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Religion and Ethnicity in America

TIMOTHY L. SMITH

THAT RELIGION AND ETHNICITY ARE INTERTWINED in modern urban and industrial societies is obvious, but the nature of this relationship and how it developed is not yet clear.¹ Recent studies of the religious aspects of cultural and social systems, particularly by anthropologists, have not yet freed historians from traditional notions about religion and ethnicity. Historians continue to believe that ethnicity is a synonym for nationality and that the religious and ethnic sentiments of immigrant minorities are anachronisms that must give way to the processes of modernization and assimilation.²

Although most European languages make it possible to use one word for what in English requires two—"nation" and "people"—ethnicity and nationality are not the same thing. Nationality is established by citizenship. Such varied modern states as Great Britain, Spain, the United States, Brazil, Yugoslavia, the Soviet Union, China, Czechoslovakia, and South Africa have brought under one government several peoples. The sense of peoplehood, moreover, which I take to be the essence of ethnicity, and the social structures that sustain it may flourish without reference to political nationhood at all, as until recently was the case for Jews, Gypsies, Sikhs, and American blacks.³ In the late nineteenth century many observers expected the sense of nationhood to replace that of peoplehood, either through the "melting pot" as in the

This essay originated as one of six addresses on "The American Experience," delivered at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Washington, D.C., December 28–30, 1976 in celebration of the United States bicentennial. Three of these addresses—by Arthur Schlesinger, jr., Robert Kelley, and C. Vann Woodward—were published previously in the bicentennial issue of the *American Historical Review* in June 1977. THE EDITOR.

¹ Robert Kelley, "Ideology and Political Culture from Jefferson to Nixon," *AHR*, 82 (1977): 531–62. For two beginnings at clarification by sociologists, see Harold J. Abramson, *Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America* (New York, 1973); and Thomas F. O'Dea, *Sociology and the Study of Religion: Theory, Research, Interpretation* (New York, 1970).

² For a study that suffers from these faults but deals perceptively with the fallacies of the assimilationist model, see John Higham, *Send These to Me: Jews and Other Immigrants in Urban America* (New York, 1975), 9–20, 202–09, 234–35. But see the essays by Josef Barton, William Galush, and Robert Mirak in Randall Miller and Tom Marzik, eds., *Immigrants and Religion in Urban America* (Philadelphia, 1977), 3–24, 84–102, 138–60.

³ For an ethnographic survey of old and persisting identities, see John Geipel, *The Europeans: The People, Yesterday and Today—Their Origins and Interrelations* (New York, 1970). Meic Stephens has argued that only since about 1840 did language become "the symbol of nationality"; Stephens, *Linguistic Minorities in Western Europe* (Llandysul, Wales, 1976), xix–xx, *passim*. But see Pierre L. Van den Berghe, "Ethnic Pluralism in Industrial Societies: A Special Case?" *Ethnicity*, 3 (1976): 242–54.

United States or through the suppression of ethnic loyalties by such policies as Russification, Magyarization, and Germanization. Events have demonstrated, however, that ethnicity is not an anachronism. The mobilization of ethnic groups in modern nations, whether among immigrants such as Finns in the United States or East Indians in Guyana or among peoples who, as the Welsh in Britain or the Georgians in the Soviet Union, are still largely resident in their ancient homelands, has aimed at the future, not at the past.⁴ Whether in cities or agricultural regions, near their ancestral villages or in distant lands, modern ethnic movements function chiefly to protect or advance the economic, cultural, or religious interests of persons who, by reason of some combination of actual or supposed common origin, language, or faith, believe they constitute one people.⁵ In the process of mobilizing these movements, leaders have often manipulated for immediate purposes the symbols of old national allegiances or invoked the ideology of new ones and thereby made notable contributions to nationalist movements in their homelands. But ethnicity and nationality ought not to be confused. The sense of inherited or acquired identity of the majority people was only one of several sources of the sentiments that sustained nationhood in Europe. The purposes of ethnic organizations in the emigrant *diaspora*, moreover, were far broader than the promotion or protection of an Old World political ideal, even though names such as "Serb National Defense League" or "Polish National Alliance" adorned their office doors.⁶

Following Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, sociologists have long stressed the interrelated functions of religion and ethnicity but, until recently, have also tended to regard both as artifacts of an outmoded past.⁷ The title of Milton Gordon's instructive volume on "the role of race, religion, and national origins" in the United States conveyed both a conclusion and a prediction: *Assimilation in American Life*. Much of the point of Nathan Glazer's early contribution to the sociological analysis of ethnicity lay in his surprise—

⁴ For historical works that make this point, see A. William Høglund, *Finnish Immigrants in America, 1880-1920* (Madison, Wisc., 1960); and Josef J. Barton, *Peasants and Strangers: Italians, Rumanians, and Slovaks in an American City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975). Also see David Lowenthal, *West Indian Societies* (New York, 1972), 144-77, 210-11; and Michael Hechter, "The Political Economy of Ethnic Change," *American Journal of Sociology*, 79 (1974): 1152-56, and *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1975), esp. 311-40.

⁵ See the Introduction to Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, eds., *Ethnicity: Theory and Practice* (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), 18, 25. Paul R. Brass has described North Indian processes of ethnic-group formation out of varied kinds and degrees of shared economic interests, religion, and other cultural resources; Brass, "Ethnicity and Nationality Formation," *Ethnicity*, 3 (1976): 225-31. And Charles F. Keyes has argued that belief in shared descent is a crucial but often contrived aspect of functioning ethnicity; Keyes, "Towards a New Formulation of the Concept Ethnic Group," *Ethnicity*, 3 (1976): 202-06.

⁶ Thomas N. Brown, *Irish-American Nationalism, 1870-1890* (Philadelphia, 1966), 85-130; Joseph Rothchild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars* (Seattle, 1974), 83-84; Mark Stolarik, "Immigration and Eastern Slovak Nationalism," *Slovakia*, 26 (1976): 13-20; and William Galush, "American Poles and the New Poland: An Example of Change in Ethnic Orientation," *Ethnicity*, 1 (1974): 216-19.

⁷ Weber, "Ethnic Groups," in Talcott Parsons et al., eds., *Theories of Society*, 1 (Glencoe, Ill., 1961): 305-09; and Durkheim, *On Morality and Society: Selected Writings*, ed. Robert N. Bellah (Chicago, 1973), ix-x, 169, 222-23. Also see W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole, *The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups* (New Haven, 1945), 156-61, 283-96; and Will Herberg, *Protestant-Catholic-Jew: An Essay in Religious Sociology* (rev. ed., New York, 1960).

shared by the academic community generally—that it had persisted.⁸ In the late 1960s a flood of new sociological studies assumed the instrumental and, hence, plastic nature of ethnic affiliation and identity and, in a few cases, analyzed the interweaving of religious ideas, customs, and institutions with the choices and the chances of free persons.⁹ Thomas F. O’Dea has recently revived Weber’s use of the example of ancient Judaism (in contrast to Durkheim’s use of Australian totemism) to demonstrate that systems of religious thought not only may serve to legitimize existing social arrangements but, through prophetic proclamation in a time of crisis, can help break the chains of custom by making new and revolutionary demands, dissolving myths, and declaring a transcendent ethic not identifiable with any existing society or social institution.¹⁰

The resurgence of ethnicity as a factor in United States politics during the 1960s—involving first blacks, then Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, American Indians, Orientals, and “white ethnics”—was only one manifestation, as British sociologist Michael Hechter put it, of a “resurgence of ethnic political conflict in the most highly differentiated societies.” This resurgence challenged the prediction of Max Weber and Talcott Parsons that urbanization and industrialization would gradually erode belief in the sacredness of the “primordial” ethnic sentiments that flourish in “relatively undifferentiated social settings,” making way for the formation of political associations by “individuals of similar market orientations.” Hechter pointed out that the opposite has been happening: political movements in many advanced societies champion minority languages, promote “national” cultures, and generally seek to “legitimate new cultural forms in the guise of old ones.”¹¹

Certainly, the worldwide politics of peoplehood helped revive scholarly interest in the history of ethnicity in the United States.¹² My study of a pluralistic society in the Minnesota iron-mining country, begun with Clarke Chambers and Hyman Berman in 1962, yielded results that seemed to contradict prevailing historical dogma in complex ways and led us at first to the

⁸ Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins* (New York, 1964); Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan, *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963); and Glazer, *American Judaism* (Chicago, 1957), 79–126.

⁹ For key essays by many of the sociologists who produced these studies, see Glazer and Moynihan, *Ethnicity: Theory and Practice*; especially see, for the choices of the Chinese in Guyana and Jamaica to convert to the Anglican and Roman Catholic faiths, Donald L. Horowitz, “Ethnic Identity,” and Orlando Patterson, “Context and Choice in Ethnic Allegiance: A Theoretical Framework and Caribbean Case Study,” in *Ethnicity: Theory and Practice*, 114–18, 305–36. But see Harold J. Abramson, “On the Sociology of Ethnicity and Social Change: A Model of Rootedness and Rootlessness,” *Economic and Social Review*, 8 (1976): 43–48.

