism in complex ones (large, heterogeneous societies). In a small, rural village, where everyone comes from the same ethnic group and class differences are minimal, it is feasible to have rigid moral boundaries and a sacred canopy that unifies the ethos of the entire society. In the global village, however, competing claims of diverse groups with radically different ethnic, historical, and class backgrounds render consensus on moral codes virtually impossible.

Sociological insights into religion center on the proposition that religious and social systems are intimately connected. Consequently, they change in a dialectical fashion, influencing and shaping one another. The dramatic transformation of the social world in the 20th century has both been shaped by and in turn produced remarkable changes in the nature of religious life on the planet.

As the world system emerges, many indigenous traditions are either incorporated into broader religious traditions or eliminated altogether, radically changing the global map of religious ecology. Colonialism and modernization destroyed so many local expressions of religious life that it appeared to some that few religious traditions would remain. Religious life has proven remarkably resilient, however, and we would be mistaken to assume that the

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shape of religion on the planet will be determined only by the central traditions. Moreover, many local variations of the global traditions have incorporated many of the indigenous beliefs and practices.

The formation of NRMs has become widespread, some in the form of movements that syncretize a range of older forms, just as intense intercultural conflict created the major religions themselves in earlier times. Other movements, such as the communist and socialist systems of the 20th century, claim to be nonreligious but take on many of the characteristics of religions. They attempt to provide a worldview and an ethos, as well as a general sacred canopy to guide both the ideology and the structure of life, from the personal to the public. In the Soviet Union, the state created a relatively rich, though often cynically practiced, ritual life apparently intended to replace traditional religious practices. When I visited the Soviet Union in 1988, I was surprised to see highly decorated evergreen trees in public places. When I asked about them, one of our hosts explained that they were New Year's trees and that Father Frost, a large man with a red suit and white beard, would put presents under the tree for the children. Similarly, a humanist seder in Austin, Texas, had all the elements of a traditional Jewish Passover except that there was no deity.

Throughout the modern world, with its nation-state system, various forms of nationalism offer a surrogate religion in which identity is forged not on a religious anvil but is linked to citizenship in a nation. This development has given us the democratic political institutions so widely cherished in modern life but also nationalistic wars and new forms of ethnocentrism. A similar ambivalence pervades the individualism of contemporary Western culture. It has taken on a quasi-religious form as well, leading to both a highly ethical humanism that stresses justice, community service, and civic responsibility and, at the same time, a narcissistic hedonism in which the lofty values of individual freedom and self-actualization are translated into patterns of consumption of mass-produced goods.

Revitalizing the Traditions

The root of the contemporary culture wars is a deep-seated discontent with both traditional and modern culture, which invades virtually every corner of the global village and undermines traditional worldviews and the ethos of indigenous cultures. Instead of showing respect for elders and attending religious ceremonies, many young people from East Asia to Latin America now play brash American rock music, watch Western movies, and drive motorcycles. Instead of following the strict moral codes of their traditions, some young women of the Arabic countries are discarding the veil and

demanding to work with men outside the home. These cultural movements lead to conflicts at every level of society, from the intergenerational struggles about conflicting norms and values within families to regional and international conflicts about religious, cultural, and economic issues.

Most individuals experience an ambivalence toward modern culture that pervades the global village, resulting in contradictory behaviors as people express first one and then another aspect of their love–hate relationship with the new world. Young people often love their parents and their village but are also drawn toward the lifestyles seen in Western movies. This ambivalence helps explain the penchant for many influences, from rock music to postmodernist theory, through which one can simultaneously emulate and attack the cultural center of the global village.

In their landmark five-volume exploration, Martin E. Marty and R. Scott Appleby (1993) concluded the following:

> Radical Shi'ite Muslims in Lebanon and Iran, militant Sikhs in Punjab, Jewish extremists on the West Bank, Hindu nationalists at Ayodhya, and Christian cultural warriors in the United States—despite being worlds apart from one another geographically, historically, and in the specific content of their beliefs and practices—were establishing "progressive," world-creating and world-conquering movements that looked to the past for inspiration rather than for a blueprint. (p. 2)

Although much has changed since that important collaborative assessment, especially since September 11 and the subsequent expansion of terrorism and the so-called war against it since that time, it is still instructive to look at the project's effort to summarize a very complex phenomenon. Gabriel A. Almond, Emmanuel Sivan, and R. Scott Appleby (1993) extracted three general findings from the project: First, "religious fundamentalist movements are distinct from other religious movements in that they are inherently interactive, reactive, and oppositional—that is, they are inexorably drawn to some form of antagonistic engagement with the world outside the enclave" (p. 503). They are, therefore, inevitably political and look to the future rather than to the past and therefore "cannot resist being caught up in modern bureaucratic and institutional dynamics—the dynamics of change" (Almond et al., 1995, p. 504), despite their efforts to revitalize tradition.