¹⁰ O’Dea, “Stability and Change and the Dual Role of Religion,” in Bernard Barber and Alex Inkeles, eds., *Stability and Social Change* (Boston, 1971), 161–65, 172–77.

¹¹ Hechter, *Internal Colonialism: The Celtic Fringe in British National Development*, 312–14.

¹² This interest has been evident in the renewed vitality of the Immigration History Society, in the establishment of several university research programs (notably the University of Minnesota’s Immigration History Research Center), and in the launching of the journal *Ethnicity*. For additional evidence, see Andrew K. Greeley, *Ethnicity in the United States: A Preliminary Reconnaissance* (New York, 1974); and George Brown Tindall, *The Ethnic Southerners* (Baton Rouge, 1976). Rudolf J. Vecoli has called for more attention to the subject; Vecoli, “Ethnicity: A Neglected Dimension of American History,” in Herbert J. Bass, ed., *The State of American History* (Chicago, 1970), 70–89.

notion that developments there might not be typical. Two subsequent research projects and the work of a dozen graduate students have convinced me that the use of churches and synagogues to promote education and upward mobility as well as to define, rationalize, and revitalize ethnoreligious identity was not unusual but rather characteristic of the urbanization of both American blacks and migrating East European villagers, whether in cities near their birthplaces or in Rochester, Cleveland, Chicago, and Minneapolis.¹³

In light of this research America's "urban villagers," to use Herbert Gans's phrase, did not appear as resistant to change as Gans and others thought them to be, either in their new environment or in the village settings from which they came. John Briggs and Josef Barton have now offered persuasive evidence that rural villages in nineteenth-century Sicily, Calabria, and Transylvania underwent those social changes that are often labeled "modernization" or, perhaps less arguably, "urbanization" long before large numbers of their younger residents began to migrate to cities near or far away. With others I have concluded that such modernization also occurred in the Danube basin north of Belgrade, in the Austrian provinces of Slovenia, Galicia, and Bukovina, in Lithuania and Finland, and in that area that is now Eastern Slovakia and the sub-Carpathian Ukraine. Where these changes took place amidst a long-existing cultural diversity, the intertwining of religious feelings with ethnic interests and identities gave both to faith and to the sense of peoplehood a fluid and instrumental quality that was more future-oriented than backward-looking. Emigrants to the United States regrouped on this side of the Atlantic into larger aggregations that both preserved and revised inherited patterns of language, religion, and regional culture. These changes thus demonstrate a dynamic relationship between religion and ethnicity, not the static one that was long the model historians and sociologists followed.¹⁴

Anthropologists, who came late to the game of modern ethnic studies, seem at the moment to be leading it, in part because they have never discounted the functional significance of religion in culture. True, the first generation, whose

¹³ I must here acknowledge my extensive debts to a group of student colleagues who have steadily shared their findings with me for a decade: Josef Barton, John Briggs, William Galush, Mark Stolarik, Matt Susel, Paula Benkart, Arunas Alisauskas, and Frederick Hale; most of their studies are cited below. For a brief report with little reference to the role of religion, to which I subsequently turned, see my "New Approaches to the Study of Immigration in Twentieth-Century America," *AHR*, 71 (1965-66): 1265-79. For my recent review of these issues, see "Native Blacks and Foreign Whites: Varying Responses to Educational Opportunity in America, 1880-1950," *Perspectives in American History*, 6 (1972): 309-36. For recent works—in addition to Barton's *Peasants and Strangers: Italians, Rumanians, and Slovaks in an American City*—that confirm our group's general findings about social mobility and, therefore, diminish the cogency of Stephan Thernstrom's *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth-Century City* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), see Thernstrom, *The Other Bostonians: Poverty and Progress in the American Metropolis, 1880-1970* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), 76-176; and Thomas Kessner, *The Golden Door: Italian and Jewish Immigrant Mobility in New York City, 1880-1915* (New York, 1977), esp. 165-70.

¹⁴ For two works that reflect essentially static views of southern Italian peasant culture, see Herbert Gans, *The Urban Villagers* (Glencoe, Ill., 1962); and Rudolf J. Vecoli, "Prelates and Peasants: Italian Immigrants and the Catholic Church," *Journal of Social History*, 2 (1969): 227-33. In comparison, see Barton, *Peasants and Strangers: Italians, Rumanians, and Slovaks in an American City*, 27-47; John Walker Briggs, *An Italian Passage: Immigrants to Three American Cities, 1890-1930* (New Haven, 1978), chaps. 1-3; and Eric R. Wolf, *Peasants* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966), 83-84. And see my "Lay Initiative in the Religious Life of American Immigrants, 1880-1950," in Tamara K. Hareven, ed., *Anonymous Americans: Explorations in Nineteenth-Century Social History* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1971), 214-49.

works historians know best, was preoccupied with premodern village or “tribal” societies, in which the whole population shared one language and faith. But anthropologists have closely observed the manner in which religious and communal rituals regulated behavior, legitimized power, transformed group memory into ideology, and gave social meaning to each stage in the cycle of individual lives. They have found that pervasive symbols and the recounting or re-enactment of traditional stories drew together the conceptions each people held of the actual and ideal worlds. Yet the preoccupation of anthropologists with such homogenous communities, usually at a given moment in time, provided little impulse to challenge assumptions about the essentially static character of religion in premodern societies.¹⁵

After World War II the organization of new nations in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean requiring the political integration of disparate peoples posed questions that prompted a different theoretical approach. Clifford Geertz, who studied Javanese religious cultures, and J. C. Mitchell, who examined the shifting character of tribalism in urban Zaire, have stressed the conflict between such new “integrative” states as Indonesia and what Geertz has called the “enduring structure of primordial identifications” rooted in religious as well as other aspects of primitive societies. Geertz’s model and Harold J. Isaacs’s development of it in *Idols of the Tribe* have proved attractive to historians and sociologists, in part, perhaps, because Geertz and Isaacs have not seriously disturbed the notion that sentiments that sustain both religion and a sense of unique peoplehood are archaic, even though surprisingly resilient.¹⁶

Recently, Abner Cohen’s studies of African cities—initially of the Hausa community of Muslim cattle merchants in Ibadan, Nigeria—sparked a quantum leap in the sophistication of anthropological inquiry into ethnicity.¹⁷ Following his lead, scholars have examined the pragmatic and often protean uses of ethnicity in widely varying urban settings and have demonstrated that ethnic movements are often a political phenomenon—a mobilization of cultural resources, in which religion is sometimes central, to serve immediate “interests” or goals. These scholars have explicitly rejected the static “primordialist” dogma of Geertz and Isaacs at the very moment when some American historians were finding in it a comprehensive rationale for ethnic

¹⁵ For studies that depart from these assumptions, see Emerick K. Francis, *In Search of Utopia: The Mennonites in Manitoba* (Glencoe, Ill., 1955), 5–7, 15–39; Martin Halpern, *A Serbian Village* (New York, 1958), chaps. 2, 10; and John W. Cole and Eric R. Wolf, *The Hidden Frontier: Ecology and Ethnicity in an Alpine Valley* (New York, 1974). For comparison, see Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York, 1973), 87–89, 126–29, 140–41. For a parallel definition of the basis of ethnicity with a psychoanalytic orientation, see Harold R. Isaacs, “Basic Group Identity: The Idols of the Tribe,” in Glazer and Moynihan, *Ethnicity: Theory and Practice*, 29–45.

¹⁶ Geertz, “The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in New States,” in Geertz, ed., *Old Societies and New States* (New York, 1963), 90–114, esp. 114; Mitchell, *The Kalela Dance: Aspects of Social Relationships among Urban Africans in Northern Rhodesia* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1956); and Isaacs, *Idols of the Tribe: Group Identity and Political Change* (New York, 1975), 38–46, 144, 147–48, 150, 162–65. Also see Edward Shils, “Primordial, Personal, Social, and Civil Ties,” *British Journal of Sociology*, 8 (1957): 130–45; and Geertz, *The Religions of Java* (1960; reprint ed., Chicago, 1976), 1–15, 355–81.