Second, although fundamentalists movements are political, they are also "genuinely religious," which sets them apart from other protest movements. As a consequence, "Militance, coalition building, 'diplomacy'—all of the 'ordinary' pursuits of minority political movements—take on unique rhythms and patterns in fundamentalisms, due to their religious character"

(Almond et al., 1995, p. 504). Finally, "while all fundamentalisms tend to be hegemonic, their world-conquering impulse is modified in practice in a variety of ways" (p. 504). They are constrained by the long-term trends of their host societies, their host religions, and even their antitraditional character in a way that leads to a fascinating sociological paradox. Their "willingness to manipulate the religious tradition and introduce innovation for political rather than strictly spiritual purposes" actually "delegitimates the so-called true believers in the eyes of many other believers" (p. 504).

David Zeidan's (2003) comparative study of themes in Christian and Islamic fundamentalist discourses finds "family resemblances" in the two kinds of movements, despite significant differences as well. He concluded that rather than being the "notorious 'clash of civilizations'" or a political confrontation "between West and East, or North and South," these ongoing conflicts are "a *kulturkampf*, a competition between two cultural tendencies *within* each civilization, one based on religious values, the other on secularism and materialism" (Zeidan, 2003, p. 280).

> For fundamentalisms of both persuasions the real question is whether the universe and human society are ultimately based on absolute values, revealed by a transcendent power, that serve as criteria and testing stones for new ideas and developments and that demand application in all areas of human life. (Zeidan, 2003, p. 281)

This conflict is, in short, framed by many as a conflict between "the Divine Principle and a secular materialist culture," as Khurshid Ahmad (1983, p. 228) put it.

I will briefly examine the culture wars in the United States as a representative battlefield, in which traditionalist Christians see themselves as struggling with modernists and progressivists to preserve moral values, and then turn to traditionalism in Islam and religious revivals elsewhere, some of which—such as Gandhian nonviolence and Christian liberation theology—take quite a different turn and have divergent political implications.

Christian Traditionalist Protests

The culture wars occurring in the United States provide a convenient microcosm of the global conflict. American culture is organized in much the same way as culture in the global village: One broadly hewn worldview and its corresponding ethos are hegemonic, but the dominant paradigm is never fully accepted. The vast diversity of religious and ethnic perspectives brought to America by immigrants from around the world, constituting

strong religious and ethnic subcultures in the country, present a strong and vocal challenge to efforts to create a hegemonic culture.

Polarized camps in the wars advocate two different styles of social authority, identified by Richard Merleman (1984) and elaborated by James Davison Hunter (1991) as "tight bounded" and "loose bounded." In tight-bounded communities, moral obligations are viewed as rigid and given, whereas loose-bounded groups view moral commitment as voluntary, contingent, and fluid. I will refer to them as the *orthodox* and *modernist* camps. Reality in American public culture, Hunter (1991) argued, is increasingly shaped by the "knowledge workers" of the modernist camp, such as "public policy specialists . . . special interest lobbyists, public interest lawyers, independent writers and ideologues, journalists and editors, community organizers and movement activists" (p. 60). These shapers of rhetoric and definers of moral standards challenge the fundamental religious tenets of many subcultures in the nation, partly because of efforts to create the proverbial "melting pot" and partly as a function of the common denominator effect of capitalism.

At stake in each area of dispute in the culture wars is the question of authority: Who is responsible for the care of the family, and how much shall the state and other institutions intervene? Who can define the role of women in society, and how much authority should men retain in the family? Who defines the ethical boundaries of business, public culture, education, and other issues of public policy? Finally—and most fundamentally—who can determine when life begins and when it should end?

Specific battles of the culture wars often reveal their fundamental structure, as in the debates over gender-specific language and the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The orthodox party, represented by the Christian Right, claimed that the ERA would destroy the traditional family and motherhood. Modernists saw it as an essential step in the creation of a just society that ensures equality for all. The same issues underlie such seemingly unrelated public battles as homosexual marriage, prayer in the schools, and abortion. Some religious leaders claim that gay rights movements represent a vicious attack on traditional family values, whereas others defend it as an essential struggle for dignity. Modernists see collective prayer in public schools as an intrusion on the religious freedom of those not of the dominant religious perspective. The founder of Campus Crusade for Christ, however, insisted that the 1963 Supreme Court ruling against prayer in the public schools constitutes the primary cause of the social problems faced in the United States today. Since the decision, he argued, "premarital sexual activity has increased over 200%, pregnancies to unwed mothers are up almost 400%; gonorrhea is up over 200% . . . [and] adultery has increased from 100% to 250% [*sic*]" (Hunter, 1991, p. 204).

The battle between the orthodox and the modernists is not just an American phenomenon. It fans conflicts within and between religious traditions around the world that have some common characteristics, whether they are between the African National Congress and pro-apartheid forces in South African churches, secular-oriented and nationalist Hindus in India, or proponents and opponents of women's rights among the world's Muslims. Although I am referring to all of them here as "traditionalists," they are known in popular parlance as "fundamentalists," which is such a loaded term that it is problematic for academic discussion. When one group and not another is referred to as fundamentalist, it touches a nerve in the culture wars, as shown in a letter to the editor in *The Economist* by Mohammed Azim (2005), who observed that in writing about the Christian Right, a story in their journal "carefully avoided the 'f' word—the more familiar term 'fundamentalist'—in your descriptions. At what point, if ever, do these rightist *Christian* factions become fundamentalists, or is that a pejorative term reserved exclusively for Muslims and, occasionally, Hindus?" (p. 1). Moreover, it is helpful to remember, as Said Amir Arjomand (1995) pointed out, that scriptural fundamentalism "is the common undercurrent of all fundamentalisms" (p. 192), regardless of the religious tradition.