¹⁷ Cohen, *Custom and Politics in Urban Africa: A Study of Hausa Migrants in Yoruba Towns* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969), 190–94. For the religious revitalization of 1951–52, see *ibid.*, 149–60.

studies.¹⁸ Even those who found Cohen's stress upon the political functions of ethnicity too narrow for the cases they studied have emphasized that the boundaries of peoplehood were elastic, not fixed, and that a new religious commitment often marked an outsider's incorporation within a group.¹⁹

Along with these advances in anthropology, sociology, and social history, two other scholarly developments especially pertinent to the American experience prompt me to propose a new beginning. First, historians of Central and Eastern Europe, following the lead of Peter F. Sugar and Donald Treadgold, have elaborated the ethnoreligious diversities that underlay political change in the Habsburg and Russian empires and in the Balkans as Ottoman control receded. The pluralistic and dynamic character of the relationships among the varied peoples of these regions helps explain the easy acceptance of pluralism by their emigrant contingents in the United States.²⁰

Second, both Jewish and Christian scholars have promoted a broad renewal of interest in Old Testament theology, partly because of the retrospective impact of the Holocaust upon Jewish thought and partly because of the herculean research of William F. Albright and his students. This theological revival has emphasized Jahweh's covenant to sustain a particular people, formed by their acceptance of his law and lordship, in all the immense challenges of their centuries-long *diaspora*. Recent works such as Emil Fackenheim's *God's Presence in History*, which grounds the culture of Judaism in the Exodus, and Jürgen Moltmann's *Theology of Hope* have underscored the contribution of Jewish messianism and Christian millennialism to the idea of progress. This wide-ranging scholarly effort to make biblical sense of "the reality we all live in," to use Geertz's phrase, has demonstrated afresh that both Judaism and Christianity have aimed to hold together what Geertz calls "ethos," which he defines as a people's view of "right" ideals for life, and "world-view," by which he means their understanding of social reality. Furthermore, both faiths have sought this union of ethos and world-view not simply in the ritualized practices and symbolic behaviors that have pre-

¹⁸ Abner Cohen, ed., *Urban Ethnicity* (London, 1974), xii-xv, xxiii; David Parkin, "Congregational and Interpersonal Ideologies in Political Ethnicity," in Cohen, *Urban Ethnicity*, 119-27; and Edward Allworth, "Regeneration in Central Asia," in Allworth, ed., *The Nationality Question in Central Asia* (New York, 1973), 3-5. For the most incisive statement I have read of the political nature of ethnic mobilization, see Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Two Modes of Ethnic Consciousness: Soviet Central Asia in Transition?" in Allworth, *The Nationality Question in Central Asia*, 168-75. But see Judith Nagata, "What Is a Malay? Situational Selection of Ethnic Identity in a Plural Society," *American Ethnologist*, 1 (1974): 331-33, *passim*.

¹⁹ For a discussion of the role of Pentecostal sects in the formation of the "Maragoli" group in rural Uganda, see S. R. Charsley, "The Formation of Ethnic Groups," in Cohen, *Urban Ethnicity*, 338-39, 344-49, *passim*. Also see Shlomo Deshen, "Political Ethnicity and Cultural Ethnicity in Israel during the 1960's," in Cohen, *Urban Ethnicity*, 282-85, 294-97, 302-06; and see Frederik Barth, Introduction, in Barth, ed., *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (Boston, 1970), 22-24, *passim*.

²⁰ Sugar, "The Nature of Non-Germanic Societies under Habsburg Rule," *Slavic Review*, 20 (1963): 16-24; Donald Treadgold, "The Peasant and Religion," in Wayne S. Vucinich, ed., *The Peasant in Nineteenth-Century Russia* (Stanford, Calif., 1965), 72-107; Emanuel Turczynski, "Nationalism and Religion in Eastern Europe," *East European Quarterly*, 5 (1972): 468-86; and Stavrou Skendi, *The Albanian National Awakening, 1878-1912* (Princeton, 1967). For a bibliographical account of recent interpretative trends, see R. V. Burns, *East European History: An Ethnic Approach*, American Historical Association Pamphlets, no. 425 (Washington, 1973).

occupied Geertz but in a set of remarkably persistent and rationally communicated ideas, to which the notion of a pilgrim people is central.²¹

Students of American ethnic history have scarcely begun to see the implications or to sift out and assimilate the results of this recent scholarship. The reconstruction of Jewish and Christian theology in terms of historical process is especially important to an analytical synthesis of the relationship between religion and ethnicity. That synthesis should concentrate upon immigrants from Europe because they came to this country in such numbers as to dominate the history of American ethnic pluralism. Although the injustices suffered by black, Chicano, Oriental, and American Indian minorities justify the multiplication of works on their sociology and history, the result is a growing cultural lag in scholarship. Recent studies of these "racial" minorities routinely analyze aspects of their ethnoreligious systems that sustain emerging social and political objectives, whereas scholars usually treat the religious institutions, cultural forms, and ideologies of immigrant Protestants, Jews, Catholics, and Eastern Orthodox Christians as backward-looking, dysfunctional, or arcane. This essay aims to redress the balance by focusing primarily on the role of religion among groups recently dubbed "white ethnics" and by pointing out resemblances to the way churches have sustained black and Hispanic-American ethnicity.

THE MOBILIZATION OF WHAT BECAME AMERICA'S IMMIGRANT PEOPLES began in most instances in their homelands, amidst a complex rivalry for economic and cultural advantage. Even in the Old World, the developing sense of peoplehood depended heavily upon religious identification, in some cases more so than upon language or myths about common descent. Migration to America, both before and after the United States became a largely urban and industrial society, produced three important alterations in the relationship of faith to ethnic identity: (1) a redefinition, usually in religious terms, of the boundaries of peoplehood, bringing folk memories to bear upon new aspirations; (2) an intensification of the psychic basis of theological reflection and ethnoreligious commitment, due to the emotional consequences of uprooting and repeated resettlement; and (3) a revitalization of the conviction, whether from Jewish messianism or from Christian millennialism, that the goal of history is the creation of a common humanity, a brotherhood of faith and faithfulness. The last two developments made the relationship between religion and ethnicity dialectical. Even while affirming that the unity of all mankind was the goal, intensified religious commitment defined more sharply the boundaries of subcultures and communities. In Western societies, both the confessional

²¹ Fackenheim, *God's Presence in History: Jewish Affirmations and Philosophical Reflections* (New York, 1970), chaps. 1, 3; and Moltmann, *Theology of Hope, on the Ground of the Implications of a Christian Eschatology* (New York, 1967). Also see Eric Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol. 1: *Israel and Revelation* (Baton Rouge, 1956), ix, xi, 126-27; and Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, 87-89, 139-41, 126-27. For an opposite argument that rites, not beliefs, are central to a religion's social role, see A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *Structure and Function in Primitive Society: Essays and Addresses* (New York, 1965), 153-65.

state churches and some of the most intensely pietistic and sectarian groups in each of the major traditions—Catholic, Orthodox, Jewish, and Protestant—have played a unifying role, even while ministering to regional, doctrinal, and ethnic divisions. How this was so in American immigrant communities and how it fostered that peculiar unity of opposites which John Higham has recently labeled “pluralistic integration” urgently needs clarification.²² This essay seeks to illuminate these three fundamental alterations in the relationship of faith to ethnicity in the United States by illustrating their pervasiveness and significance. Since the alterations began in Europe, I must begin by summarizing the religious aspects of the changes in culture, society, and ideology that took place there.

Long before the first substantial migrations of any people occurred, a mobile minority composed of clergymen, peddlers, fishermen, government officials, and soldiers had already sensed that they were part of a cultural community extending beyond their native villages and valleys. As the agricultural and commercial revolutions spread, moreover, “modern” ideas about personal success, individual autonomy, work, and risk taking penetrated even the most isolated European and Near Eastern villages. Conscription to the armed services took young men to distant places for short periods; agricultural laborers journeyed from the mountains to the plains at harvest time; and the expansion of trade first encouraged, then undermined, household industry. For decades, peddlers carted the new manufactured products across great distances. During the nineteenth century the railroads turned this trickle of goods into a torrent. The construction of railroads by wage labor recruited from villages where no one had ever seen a steam engine transformed rural economies and peasant perceptions of time and space. Meanwhile, the population explosion that began in the seventeenth century had prompted the migration of peoples such as the Scots, Germans, Jews, Rusins, and Rumanians into nearby lands and villages. The resulting conflict and accommodation among groups intensified the sense of uniqueness and sharpened the psychic boundaries that language, culture, and religion drew among peoples who lived close together.²³

Ethnoreligious diversity characterized many of the areas of Western Europe that first sent peoples to America. Colonial Englishmen were highly conscious of the religious and other cultural characteristics that distinguished them from Scottish, Welsh, and Scotch-Irish Protestants and especially from the Catholic Irish, whose migration to both English and American towns began

²² John Higham, “Hanging Together: Divergent Unities in American History,” *JAH*, 41 (1974): 5–28, foreshadowed in its title a central point in his *Send These to Me: Jews and Other Immigrants in Urban America*, 240–42.