Despite shared national, linguistic, and geographical bonds, the combatants of the culture wars live in different worlds and talk past one another. The *orthodox* and *modernist* camps tend to "operate from different philosophical assumptions and by very different rules of logic and moral judgment" (Hunter, 1991, p. 250). A negotiated settlement is not likely in the near future, Hunter (1991) argued, because vocal advocates "at either end of the cultural axis are not inclined toward working for a genuinely pluralistic resolution" (p. 298).

The New Christian Right

One of the most visible developments in American culture in the late 1970s and 1980s was the rise of the so-called New Christian Right, which soared into prominence with the presidential administration of Ronald Reagan. It revived again with the election of George W. Bush, who relied upon the Christian Right as a major political base, addressed some of their core issues, and appointed Pentecostal John Ashcroft as his attorney general and conservative judges John Roberts and Samuel Alito as justices on the Supreme Court.

Although it had an impact on American politics at a number of points in its history (see, e.g., Sutton, 2005), Christian traditionalism in the United States during the 1980s contained a number of interesting hybrids that used

modern technology to promote its decidedly antimodern beliefs. Television brought the Christian Right into America's homes and made it possible for the movement to become a major force in American culture. In 1970, according to Arbitron, 38 religious programs had a combined audience size of 9,803,000; by 1980, 66 programs had 20,538,000 viewers, significantly transforming the religious landscape of the country (Hadden & Swann, 1981, p. 55).

Television was the most important but not the only medium used by traditionalists in mobilizing their movement; other means included computerized direct mail, Learjets, and even a computer billboard created by John Marler's "Computers for Christ." Marler encouraged the development of a computer network to exchange information about everything from how to attack disturbing social problems to theological debates. Marler himself claimed to have "proof" that God dictated "each and every character and word in the Bible" (quoted in "Evangelist Uses Computer Exchange," 1984).

Many Christian conservatives overcame a natural antipathy to partisan politics, beginning in the late 1970s, because they were fed up with the drift of American culture. On the West Coast, where the two sides of the culture wars meet on the battlefield daily; in the South, where many still view the national culture with considerable ambivalence; and across the airwaves into every conservative corner of resistance, they began to talk with a new confidence about changing the country. And this time, they were not just talking about individual conversion; they were talking politics.[5]

In January 1979, a number of antigay, antipornography, and pro-family groups on the West Coast were brought together by California ministers Robert Grant and Richard Zone to found Christian Voice. Pat Robertson featured Voice on his program *The 700 Club*, and it quickly amassed a mailing list of 150,000 laity and 37,000 clergy, including Catholics and Mormons as well as Protestants. A few months later, in July 1979, Jerry Falwell founded the Moral Majority, with a strong Southern contingent and a serious computer-based fundraising effort that gathered $1,000,000 in the first month, largely with support from the *Old Time Gospel Hour* audience. Falwell traveled to all 50 states holding "I Love America" rallies; by 1981, he claimed to have 4 million members in his organization—hardly a majority but certainly a substantial bloc.

Another significant Christian Right organization, Roundtable, sponsored workshops (including a 1980 Dallas extravaganza with Ronald Reagan) to teach clergy how to mobilize their congregations to support conservative political candidates. These organizations and others joined with the televangelists to oppose the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty between the Soviet Union and the United States in late 1979, to protest state interference with

Christian schools, to oppose abortion and endorse school prayer, and to elect a new set of political leaders. Although not very successful at recruiting people to run for Congress, the New Christian Right did play an important role in defeating Senators Robert Packwood, Frank Church, Evan Bayh, George McGovern, and John Culver, as well as several House members from conservative districts.

The Christian Right's greatest coup, though, was the election of Ronald Reagan as president. Not only did the conservatives mobilize people in the church to vote, but they also raised large sums of money for political action committees (PACs). Whereas liberal PACs raised only about $1.2 million in 1977 and 1978, conservative PACs raised about $6.4 million. In 1979 and 1980, the disparity was even greater: Liberal PACs raised about $2.1 million, conservative PACs $11.3 million (Latus, 1983).

Some students of the Christian Right believe that the movement mobilized resources to influence U.S. politics at the turn of the 21st century for the following reasons:

1. A loss of confidence in the liberal philosophy because of persistent military defeats, failed leadership, poverty, crime, drug use, and the like
2. The legitimization of a conservative cultural revolution during the Reagan era and the linkage between Christianity and free-enterprise capitalism, prayer in schools, and the protest against secular humanism
3. The New Christian Right's monopoly of religious broadcasting: By 1987, it had 1,370 religious radio stations and 221 religious television stations, far surpassing that of any other single interest group (aside from corporations)
4. The New Christian Right's mastery of fundraising skills so essential to sustaining a social movement organization, in terms of grassroots fundraising (especially through television and direct mail) and contacts with wealthy individuals
5. The New Christian Right's appeal to the growing number of Americans over the age of 65 (3.1 million in 1900 and 29 million in the late 1980s), who are more likely to be religious than a demographically younger population

To this impressive list, Hunter (1991, p. 299) added another: the extensive network of parallel institutions—the schools, colleges, universities, and publishing firms—of the New Christian Right. Moreover, despite a number of scandals and difficult times for televangelists, many persist in having widespread influence. A more secularized version of the Christian Right's agenda has a widely heard supporter in the strident voice of syndicated radio and television talk show host Rush Limbaugh.

A number of countertrends call the previously listed predictions into question, however.[6]

1. When Ronald Reagan left the presidency, the initial fervor of the New Christian Right evaporated quickly; Reagan's charismatic authority held together a rather disparate movement with serious internal cleavages.
2. Those people most likely to support the movement—a disproportionate number of the working class and minorities—are traditionally drawn to the more liberal Democratic Party, such that few issues unite the movement beyond school prayer and abortion.
3. The institutional resources and power behind the modernist camp—notably the knowledge industry itself, so central to the process of constructing public opinion and with a relatively secular ethos—are probably stronger than those supporting the orthodox camp.
4. Because of its general orientation and modes of operation, the ethos of the modern state does not support an orthodox stance.
5. The ethos of the country's major cultural centers—New York, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, DC—tends to be progressive or modernist.
6. Finally, the style of contemporary policy debates assumes the autonomy of rationality, thereby excluding the appeal to traditional authority of the orthodox message. The orthodox camp tends to lose simply by accepting this ground rule for participation in debate. (see Hunter, 1991, p. 306)

The culture wars are far from over in the United States, and bickering occurs within each camp as well. One of the most difficult problems in political culture is the lack of tolerance on both the Left and Right. For example, even some of the traditional conservatives were displeased with the New Christian Right's efforts to label those who disagreed with them as immoral people. Senator Barry Goldwater, a longtime spokesperson for the conservative community, declared in 1981 that he was "frankly sick and tired of the political preachers across this country telling me as a citizen that if I want to be a moral person, I must believe in A, B, C, and D. Just who do they think they are?" (Nelson, 1981).

Because of the pluralistic character of the U.S. population, pressures to have a broad, flexible collective moral code have permeated American culture from the country's beginning. Those forces favoring less rigid common morals have always collided with others attempting to install a hegemonic culture and to enforce a particular brand of Christianity on everyone. They have never been fully successful, however, and part of the reason for the New

A number of countertrends call the previously listed predictions into question, however.[6]

1. When Ronald Reagan left the presidency, the initial fervor of the New Christian Right evaporated quickly; Reagan's charismatic authority held together a rather disparate movement with serious internal cleavages.

2. Those people most likely to support the movement—a disproportionate number of the working class and minorities—are traditionally drawn to the more liberal Democratic Party, such that few issues unite the movement beyond school prayer and abortion.

3. The institutional resources and power behind the modernist camp—notably the knowledge industry itself, so central to the process of constructing public opinion and with a relatively secular ethos—are probably stronger than those supporting the orthodox camp.

4. Because of its general orientation and modes of operation, the ethos of the modern state does not support an orthodox stance.

5. The ethos of the country's major cultural centers—New York, Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, DC—tends to be progressive or modernist.

6. Finally, the style of contemporary policy debates assumes the autonomy of rationality, thereby excluding the appeal to traditional authority of the orthodox message. The orthodox camp tends to lose simply by accepting this ground rule for participation in debate. (see Hunter, 1991, p. 306)

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Christian Right's emergence in the 1970s and 1980s was their perception that they were losing the battle for the country's hearts and minds, especially as various minority groups began to assert their own subcultures in the wake of the cultural ferment of the 1960s.

Christian traditionalist and evangelical movements in the United States provide an important anchor for identity in a sea of change and a means of expression for people dissatisfied with the direction in which the world is moving and grieving over the loss of the world as they knew it. Christian traditionalists also present a serious challenge to American multiculturalism and religious pluralism because of their strong opposition to religious tolerance and their certainty of the truth on certain moral issues against which other groups hold competing beliefs just as strongly.

Islamic Traditionalism: Antimodern and Anticolonial

Many believers in the Islamic world have picked up their own banner of orthodoxy in a manner similar to that employed by the New Christian Right in the United States. In some ways, these two groups fight the same enemy—the Western establishment against the modernists who attempt to establish cultural hegemony in the contemporary world based on secular scientific thought that undermines the ethos and worldview of the religious community. The Islamic traditionalists emerged from a very different historical context, however.

In the past century, issues of modernism and colonialism became deeply intertwined in the Islamic community. On the one hand, life in the 20th century raised the question of how to respond to the globalization of culture, the interaction among the world's religious traditions, and the challenges to all religious dogmas presented by science. On the other hand, the humiliation of colonial subjugation that so many Muslims endured at the hands of Westerners fed fuel to the fire of conflict. In the polarized climate of charges and countercharges, it became virtually impossible, in many parts of the Muslim world, to be faithful to Islam and also tolerant of other religious faiths and scientific inquiry—much like the Catholic Church aligned itself against science and democracy in the West during the 18th and 19th centuries.