²³ Ian Charles C. Graham, *Colonists from Scotland: Emigration to North America, 1707–1783* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1956) chaps. 1–3; Mack Walker, *Germany and the Emigration, 1816–1885* (Cambridge, 1965), 1–9; Laurence J. McCaffrey, *The Irish Diaspora in America* (Bloomington, Ind., 1976), 60–61; Carlile A. Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors: The Treaty of Trianon and Its Consequences, 1918–1937* (London, 1937), 83–94, 200–12, 262–75, 356–62, 380–90; Sugar, “Nature of Non-Germanic Societies under Habsburg Rule,” 16–24; and Gunther E. Rothenburg, “The Croatian Military Border and the Rise of Yugoslav Nationalism,” *Slavic and Eastern European Review*, 43 (1964): 35–38, 42.

in the middle of the eighteenth century. Northern Ireland, source of both Catholic and Protestant immigrants, gave colonial America a Scotch-Irish Puritanism quite different from the English variety dominant east of the Hudson River.²⁴ German-speaking migrants from the Rhineland represented not only various Protestant communions—from Mennonites and Brethren to Lutherans and Reformed Germans—but, as time passed, Catholic and Jewish populations as well. Both of the latter groups came in large numbers from Bavaria in the decades before the Civil War. The Netherlands, whose Protestant and Catholic divisions were reflected in the earliest settlers of New Amsterdam, sent some Quakers and Mennonites and a large Dutch Reformed contingent to the Middle Colonies and, later, both Reformed Dutch and Catholic Belgians to the Midwest.²⁵ Laplanders—some by language Swedish and others Finnish—were, like the Swede-Finns from certain Baltic islands, Lutheran in religion. In the decades preceding mass migration to America, all of the Scandinavian peoples experienced extensive religious awakenings that heightened their sense of identity as Danes, Norwegians, Swedes, or Finns.²⁶

Population expansion, resettlement of peoples, and intensified ethnic rivalry also characterized Central and Eastern Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Rumanians, Orthodox in religion and speaking a language rooted in both Slavic and Latin, spread northward over the Transylvanian plateau, complicating the cultural map of a region long occupied by German-speaking Saxons, Magyars, and an older native population whose ethnic and linguistic identity remains unresolved. Meanwhile, contingents of Carpathian and Galician Jews moved southward into Transylvania, while others fanned out into what is now Slovakia, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. In all of these regions, competition among peasants, tradesmen, and laborers for land and other economic advantages intensified the group loyalties originally defined by religion. Rumanian Orthodox chapels and fortress-like Saxon Lutheran churches still stand in separate sections of hundreds of Transylvanian villages; frequently, the same villages contain Jewish, Rumanian Greek Catholic, and (westward toward Hungary) Magyar Roman Catholic houses of

²⁴ On the general background, see Geipel, *The Europeans: The People, Today and Yesterday*. For Switzerland and Belgium, see William Petersen, "On the Subnations of Western Europe," in Glazer and Moynihan, *Ethnicity: Theory and Practice*, 177–208. R. J. Dickson has demonstrated that economic and not religious considerations provided the chief motive for Scotch-Irish emigration, but he has ignored the role of Presbyterian piety in mobilizing and sustaining their venture; Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, 1718–1775* (London, 1966), 24–25, 33–39. Also see Leonard J. Trinterud, *The Forming of an American Tradition: A Re-examination of Colonial Presbyterianism* (Philadelphia, 1949), 15, 30–31, 34–35, 71–72, 127–30, 137–38, 222–27, 261–64; and L. C. Rudolph, *Hoosier Zion: A Study of Presbyterianism in Indiana to 1850* (New Haven, 1963), 118–29.

²⁵ For careful essays on Lutheran, Reformed, Mennonite, Moravian, and Brethren immigrants, see F. Ernest Stoeffler, ed., *Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity* (Grand Rapids, 1976). Also see Henry S. Lucas, *Netherlanders in America: Dutch Immigration to the United States and Canada, 1789–1950* (Ann Arbor, 1955); and Eric Hirshler, ed., *Jews from Germany in the United States* (New York, 1955).

²⁶ Uuras Saarnivaara, *The History of the Laestadian or Apostolic-Lutheran Movement in America* (Ironwood, Mich., 1947); Florence E. Janson, *The Background of Swedish Immigration, 1840–1930* (Philadelphia, 1931), 167–221; and Einar Molland, *Church Life in Norway, 1800–1950*, trans. Harris Kaasa (Minneapolis, 1957), 2–3, 15–19, 35–41, 48–52.

worship. A similar pluralism emerged in the villages and towns of the great basin of the Danube north of Belgrade, called the Banat and the Batchka, and in what is today eastern Slovakia. In the larger Slovak towns, a small German Lutheran population (dating from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) profited from the special favor of the Habsburg monarchs. A strong educational program and the impulse to get ahead that migrants generally display enabled them to compete effectively with the far more numerous Slovak Roman Catholics. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a steady stream of Rusin Greek Catholics poured from the Carpathian highlands into the vacant lands around the East Slovak villages; and into the villages and towns came Jews from the same area and Protestant and Roman Catholic Magyars from the south.²⁷

Elsewhere in Eastern Europe not only the towns but many of the villages were cockpits of cultural, economic, and political rivalry among ethnoreligious groups long before mass migration to America began. In the Austrian province of Galicia, now southern Poland, Roman Catholic Poles, Greek Catholic or Orthodox Rusins (or Ukrainians, as some of them came to prefer to be called), and Orthodox and Hasidic Jews lived together uneasily in the same towns and villages. In the nineteenth century the government in Vienna counteracted Polish agitation for independence by supporting the communal enterprises of the non-Polish peoples. For similar reasons, the Prussian government usually supported German interests against the Polish population in Posen, Upper Silesia, and the province of West Prussia. Eastward in Bukovina and Lithuania, as in all of the long borderland from the Baltic to the Bosphorus, the convergence of Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant peoples and the rapid expansion of the Jewish population created similar rivalries. The tsarist government, insecure in its control over the western provinces, sought stability through Russification. Along the Dalmatian coast from Trieste to Dubrovnik, Catholic Slovenes and Croats and Orthodox Serbs likewise often lived side by side. Their exposure to Italian and Greek influences through the Adriatic ports as well as their proximity to the large Muslim populations in Bosnia and Herzegovina made the coastal as well as many inland towns and villages arenas of competing cultures. In all of these regions, economic rivalries accentuated the divisions that religion and language defined, as the

²⁷ For relevant sources on village backgrounds, see the citations in my "Lay Initiative in the Religious Life of American Immigrants, 1880-1950," 216-25. For the multi-ethnic character of village life, see Barton, *Peasants and Strangers: Italians, Rumanians, and Slovaks in an American City*, 27-47; Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors: The Treaty of Trianon and Its Consequences, 1918-1937*, 75-94, 200-11, 251-74, 383-90; Oscar Jászi, *The Dissolution of the Habsburg Empire* (Chicago, 1929), 391-93; Jean Mousset, *Les villes de la Russie subcarpatique (1918-1938): L'effort tchécoslovaque* (Paris, 1938), 17-26; David Friedmann, *Geschichte der Juden in Hunnén vom 13. Jahrhundert bis auf die Gegenwart* (Beregsas, Hungary, 1933), 48-74; Marion Mark Stolarik, "Immigration and Urbanization: The Slovak Experience, 1870-1918" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1974), 1-54; and Paula Kaye Benkart, "Religion, Family, and Community among Hungarians Migrating to American Cities, 1880-1930" (Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1975), 1-58. For the study that supersedes other discussions of the general question, see Turczynski, "Nationalism and Religion in Eastern Europe," 468-71, 475-76, *passim*.

various peoples competed for possession of the soil and for commercial as well as agrarian markets.²⁸

The ethnic mobilization of what became America's immigrant peoples began, then, in their homelands amidst complex economic and cultural rivalries. In each case the developing sense of peoplehood depended heavily upon a revitalization of religious faith and commitment. Religious awakenings helped define both the boundaries and the moral ideals of ethnic groups and thrust both townsmen and peasants toward the "modern" goals of autonomy, self-realization, and mobility that were crucial in the decision to migrate. The Irish national awakening, for example, may have helped generate and certainly drew inspiration from the "devotional revolution" which swept through Ireland and its emigrant colonies in England and America in the mid-nineteenth century. John Livingston's revivals, which "Presbyterianized" northern Ireland in the seventeenth century, had an effect upon the Scotch-Irish similar to that of the Wesleyan revival in England and the Pietist movements in Germany in the eighteenth.²⁹ The awakening of Serbian Orthodoxy—through which Danilo Jakšić, Bishop of Karlovac, marshaled cultural resources for the Serbian resurgence in the Croatian borderlands—roughly paralleled the invigoration of Carpathian Jewry by the intensely personal and communal piety of Hasidism. In the nineteenth century the Haugean and Johnsonian revivals among Norwegian Lutherans, the Ukrainian national movement that the Metropolitans of Lvov helped inspire, and the Slovak Catholic resistance to Magyarization also mobilized religious sentiments to serve ethnic purposes.³⁰

Moralism, rooted in biblical teachings but made intensely personal in religious revivals, was an essential ingredient of modernization. The fashioning of "new persons"—involving new perceptions of individual worth, enlarged hopes for both this life and the next, and the internalization of moral

²⁸ For a comprehensive and thoughtful analysis of the ethnoreligious situation in Austrian Galicia and Russian Poland, see Keith Dyrud, "The Rusin Question in Eastern Europe and in America, 1890–World War I" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1976), 16–74 (forthcoming, Arno Press). Also see William John Galush, "Forming Polonia: A Study of Four Polish-American Communities, 1890–1940" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1975), 1–44; Erich Prokopowitsch, *Die Romanische Nationalbewegung in der Bukowina und der Dako-Romanismus*, Studien zur Geschichte der Österreichisch-Ungarischen Monarchie, no. 3 (Graz, Austria, 1965), 35–110; Ludvik Nemeč, "The Ruthenian Uniate Church in Its Historical Perspective," *Church History*, 37 (1969): 371–86; Macartney, *Hungary and Her Successors: The Treaty of Trianon and Its Consequences, 1918–1937*, 356–62; and Smith, "Lay Initiative in the Religious Life of American Immigrants, 1880–1950," 214–49. Arunas Alisaukas has research in progress on Lithuanians in Europe and America.

²⁹ Emmet Larkin, "The Devotional Revolution in Ireland, 1850–1875," *AHR*, 77 (1972): 636–52; Trinterud, *Colonial Presbyterianism*, 170; Bernard Semmel, *The Methodist Revolution* (New York, 1973), 3–40, 81–108; and Donald F. Durnbaugh, "The Brethren in Early American Church Life," in Stoeffler, *Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity*, 222–32. For an absorbing commentary on the issues Larkin has raised, see David W. Miller, "Irish Catholicism and the Great Famine," *Journal of Social History*, 9 (1975): 81–98.

³⁰ Turczynski, "Nationalism and Religion in Eastern Europe," 473–76; Gershom Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York, 1961), 325–50; Molland, *Church Life in Norway, 1800–1950*, 10, 19; Ivan L. Rudnytsky, "The Role of the Ukraine in Modern History," *Slavic Review*, 22 (1963): 203–15; and A. Hlinka, "The Influence of Religion and Catholicism on States and Individuals," in R. W. Seton-Watson, ed., *Slovakia Then and Now: A Political Survey* (London, 1931), 168.

constraints calculated to help converts realize these hopes—seems to have been the primary aim of all religious awakenings. Bernard Semmel has recently argued that John Wesley’s lifelong battle against the “antinomian tendencies” of the Reformation doctrines of predestination and of justification “by faith alone” and his immensely complex recasting of Anglican, Arminian, and Moravian teachings stemmed from Wesley’s conviction that biblical faith aimed at “holiness”—the moral regeneration of both individuals and societies. Earlier, George M. Stephenson and Einar Molland pointed out that Methodist moralism was critical in early nineteenth-century Swedish and Norwegian revivals, even though Wesley’s sect itself won few adherents.³¹ The timing and indigenous character of European movements for temperance or total abstinence from alcoholic beverages in the nineteenth century is one clue to the nature of the revitalizations that took place.³²

Regional religious organizations both sustained and restricted cultural awakenings. In Central and Eastern Europe, for example, long before other agencies of modernization—railroads, newspapers, industrial employment, and the like—began deeply to affect group consciousness in isolated villages, the various religious communities—Roman and Greek Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Eastern Orthodox, and Jewish—had fashioned hierarchies of communication or authority that sustained the efforts of pastors, priests, rabbis, and lay leaders to help the members of local congregations find in their faith the moral resources to take advantage of a world of enlarging opportunities. By the nineteenth century, these competitive ethnoreligious structures functioned much like American denominations and were the administrative units with which national or imperial governments dealt. In multi-ethnic regions, a single parish or synagogue often served a half-dozen or more villages, many of which contained sizable populations of other faiths. The pastor or rabbi moved from day to day and week to week across his broad territory, somewhat like an American circuit rider, attending to the needs of groups that in some villages were too small to meet anywhere but in homes. Nineteenth-century Lutheran bishops made regular official visits to Slovak congregations in the northern counties of the old Kingdom of Hungary, for example, as did Reformed bishops from Debrecen to their Magyar congregations in Slovakia and Transylvania. Both were concerned for the preservation of the language as well as the faith of these ethnoreligious communities and for the education as well as the economic advancement of the children. The structure of Jewish life, particularly of Hasidism, was too congregational to allow a formal hierarchy to develop. Yet certain rabbis or zaddikim were most frequently consulted on questions of behavior or belief, and all Jewish congregations

³¹ Semmel, *Methodist Revolution*, 93–108, 191–98; and Stephenson, *The Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration: A Study of Immigrant Churches* (Minneapolis, 1932), 116–17. Molland has noted the work ethic and the moral ideal of holiness in the Haugean reaction against Pietism; *Church Life in Norway, 1800–1950*, 10–19.

³² Joan Bland has recounted the indigenous origins and convergence during the 1840s of Irish temperance movements in the United States and Ireland; Bland, *Hibernian Crusade: The Story of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America* (Washington, 1951), 9–17, 21–24. Also see Janson, *The Background of Swedish Immigration, 1840–1930*, 172–76. For an influential exposition of the term “revitalization,” see Anthony F. Wallace, *The Death and Rebirth of the Seneca* (New York, 1969), vii, 239–340.

were preoccupied with the social welfare of their members. As a consequence, in many regions Jewish religious communities became as “denominational” as those of Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, and Greek Catholic Christians.³³

Through this variety of cultural awakenings, then, ethnic consciousness fortified by religious faith took hold of the imagination of many Europeans. It affected most the younger people, especially those with the earliest and best opportunities for schooling—precisely the group that provided the majority of emigrants to the United States. By the time they began to consider the possibility of migration, the interweaving of religious and ethnic feelings had become for many a deep-seated habit of mind.³⁴

Anticlericalism also flourished in nineteenth-century Europe. Some of the most socially progressive emigrants were hostile to doctrines and rites that they felt impeded progress. But they were a minority. The great majority of Greeks, Slovaks, Swedes, Magyars, Lithuanians, and Rusins that settled in America perceived their pastors, priests, or rabbis as agents of progress.³⁵ In both the Old World and the New, clergymen provided moral guidance and spiritual comfort to families unable to sustain themselves on the land and dismayed by the manifold adjustments to a commercial or industrial economy. Pastors served as “spiritual advisers” to the many types of mutual benefit societies that spread through nineteenth-century Scandinavia, Germany, Sicily, Calabria, and the Habsburg Empire. They not only legitimized but sometimes, as in the case of the Norwegian moral revivalist Hans Nielsen Hauge, originated plans for the reorganization of economic life. Clergymen were interested in the social welfare of peasants, craftsmen, shopkeepers, and fishermen and served as spokesmen for ethnic interests that the policies of the English, German, Austro-Hungarian, and Russian governments seemed to threaten. As a consequence, many clergymen performed a role in the mobilization of cultural resources that married ethnicity to religion on clearly “modern” terms.³⁶ Such a role seemed even more appropriate in America,

³³ For the “denominational” structure of religious life in eighteenth-century America, see my “Congregation, State, and Denomination: The Forming of the American Religious Structure,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 25 (1968): 168–75. For nineteenth-century developments in Eastern Europe, see my “Lay Initiative in the Religious Life of American Immigrants, 1880–1950,” 214–49. Also see Turczynski, “Nationalism and Religion in Eastern Europe,” 468–75; and Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 336–37, 344–47.

³⁴ Abramson has argued that “societal competition” among differing faiths was indispensable to the development of ethnoreligious identity; see *Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America*, 127–52.

³⁵ Timothy L. Smith, “Religious Denominations as Ethnic Communities: A Regional Case Study,” *Church History*, 35 (1966): 207–26; Mary B. Trendley, “Formal Organization and the Americanization Process, with Special Reference to the Greeks of Boston,” *American Sociological Review*, 14 (1949): 44–53; and Dyrud, “The Rusin Question in Eastern Europe and in the United States, 1890–World War I,” 1833–89.

³⁶ Their role in mobilizing ethnic groups seems to fit exactly what Glazer and Moynihan have posited as probably the most vital function of ethnic leadership; “Introduction,” *Ethnicity: Theory and Practice*, 18, 25. For a description of a comparable development in Ceylon in the 1950s, see Geertz, “Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in New States,” 122. For pastoral examples in Europe, see Bland, *Hibernian Crusade: The Story of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America*, 22–23; Walter J. Kukkonen, “The Influence of the Revival Movements of Finland on the Finnish Lutheran Churches in America,” in Ralph J. Jalkanen, ed., *The Faith of the Finns: Historical Perspectives on the Finnish Lutheran Church in America* (East Lansing, Mich., 1972), 82–93; Stephenson, *Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration*, 74–132, esp. 103–05; Molland, *Church Life in Norway, 1800–1950*, 10, 15–16; and Wilhelm Austerlitz, *Leben und Werken von Weiland Rabbi Dr. [Mayer] Austerlitz . . .* (Prešov, Slovakia, 1928), 8, 13, 15–16.

and the laymen who founded congregations here expected the clergymen whom they brought from Europe to perform it.³⁷

THUS, THE THREE MAJOR ALTERATIONS in the relationship between ethnicity and religion that took place in America extended and intensified what had begun in Europe. The first of these, to which I now turn, was the redefinition of ethnic boundaries in religious terms. This involved a broadening of the geographic and linguistic backgrounds of persons deemed suitable for inclusion and frequently a decisive narrowing of religious ones.