By the end of the 19th century, nearly all the Muslim world had been conquered by European colonialism: Britain controlled the Gulf area, Egypt, portions of Africa, India, and Malaysia; France had taken over North Africa and much of West Africa and the Middle East; the Soviet Union had incorporated major Muslim areas of Central Asia after the 1917 revolution.[7] During this colonial period, Jamal al din Afghani (1830–1897) and Muhammad Abduh (1849–1905) attempted to elevate the dignity of Islamic thought

and encouraged self-determination among Muslims in the Middle East. Afghani argued that Islam was not inherently opposed to modern science but that European domination should not be tolerated; he encouraged the formation of a pan-Islamic federation of states. A number of independent Muslim nation-states were created, although at the beginning they tended to follow, rather than reject out of hand, trends initiated by the European colonials. Ataturk (Mustafa Kemal) founded Turkey, a secular state replacing the disintegrating Ottoman Empire, in 1923. Ataturk essentially disestablished Islam in Turkey, limiting the scope of the Shari'a to personal matters, and adopted many European practices in government and culture.

Iran underwent a similar process, beginning in 1921 with Reza Khan, who proclaimed himself shah (Persian for emperor) and set his country on a process of modernization, despite resistance from the religious scholars, the mullahs, who had always played a significant role in governing the country. Hasan al-Banna founded the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and the movement spread to Syria, Palestine, the Sudan, and elsewhere in the Arab world. In South Asia, scholars such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan, Sayyid Amir Ali, and Muhammad Iqbal participated in an Islamic intellectual revival at the turn of the 20th century, including the founding of the Aligarh Muslim University in India. Muhammad Ali Jinnah pressed vigorously for the formation of a separate Muslim state when India was pushing for its independence from the British Empire, and succeeded in getting it, despite the strenuous objections of Gandhi and others.

Sayyid Abdul Ala Maududi, a Muslim intellectual and religious leader in India and Pakistan in the early 1940s, spoke for many Muslims when he decried the moral decadence and corruption of the West. "Islam and Western civilizations are poles apart in their objects as well as in their principles of social organization," he insisted (Maududi, 1979, p. 23). Moreover, he claimed that Islam was self-sufficient and provided a viable alternative to both Western and socialist ways of life. The Muslim Brotherhood (Jama'at-i Islami), founded in 1941, was vital under Maududi's leadership and laid the basis for an educational campaign, influencing many Muslims outside Pakistan, including those in Europe and North America (see Cragg, 1965).

Two years later, in 1949, Indonesia gained independence from the Dutch after a struggle led by Sukarno that was motivated by nationalism and Islam. Although the independent republic succumbed to military rule, Indonesia's Muslims remain a vital part of the country, which has the largest population of Muslims in the world. North and West African Muslims also gained independence during the middle of the 20th century, producing a number of Islamic states. Considerable conflict ensued, however, between orthodox and modernist Muslims within these new nation-states, as well as with external

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powers. Dreams of establishing a unified Islamic Brotherhood of nations has not materialized, and the difficulties of doing so are exemplified in the eight-year bloody war between Iraq and Iran, in which each side claimed to have God on its side.

The traditional alliance between Islam and the state, an alliance also enjoyed by Western religions until very recently, has exacerbated the tensions between those wishing to make a transition to modernity and forces wanting to revive a more traditional Islamic society. The emergence of Islamic traditionalism—which some call Islamic "fundamentalism"—represents the orthodox camp's effort to reassert itself in the wake of Western colonialism and in the face of rapid changes in many Islamic states. Those internal conflicts have been exacerbated by continued struggles with the non-Muslim world as well, especially since the founding of the state of Israel and the intrusion of the United States after the disintegration of European control over the region. Many of the orthodox thus perceive a dual enemy attacking the sanctity of their traditions: the Western outsiders, especially the United States and Israel, and the modernizing insiders, who reduce the power of religious leaders and the Shari'a, the rule of Islamic law, in regulating society's affairs as they press for a modern, secular state.

These developments in the Muslim world have led to tremendous misunderstandings in the West along with considerable fear fueled both by misleading stereotypes in the media (see Said, 1978) and popular culture and by the visibility of life-threatening terrorist groups, sometimes operating in the name of Allah. Now, for the first time, these groups have launched significant attacks on targets within the United States, heretofore relatively unscathed by the Islamic struggle. The bombing of the World Trade Center in New York in the spring of 1993 and the attacks of September 11, 2001, as well as the subsequent arrests of suspected terrorists planning to bomb other key U.S. targets, have left many in the country suspicious and fearful. On the other hand, the U.S. government, sometimes in league with the other major Western powers, has inflicted much violence on Islamic populations as well, having destroyed the infrastructure of Iraq during the 1991 Persian Gulf War and overthrown the governments in Iraq and Afghanistan in the wake of September 11. The so-called "war on terror" has resulted in rounding up large numbers of Islamic suspects and attacking other targets in predominantly Muslim states. The publication of cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad in Denmark in 2006 became a symbol of perceived insults that provoked rage and protests in many places around the world.

When the battles escalate, religious traditions are often called into play to justify the political stances of the combatants. This practice is particularly obvious in the Islamic world, in which religious rhetoric is a more central

part of the political culture than in other societies. Thus, the orthodox attack their enemies—both internal and external—with an intensity that only religious framing can justify.

Islamic Reformers Enrage the Traditionalists

It is one thing to have infidel ideas imposed by foreigners. It may be even more outrageous to have such ideas championed by insiders, who are, in the long run—like all heretics—more dangerous than outsiders because they undermine the faith.

The case of King Amanullah of Afghanistan (who reigned from 1919 to 1929) is instructive.[8] He declared Islam to be the official religion of Afghanistan in 1923, provided the country with a written constitution, and endeared himself to many with his jihad against the British. In 1927, he toured India, the Middle East, and Europe, and his wife Soraya appeared unveiled at receptions in Europe, causing a scandal when her photographs circulated in Kabul. Despite resistance, Amanullah pressed forward with his efforts to reshape his Islamic society. He championed women's rights, outlawing polygamy among civil servants and permitting women to discard their veils. In October 1928, the queen led 100 women in appearing unveiled at an official function in Kabul, outraging the religious establishment. The act was not simply a matter of women's rights, according to some; it rent the entire fabric of the sacred canopy. As one cleric declared, "When reforms come in, Islam goes out" (Hiro, 1989, p. 234). Instead of retreating, the king escalated the conflict. In 1929, he required all Afghans in Kabul to wear Western dress, including European hats. When clerics pronounced this practice blasphemous, the king forbade students to enroll in the famous Deoband seminary. When the Hazrat of Shor Bazaar collected signatures of protest, he was arrested. At this point, rioting broke out in Kabul, and an insurrection ousted King Amanullah from power, despite his last-minute concessions.

The significance of this scenario lies in the role of religion and religious leaders in the debate over the ethos of Afghan society and the extent to which people were willing to allow Western influence to affect the norms and values of their culture. It was not the monarchy itself but the king's alliance with the West and his subversion of Islamic tradition that precipitated both the popular revolt and the organized resistance of the *ulama*. Afghan traditionalism waxed and waned throughout the rest of the century, but it was almost always used as a tool to resist both modern culture and Western intervention in that society.

As the case of Amanullah suggests, one test for ethos-related conflicts between orthodox and modernist camps in the contemporary world is the

role and status of women. Some highly visible and influential Islamic women insist on their equality, and many equally visible and influential Islamic men resist their efforts ferociously. The Pakistani Muslim leader Sayyid Maududi, for example, was innovative in trying to develop Islam as an alternative to Western and socialist systems, but on the issue of women he maintained a strict orthodox position. Maududi advocated strict sexual segregation and the necessity of the veil to close the "main gate"—that is, the face: "Nothing can be more unreasonable than to close all the minor ways to indecency but to fling the main gate wide open" (Maududi, 1979, pp. 197–198).

One reason for the intensity of these conflicts now is that the social organization of the family often represents for Muslims the last bastion of traditional Islam. During the colonial period, Muslims were forced by the colonial powers to secularize their legal system, taking power away from the Shari'a, the rule of Islamic law. The family was exempted from many of these developments, probably because it was so important to traditionalists and did not substantially affect the economic interests of the colonizers. By leaving the family under the aegis of the Shari'a, Islamic elites and the general population could be more easily persuaded to cooperate with the colonial government.

Revivalism Around the World

The Islamic world is not the only place where colonialism and modernism are challenged by efforts to revive indigenous religious practices. The prototype is Mahatma Gandhi's revival of Hinduism in India as part of his campaign for independence from Britain. In his famous Hind Swaraj (Gandhi, 1908/1939), Gandhi denounced the corrupt influence of Western, especially British, influence on Indian culture, calling for a return to Hinduism. Gandhi successfully used the stories and rituals of several religions, but especially those of Hinduism, as a vehicle for his development of the Indian freedom movement.

The first major element of the Indian movement's campaign of noncooperation with British rule to protest the colonization of their country was initiated with a day of prayer and fasting. "Do you mean a strike?" he was asked. "No, a day of prayer and fasting," Gandhi replied. The entire country came to a standstill as people prayed and fasted. The British might try to punish people for engaging in a general strike, but how could they suppress a religious celebration? Subsequently, Gandhi used daily prayer meetings and his status as a religious holy man to press his message of Indian home rule and to mobilize the social movement that opposed British rule. Despite the fact that it was presented in an orthodox fashion, Gandhi's interpretation

of Hinduism was novel. His charismatic authority was so great as leader of the freedom movement, however, that no one was able to challenge him successfully on religious grounds.

Other colonial countries followed suit, especially after World War II, often emulating Gandhi's tactics and adapting them to their own situation. A 1947 Nigerian editorial, for example, bemoaned the invasion of Christianity and advocated a revival of traditional religion as a means of resistance.