That this nation's ethnic groups, viewed structurally, were made in America by the voluntary association of newcomers has long been evident.³⁸ Less clear is the fact that the models for this development had emerged earlier in the multi-ethnic arenas of Europe. What in premodern societies had been the experience of wandering tradesmen, scholars, soldiers, government officials, and religious pilgrims—discovering far from their home villages persons similar to themselves in language, cult, or custom and accepting them as “brothers and sisters” of presumed common descent—became routine among migrants to America. Ethnic organizations coalesced out of both economic and psychic need and found meanings for personal and communal life in the cultural symbols and the religious ideas that their leaders believed were marks of a shared inheritance and, hence, of a common peoplehood. Both the structure and the culture of these emerging ethnoreligious groups helped participants compete more advantageously with members of other groups. And, once established, each group constituted—in Milton Gordon's classic terms—a social system in which the members could satisfy all of their needs for structured human relationships from the cradle to the grave.³⁹ The Ameri-

³⁷ For a penetrating revision of long-held views, see Josef J. Barton, “Religion and Cultural Change in Czech Immigrant Communities,” in Miller and Marzik, *Immigrants and Religion in Urban America*, 9–10, 14–15, 17. For other examples demonstrating that the transfer to America was often direct, see Arthur J. Goren, *New York Jews and the Quest for Community* (New York, 1970), 76–85; Stephenson, *Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration*, 264–77, 384–94; Jay P. Dolan, *The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815–1865* (Baltimore, 1975), 64–66, 81–84, and *Catholic Revivalism in the United States, 1830–1900* (South Bend, Ind., 1978), 21–23, 35–36, 189–93; Bernard Coleman and Verona LaBud, *Masinaigans—The Little Book: A Biography of Monsignor Joseph F. Buh, Slovenian Missionary in America, 1864–1922* (St. Paul, 1972), 130–31, 184–87; Arlow W. Anderson, *The Norwegian-Americans* (Boston, 1975), 13–15, 95–98, 102–08; Gillian L. Gollin, *Moravians in Two Worlds: A Study of Changing Communities* (New York, 1967), 9–24, 165–216; Vladimir Kaye, *Early Ukrainian Settlements in Canada, 1895–1900: Dr. Joseph Oeskew's Role in the Settlement of the Canadian Northwest* (Toronto, 1964); and John Walker Briggs, “Church Building in America: Divergent and Convergent Interests of Priests and Lay People in Italian-American Communities,” paper read at the Hopkins-Harwichport Seminar in American Religious History, 1975.

³⁸ See William I. Thomas and Florjan Znaniecki, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Chicago, 1918); Oscar Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants: A Study in Acculturation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1941); Hoglund, *Finnish Immigrants in America, 1800–1920*; and Philip Gleason, *The Conservative Reformers: German-American Catholics and the Social Order* (Notre Dame, Ind., 1968). Also see Theodore C. Blegen, *Norwegian Migration to America: The American Transition* (Northfield, Minn., 1940); Theodore Saloutos, *The Greeks in the United States* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964); and Rudolph J. Vecoli, “European Americans: From Immigrants to Ethnics,” in William H. Cartwright and Richard L. Watson, Jr., eds., *The Reinterpretation of American History and Culture* (Washington, 1973), 81–112.

³⁹ Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life*, 34–51. For Gordon's more recent thinking, see his “Toward a General Theory of Racial and Ethnic Group Relations,” in Glazer and Moynihan, *Ethnicity: Theory and Practice*, 84–110.

can communities were not simply transplantings of Old World political and religious loyalties but reasoned efforts to deal with new challenges. That the national movements in Slovakia, Lithuania, and Poland drew heavily for inspiration, leadership, and funds upon their countrymen in the United States ought not to distort our understanding of the differing cultural, economic, and political purposes of the organizations that the immigrants founded here.⁴⁰

Formal affiliation, however, turned on personal choice. Ethnic association—here defined as residence in a boarding house or tenement, membership in a local or national mutual benefit society, or participation in a musical, dramatic, or recreational club—was determined largely by the immigrant's identification with a particular religious tradition.⁴¹ The appeal of common language, national feeling, and belief in a common descent was sufficient in only a few minor cases to outweigh the attraction of religious affiliation as an organizing impulse.⁴² Two problems of perception have obscured this fact: the preoccupation of historians and sociologists with the secular aspects of ethnicity and nationality;⁴³ and the unexamined assumption that the experiences of linguistic groups among whom no substantial religious divisions existed (Greeks, Poles, Italians, Slovenes, French-Canadians, Scots, and Chicanos) were typical of all groups. Scholars and journalists have written about a major religious segment of the German, Czech, Slovak, Hungarian, Arab, or Russian populations in America under the assumption that ethnic identity was defined by language, while largely ignoring another branch or branches of the same linguistic group whose ethnic life revolved around a different religious affiliation.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Stolarik, "Immigration and Urbanization: The Slovak Experience, 1870-1918"; Galush, "Polish-American Communities, 1890-1940"; Dyrud, "The Rusin Question in Eastern Europe and in America, 1890-World War I"; Arunas Alisauskas, "Religion, Ethnicity, and the Emergence of a Lithuanian Subculture in the United States, 1870-1900," paper read at the Hopkins-Harwichport Seminar in American Religious History, August 1974; and Timothy L. Smith, "Immigrant Social Aspirations and American Education, 1880-1930," *American Quarterly*, 21 (1969): 539-42. Also see Victor Greene, *For God and Country: The Rise of Polish and Lithuanian Ethnic Consciousness in America, 1860-1910* (Madison, Wisc., 1975), 85-99, 143-53.

⁴¹ Several groups of graduate students and I have closely examined the marriage records of numerous immigrant congregations and the personnel records of the mutual benefit societies that supported them. We found that members of local ethnic communities almost invariably came from a wide variety of villages and usually from two or more regions in their homelands. Also see Vilho Niitemaa, "Emigration Research in Finland," in Michael G. Karni, Matti E. Kaups, and Douglas J. Ollila, Jr., eds., *The Finnish Experience in the Western Great Lakes Region: New Perspectives* (Turku, Finland, 1975), 31-33; Dolan, *Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815-1865*, 72-73; and Walter O. Forster, *Zion on the Mississippi: The Settlement of the Saxon Lutherans in Missouri, 1839-1841* (St. Louis, 1953), 150.

⁴² For the rich variety of ethnoreligious organizations of Arabic-speaking Americans, see Barbara C. Aswad, ed., *Arabic-Speaking Communities in American Cities* (New York, 1974). For other examples in which language and ethnicity are not correlated, see Keyes, "Towards a New Formulation of the Concept Ethnic Group," 202-04; and Petersen, "Subnations of Western Europe," 177-79. Also see Dell H. Hymes, "Linguistic Problems in Defining the Concept of Tribe," in J. Helm, ed., *Essays on the Problem of Tribe* (Seattle, 1968), 23-48. For a theoretical reconstruction of the whole problem, see Dell H. Hymes, *Foundations in Sociolinguistics* (New York, 1974), 18-19, 30-32, 45-53, 102-05.

⁴³ This preoccupation is especially obvious in the essays in Glazer and Moynihan, *Ethnicity: Theory and Practice* and in the papers presented at the Schouler Lectures and Symposium on Ethnic Leadership at Johns Hopkins University in February 1976. Oscar and Mary F. Handlin and Thomas Kessner have, moreover, virtually ignored religion; Handlin and Handlin, "The New History and the Ethnic Factor in American Life," *Perspectives in American History*, 4 (1970): 21-23; and Kessner, *The Golden Door: Italian and Jewish Immigrant Mobility in New York City, 1880-1915*.

⁴⁴ For one of the finer recent studies, see Kathleen Conzen, *Immigrant Milwaukee, 1836-1860: Accommoda-*

By its policy since 1920 of recording the “mother tongue” of the population, the federal Census Bureau has encouraged the notion that language was the bench mark of ethnicity. For their own reasons, the editors of foreign language newspapers have for decades declared this to be the case. Yet they, at least, knew that Norwegian and Danish were scarcely two languages, that Croatian and Serbian were closely related South Slavic dialects, that literary Ukrainian and Slovak were created in the nineteenth century in order politically to unite regional groups with diverse dialects, and that the dialects of northern and southern Italians were at least as dissimilar as Swedish and Norwegian.⁴⁵

Consider, for example, the role of religion among Germans in America. Those who settled in colonial Pennsylvania were divided between the “church” party (Lutheran or Reformed), whose congregations also attracted settlers of those persuasions hailing from Switzerland or the Low Countries, and the “sectarian” groups which had Anabaptist or Pietist backgrounds. So sharp were the distinctions between these two general alignments and so insistent were the Mennonites, Moravians, and Dunkers upon their particular separateness that, if we stay with Gordon’s functional definition, colonial Pennsylvania was the home of a half-dozen German ethnic groups. In the nineteenth century, large-scale immigration from Germany produced several new ethnoreligious communities: a Protestant one, bounded by the Missouri and Wisconsin Lutheran Synods; a Jewish community, the leadership of which soon passed to the Reform rabbis; a small but influential community of freethinkers, united in the *Turnvereine*; and the German Catholics. The organizational center of the last was not a separate church because Roman Catholic doctrine and structure forbade sectarian divisions; so the numerous local and national German Catholic mutual aid societies and their umbrella organization, the *Central-Verein*, provided a surrogate church and nurtured their sense of separate peoplehood.⁴⁶ Although in the twentieth century all of the German ethnic groups responded in similar ways to the political crises that the two world wars created in their relationship to other Americans, their segregation in separate parishes, clubs, and neighborhoods as well as the separate paths they took toward accommodation with non-German Protestants, Catholics, and Jews made the notion of a common German “nationality” important only

tion and Community in a Frontier City (Cambridge, Mass., 1976). In the chapter on religious developments, Conzen has dealt with both Protestant and Catholic Germans, but not with Jews. The same is true of Carl Wittke’s chapter on Germans, which also emphasizes free thinkers; Wittke, *We Who Built America: The Saga of the Immigrant* (rev. ed., Cleveland, 1964), 186–256.

⁴⁵ Meic Stephens has covered some of these differences from the point of view of a Welsh nationalist who considers all Gaelic speakers as one people; see *Linguistic Minorities in Western Europe*, xix–xx, 1–5, 479–552.

⁴⁶ For the early years, see Julius F. Sachse, *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania, 1694–1708* (Philadelphia, 1895), and *The German Sectarians of Pennsylvania*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia, 1899–1900). For splendid summaries, see John R. Weinlick on Moravians, Donald Durnbaugh on the Brethren or Dunkers, and James R. Tanis on Reformed Pietism in Stoeffler, *Continental Pietism and Early American Christianity*, 123–63, 222–65, 34–73. For the nineteenth century, see Conzen, *Immigrant Milwaukee, 1836–1860*, 158–67; Carl E. Schneider, *The German Church on the American Frontier* (St. Louis, 1939); Colman J. Barry, *The Catholic Church and the German-Americans* (Milwaukee, 1953), and “German Catholics and the Nationality Controversy,” in Philip Gleason, ed., *Catholicism in America* (New York, 1970), 68–78; Gleason, *Conservative Reformers: German-American Catholics and the Social Order*, 14–68, 145–58; and Glazer, *American Judaism*, 22–42.

in the politics of foreign policy. By the 1920s the resistance of the separate German religious communities helped to abort plans for a German-American bloc in national elections.⁴⁷ The unity which Bismarck imposed on a religiously plural Germany turned out in the American setting to be neither socially nor politically feasible.

A similar sharpening of the religious boundaries of ethnic association took place among Magyar immigrants, whom other Americans often labeled, inaccurately, "Hungarians." After 1867 the Kingdom of Hungary conferred special privileges on minorities that accepted Magyarization in language and political loyalty, as did most of the Jews in the kingdom and scattered groups of Greek Catholic Rusins and Lutheran Germans. After 1903 the Hungarian prime minister extended this policy to Magyars and Rusins in the United States, secretly subsidizing congregations and newspapers whose leaders agreed to resist Americanization and to help keep their followers loyal to both the government and the religious organizations of their homeland. But the subsidies merely helped the Magyars in the United States do more conveniently what immigrants from other nations did on their own: develop increasingly separate ethnic communities—Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, and Jewish—each sustained by a broad array of congregations, mutual benefit societies, and cultural associations. Until the 1930s, "Hungarian" synagogues stood aloof from both Reform and Orthodox rabbinical organizations; eventually, however, they did what some Magyar Catholics perceived at the outset was inevitable and became an ethnic subcommunity within a major religious tradition. Magyar Lutherans, most of whom joined the Missouri Synod, and the majority of the Reformed congregations, which accepted membership (and subsidies) from either the Presbyterian or Evangelical and Reformed denominations, followed a similar course.⁴⁸

The Rusins, often called Ukrainians or Ruthenians, illustrate particularly well the role of religion in setting new ethnic boundaries. For decades the First Greek Catholic Union and its affiliated organizations defined the ethnic identity of persons of that faith so completely that Slovaks who had been Greek Catholics in Europe became Ruthenians in the United States. During the 1890s wholesale conversions of Greek Catholic Rusins to Orthodoxy in Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and Ohio produced virtually all the "Russians" who lived outside California before 1920, a situation only slightly altered by the arrival after both world wars of refugees more accurately labeled "Rus-

⁴⁷ Frederick Luebke, "Leadership among German Americans between the World Wars," paper read at the Schouler Lectures and Symposium, Johns Hopkins University, February, 1976, pp. 6–8, 23–25.

⁴⁸ Benkart, "Religion, Family, and Community among Hungarians Migrating to American Cities, 1880–1930," 59–101; *The Jewish Review and Observer* (Cleveland), October 17 and 31, 1913, p. 5, p. 3; Louis A. Kalassy, "The Educational and Religious History of the Hungarian Reformed Church in the United States" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1939), 23–26, 65–72, 132; Dyrud, "The Rusin Question in Europe and in America, 1890–World War I," 227–74; and records in the office of the Hungarian Lutheran Church, Cleveland. I differ with Herberg about the outcome of this process; see his *Protestant-Catholic-Jew: An Essay in Religious Sociology*, 72–98, 254–81. It did not constitute a prostitution of religious values to Americanism but in some ways was a fulfillment of their character and promise. Also see Harold J. Abramson, "The Religio-Ethnic Factor and the American Experience: Another Look at the Three-Generations Hypothesis," *Ethnicity*, 2 (1975): 163–77.

sian.”⁴⁹ One of the few exceptions to the rule that faith defined ethnic boundaries in America was a third contingent of Rusins—those of both Greek Catholic and Orthodox affiliation—whose political aspirations were so powerful in both the Old World and the New that they, their prelates, and their priests were swept into the Ukrainian national movement.⁵⁰

The consolidation of New World ethnicity and Old World nationalism in Boston’s Albanian Orthodox community is almost a caricature of the prevailing pattern. Albania was originally Catholic in the north and Orthodox—under Greek bishops—in the south, but central Albania became Muslim as a result of the Ottoman conquest. In the 1890s nationalists in the south began pressing the Greek hierarchs for priests and a liturgy in their own language and for the early establishment of an independent (in Orthodox terminology, “autocephalous”) church. Albanians living outside the country in Bucharest, London, Cairo, and particularly America soon accomplished what the ecclesiastical authorities refused to allow in the home country. In 1903 Fan S. Noli, a native of Thrace who had lived for a time in Athens, moved to Egypt, where he met Orthodox nationalists. Three years later they sent him to Buffalo, New York to assist in the development of an Albanian mutual benefit society. The next year a Greek priest in Hudson, Massachusetts refused to allow a funeral liturgy for a young Albanian nationalist on the grounds that all such persons were automatically excommunicated. The members of the Boston community were outraged, and they persuaded Noli, in order to have him become their pastor, to accept ordination at the hands of the Russian archbishop in New York. Consecrated archbishop, Noli made the Albanian Orthodox Church, formally declared autocephalous in 1919, the center of the Albanian national movement. He translated and published for worldwide distribution an Albanian liturgy, printed textbooks in the native language for use in homeland and American schools, and influenced Catholic and Muslim leaders in the New World to use the pulpit as a forum to promote both Albanian nationalism and the ethnic advancement of their countrymen who had settled in America. When the end of the First World War brought independence to Albania, Noli returned to a land that had never been his home to become one of its first prime ministers.⁵¹

Much additional evidence of the overriding influence of religion upon identity-formation among other ethnic groups does not need recounting here. I have written elsewhere of the duality of communities, one Christian and the

⁴⁹ Andrew J. Shipman, “Greek Catholics in America,” *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 15 vols. (New York, 1907–12), 6: 745–49, and “Our Russian Catholics: The Greek Ruthenian Church in America,” *The [Russian Orthodox] Messenger*, 42 (November, 1912): 664–67; Stephen E. Gulovich, *Windows Westward: Rome, Russia, Reunion* (New York, 1947), 124–35; Walter C. Warzewski, “Religion and National Consciousness in the History of the Rusins of Carpatho-Ruthenia and the Byzantine Rite Pittsburgh Exarchate” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1964), 118–39; Alex Simirenko, *Pilgrims, Colonists, and Frontiersmen: An Ethnic Community in Transition* (Minneapolis, 1964), 37–54; Dimitry Gregorieff, “The Historical Background of Orthodoxy in America,” *St. Vladimir’s Seminary Quarterly*, 5 (1961): 9–12, 41; and Dyrud, “The Rusin Question in Eastern Europe and in America, 1890–World War I,” 136–69, 211–12.