> The native dweller in Nigeria had a religion before the advent of Christianity. His religion was perfect, and taught him the brotherhood of man and the fatherhood of God. He lived for the other man. His one sole aim was to carry sunshine and happiness into the home of his fellow man. . . . The African has a religion which, unfortunately, is fast giving place to the imported form of worship. His religion takes him closer to the Divine Presence, and enjoins him in true love for his fellow man. Hence the African has always been found a child of nature, docile and unsuspecting. This copyist attitude in all phases of his life has robbed the African of his innate godliness, and it was time our people turned to find God, to worship Him, and to serve Him in the true African way.[9]

In Latin America, Roman Catholicism was used from the beginning of the colonial period to legitimate the imposition of European rule over the indigenous people of that continent. Over the centuries, Catholicism became the core of Latin American popular culture, and people in power there used the faith's symbols and the authority of the church to maintain their hold over the masses. With the emergence of indigenous Christian leaders in the 20th century, however, Christianity began to legitimate movements of resistance against the power structure and was used to mobilize reform movements and even revolutionary activities.

Christian Liberation Theology

A social protest movement challenging the status quo of the modern world—the theology of liberation—represents one of the major religious movements of the 20th century. As with Islamic and Christian traditionalism, as well as the Indian freedom movement, liberation theology frames the desire for freedom from political subjugation in a traditional religious perspective. The birth of this movement among the poor of Latin America signaled a reshaping of traditional Christian symbols in a way that some argue is truer to the spirit and teachings of Jesus and the early Christian church than is the establishment church, which legitimates an oppressive social order. A traditional reliance upon God as a personal savior, or liberator, is

taken for granted by people in this movement, but the classical theological questions of modernism—Does God exist? Are the scriptures infallible? Is the pope infallible? Can a Buddhist be saved without becoming a Christian?—mean little to them. They ask instead the following: How can we participate in God's liberating activity in the world?

Christianity From the Bottom Up

Liberation theology grows, first of all, out of Latin American attempts to break out of the historical oppression of first colonialism and then hierarchical systems in which a small wealthy elite is sustained in power by the United States. Penny Lernoux (1982) put it this way:

> From the moment Columbus set foot in the New World cross and sword had been indistinguishable. Priests and conquistadors divided the plunder in people and land—it was a toss-up which was the greedier. And long before Latin America's military regimes installed their torture chambers the Inquisition was at work with whip and rock. By the time of the wars of independence at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Church was the largest landowner in Latin America. It was also the most conservative political force on the continent. (p. 10) [10]

Other forms of liberation theology have emerged elsewhere in the Third World, especially in Africa, and among feminists, black Christians in the United States, and German philosophical theologians criticizing the middle-class gospel of consumerism. Liberation theology constitutes a new paradigm in Christian theology (Chopp, 1986), as well as a practical liberating activity in the *comunidades de base* ("base communities") of Latin America.

Two events in the 1960s laid the groundwork for the emergence of the liberation theology movement: the Second Vatican Council in Rome, beginning in 1962, and the Medellín Conference (CELAM II) in 1968. Vatican II and Pope John XXIII's attempts to "open the windows" of the church established a precedent in taking note (Vatican Council II, 1965) that Christians have a special responsibility for "those who are poor or in any way afflicted." This emphasis on the church's responsibility to the poor struck a chord in Latin America, where the church was deeply enmeshed in the lives of the poor. At the General Conference of the Latin American episcopacy in Medellín, Colombia, in 1968, the Roman leaders of the church contended that "the Lord's distinct commandment to 'evangelize the poor' ought to bring us to a distribution of resources and apostolic personnel that effectively gives preference to the poorest and most needy sectors" (Latin American Bishops, 1979, p. 175).

The Medellín conference gave a green light (Berryman, 1976) to the development of Christian base communities in which small groups of people—often meeting without clergy, because of a shortage of priests and Rome's relaxation of regulations after Vatican II—met throughout Latin America for prayer and Bible study, rediscovering the radical liberating message of the New Testament often lost in contemporary Christianity. This message—and the process by which it emerges from the pages of the Bible in the hands of the peasants—comes through clearly in the four volumes of *The Gospel in Solentiname*, transcripts of Bible studies led by the poet–priest Ernesto Cardenal in Nicaragua. In the discussion following their reading of Luke 4:16–30, in which Jesus announces that he has come "to give the good news to the poor," Cardenal (1982) explained the following:

> The good news is for the poor, and the only ones who can understand it and comment on it are the poor people, not the great theologians. And it's the poor who are called to announce the news, as Jesus announced it. (p. 133)

Similar communities emerged in other parts of the world, including Africa and Asia, although with their own local agendas and languages. In Zimbabwe before independence, people from all across the country would meet early in the morning to pray and sing and ask God for their liberation.

The preeminent figure in articulating the ideas of liberation theology was Gustavo Gutiérrez, whose *Teología de la Liberación* (*A Theology of Liberation*; 1973) served as a manifesto for the movement. Bridging the gap between the church hierarchy and the base communities that flourished in the slums,[11] Gutiérrez's theological reflections were amplified by such figures as Camilo Torres from Colombia (who studied sociology at Louvain, where he was a classmate of Gutiérrez) and Dom Hélder Camara in Brazil.

Ironically, the initial ecclesiastical actions that led to the liberation theology movement grew out of conservative efforts to defend the institutional interests of the Roman Catholic Church in the face of Marxist and other left-wing critics (Adriance, 1992). Moreover, the practical measure of forming base communities in the wake of Vatican II reforms and a shortage of priests cultivated the growth of base communities among the poor, which unexpectedly resulted in a movement that gradually sought some independence from the church hierarchy. Here is Adriance's (1992) examination of developments in Brazil and Chile:

> [They] provide illustrations of the paradox of institutionalization. They show how measures taken by some bishops to restore the church's influence in the

context of a secularized, pluralistic society unleashed a potential for social and ecclesial change that may prove to be more radical than the bishops had ever intended. (p. 60)

The Vatican found the liberation theology movement a highly disturbing phenomenon, in part because of its independence not only from the political establishment but also from the ecclesiastical one. The Polish Pope John Paul II was also concerned about its links with Marxism, because in his experience Marxism was more the oppressor than the liberator. When the pope visited Nicaragua in 1983, he shook his finger at Father Cardenal, who was minister of culture in the new communist Sandinista government, and scolded him for his political involvement.

Liberation theology had many critics in the church because it was too politicized, too Marxist, and sometimes advocated violence. It also had many supporters at high levels and represented one of the fastest-growing sectors of the church, so the movement was difficult to suppress. Like Islamic and Christian traditionalism, liberation theology provided a vehicle for discontented people to express their protest and try to change the world around them. A similar, and in some ways more successful, movement for change with a religious base occurred in recent nonviolent movements in Asia and Europe, where the church played a key role in organizing resistance against various dictatorships.

A Theology of "Nonpersons"

Although not always articulated by the poor,[12] liberation theology is a perspective of and from the poor, or as Gutiérrez (1973) put it, "nonpersons"—that is, the people who are ignored to the extent that they do not even exist for people in power. Erving Goffman (1959) explained the dynamics of this role in social life in the example of the servant, who is a convenient "nonperson" to have around but does not exist for social interaction and is treated as less than human. In the most extreme instances, a "nonperson" in the role of a servant sleeps in the master's bedroom as part of the furniture in case anything is needed during the night. Most of us find ourselves in this role, to a lesser extent, when people of power and privilege simply ignore our presence.

Entire classes of people are nearly invisible to the mainstream, and especially to the elites, of most modern cultures. The invisibility phenomenon enables the rich to cope psychologically with the existence of mass poverty and starvation in their environment. In India, the millions of people living in abject poverty on the street are simply screened out of existence by the middle and upper classes, who go about their daily routines pretending that

they do not exist. The number of people who live in such dire poverty that they scarcely live at all is so enormous that we ignore their existence in order to enjoy our own lives. Even the news media, which usually focuses on problematic aspects of human life, manages to ignore what is certainly one of the most significant stories about our world every day—that is, that roughly 40,000 children die each day of malnutrition and related causes, and a similar number are permanently damaged each day by the same state.

Since the 1960s, the world has witnessed what Gutiérrez (1973) calls an "eruption of the poor."[13] Religious thinking grows out of the social context in which the thinker lives; liberation theology constitutes a form of reflection on the nature of the sacred from the point of view of those who suffer, from those who constitute the majority of the world's population (see Chopp, 1986). Sociologically, we expect "nonpersons" to view the world differently, of course, than people in other social roles and to have affinities with different religious expressions than those of the rich. Gandhi said that God should appear to the poor in the form of bread. Liberation theology recovers the perspective of the poor from the Judeo-Christian tradition, a rich and deep element that has been conveniently subordinated by the alliance between the church and the Western establishment.

All of these developments in faith communities over the past 200 years or so brings us to a situation in the 21st century in which religious life has been substantially transformed. It is to the religious landscape of the new millennium that I now turn my attention.

7

Religious Movements for a New Century

Along with the revitalization of ancient traditions in the form of traditionalism and various religious revivals and reformulations of religious traditions, a number of new religious forms have emerged as a response to modernism. These forms include civil religions and syncretic religious movements and new forms of religiosity that draw upon elective affinities between the interests of particular groups of people and the interaction among various religious traditions and secular forces. Religiosity in the new century is a dynamic mixture of the old and the new, of ancient rites and beliefs as well as a plethora of recent religious movements, and the impact of social movements, such as the women's and environmental movements, on religious beliefs and institutions (see, e.g., Robbins & Anthony, 1990). As the pace of globalization picks up, the crosscurrents of the global cultures—and reactions against broad social changes—make spiritual life interesting and diverse.

Civil Religion and Nationalism

One of the most significant forms of quasi-religion in the 20th grew out of the social organization of the nation-state, which often replaces traditional religious institutions as a focus of identity and basis of the cultural ethos. This significant element of political culture, especially in modern nation-states, is usually called civil religion, a concept developed by Jean-Jacques