⁵⁰ Ukrainian National Association, *Jubilee Book: In Commemoration of the Fortieth Anniversary* (Jersey City, N.J., 1933), 194–98, *passim*.

⁵¹ Skendi, *Albanian National Awakening, 1878–1912*, 6–13, 158–63, 296–303.

other anticlerical or socialist, that emerged around 1900 among Catholic Slovenes and Lutheran Finns. A brief effort to unite all South Slavs in America on the basis of their common descent—as nationalists dreamed of doing in the old country—ran afoul of the Slovenes' belief that they were culturally superior to their fellow Catholic Croatians and the Orthodoxy of the Serbs. Meanwhile, Montenegrin immigrants and those Orthodox Macedonians whose language was Serbo-Croatian became Serbs in America. Slovaks of Catholic, Lutheran, Greek Catholic, and Presbyterian backgrounds managed to unite for a decade or so after 1890 in the National Slovak Society, whose strongly political ideology was conditioned by long resistance to Magyarization in the old country; but congregations and mutual benefit societies soon formed separate national religious brotherhoods that proved to be the decisive catalysts of ethnicity and, eventually, the major avenues of accommodation to a wider American identity.⁵²

The very recent emergence of working unity among Catholic Hispanic-Americans illustrates the continuing role of religious affiliation in the evolution of the boundaries of ethnicity. To those Chicanos whose roots lay deep in the soil of the Rio Grande and lower Colorado valleys and in the southern California coastlands, the Anglos were the immigrants—but immigrants who held all the economic and political aces. The twentieth-century movements for social justice among Catholics, however, eventually produced in the American Southwest a band of nuns, teaching brothers, priests, and auxiliary bishops committed to promoting the welfare of Chicanos and of recent Mexican immigrants, whether in that region or in the shanty-towns that housed migratory agricultural workers from the Gulf states to Canada. This development roughly coincided with the emergence in eastern cities of a community of economic and political interests among groups of Catholics from Puerto Rico, Cuba, and other Latin American countries.⁵³ During the 1970s liberation theology and the quest of Cesar Chavez and others for political clout in the large states of California, Texas, Florida, and New York brought Chicanos and urban Hispanics together. They built their unity, however, within the scaffolding of relationships, beliefs, and social aspirations that they shared as Catholics. In October 1976 a Hispanic-American caucus exercised immense, though unpublicized, influence at the United States Bishops' Conference on Liberty and Justice for All, the first representative assembly of American Catholic clergy and laity held in the twentieth century. On the heels of that achievement, the Hispanic-American members of the United States Congress announced success in the long-frustrated effort to form a congressional caucus. If, as I believe, these developments affirm the mobilization of an enlarged

⁵² Smith, "Religious Denominations as Ethnic Communities: A Regional Case Study," 210–24; and Mark Stolarik, "Building Slovak Communities in America," paper read at the Hopkins-Harwichport Seminar in American Religious History, August 1974.

⁵³ Joseph Fitzpatrick, *Puerto Rican Americans* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1971); Leo Grebler, J. W. Moore, and R. C. Guyman, *The Mexican-American People: The Nation's Second Largest Minority* (New York, 1970), 453–57, 463–68; and Manuel P. Servin, ed., *The Mexican-Americans: An Awakening Minority* (Beverly Hills, Calif., 1970), 176–78, 188–92, 232–33.

and powerful ethnic entity, its political as well as its economic significance reflects the successful linking of ethnic interests to religious idealism in broad strategies that are as much Catholic as Hispanic.⁵⁴

THE CUSTOMS AND BELIEFS of particular varieties of faith and the traditions of loyalty to them seem, then, to have been the decisive determinants of ethnic affiliation in America. The availability of religious structures whose rituals were rooted in the past but whose doctrines sustained expansive hopes for the future does not, however, fully explain the changing relationship of faith to ethnicity in the United States. A second important alteration in that relationship was the intensification of the psychic basis of religious commitment that the acts of uprooting, migration, and repeated resettlement produced in the minds of new Americans. The most important of the several enduring contributions of Oscar Handlin in *The Uprooted* is his evocation of the anxieties, both personal and social, that resulted from forsaking an old home and searching for a new community. An intense interest in the religious meaning of their break with the past lay behind the preoccupation of both clergy and lay emigrants with religious organizations; and this interest stemmed from formidable psychic challenges.⁵⁵

The individual's sense of responsibility for the decision to migrate was primary here. Loneliness, the romanticizing of memories, the guilt for imagined desertion of parents and other relatives, and the search for community and identity in a world of strangers all began the moment the nearest range of hills shut out the view of the emigrant's native valley. Longing for a past that could not be recovered intensified the emotional satisfaction of daring to hope for a better future. Separation from both personal and physical associations of one's childhood community drew emotional strings taut. Friendships, however, were often fleeting; and the lonely vigils—when sickness, unemployment, or personal rejection set individuals apart—produced deep crises of the spirit. At such moments, the concrete symbols of order or hope that the village church and priest and the annual round of religious observances had once provided seemed far away; yet the mysteries of individual existence as well as the confusing agonies of anomie cried out for religious explanation.⁵⁶ For this

⁵⁴ This development is contrary to what Andrew Greeley expected only five years ago; see his *Ethnicity in the United States: A Preliminary Reconnaissance*, 295. My account is based on interviews with officers of the Mexican American Cultural Center in San Antonio. As a consultant to the Bishops' Conference on Liberty and Justice for All, I witnessed the immense influence exercised by the Hispanic-American caucus. Also see Jacques E. Levy, *Cesar Chavez: Autobiography of La Causa* (New York, 1975), 453–62; and Francis P. Firenza, "Latin American Liberation Theology," *Interpretation*, 28 (1974): 441–57. For eschatological, ecumenical, and biblical perspectives, see Juan Luis Segundo, S. J., *Liberation of Theology*, trans. John Drury (New York, 1976), 138–51, 228–37.

⁵⁵ Handlin, *The Uprooted: The Epic Story of the Great Migrations that Made the American People* (Boston, 1951). Harold Isaacs has seen the psychic intensity but not the theological implications of uprooting and migration; "Basic Group Identity: Idols of the Tribe," 34, *passim*. But such theological implications gave ideological and emotional stamina to ethnoreligious groups; see Timothy L. Smith, "Refugee Orthodox Congregations in Western Europe, 1945–1948," *Church History*, 38 (1969): 320–26; and Stanford E. Marovitz, "The Lonely New Americans of Abraham Cahan," *American Quarterly*, 20 (1968): 197. For comparison, see John A. Jackson, *The Irish in Britain* (London, 1963), xi–xii, 137, 142–44.

⁵⁶ For my brief discussion of this matter, see "Congregation, State, and Denomination: The Forming of

reason, I shall argue, migration was often a theologizing experience—just as it had been when Abraham left the land of his fathers, when the people of the Exodus followed Moses into the wilderness, and when Jeremiah urged the exiles who wept by the rivers of Babylon to make the God of their past the hope of their future.

Preoccupation with the ethical dimension of faith was one outcome of such uprooting. Once in America, immigrants uniformly felt that learning new patterns of correct behavior was crucial to their sense of well-being. Everything was new: the shape and detail of houses, stairways, windows, and stoves; the whir of engines, trolleys, furnaces, and machines; the language, facial expressions, dress, table manners, and forms of both public and private courtesy; and, most important of all, freedom from the moral constraints that village culture had imposed in matters monetary, recreational, occupational, alcoholic, educational, and sexual. Each immigrant had to determine how to act in these new circumstances by reference not simply to a dominant “host” culture but to a dozen competing subcultures, all of which were in the process of adjustment to the materialism and the pragmatism that stemmed from the rush of both newcomers and oldtimers to get ahead.⁵⁷ This complex challenge to choose among competing patterns of behavior affected immigrants in all periods of American history; and they persisted in dealing with it on religious terms. At the turn of the twentieth century, Father Paul Tymkevitch declared that the greatest need of young Rusin Greek Catholics was to acquire “habits”—patterns of behavior ratified by both conscience and example and imprinted by repetition, patterns that would make each person his or her own monitor.⁵⁸

But which cultural home should a young man choose? The tradition-oriented group that had preceded him here from the old country and presented itself as guardian of a past he sensed must disappear? The value system of the Americanizing culture-brokers living on the fringes of his own community? The culture of what he perceived to be a “successful” immigrant group that

an American Religious Structure,” 156–60. For examples from several settings of such sentiments, see Francis Asbury, *Journal and Letters*, ed. J. Manning Potts *et al.*, 1 (Nashville, 1958): 1, 8, 39–40, 72, 77, 123–25; Donald F. Durnbaugh, ed., *The Brethren in Colonial America: A Source Book on the Transplantation and Development of the Church of the Brethren in the Eighteenth Century* (Elgin, Ill., 1967), 229–31; Charlotte J. Erickson, *Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Emigrants in Nineteenth-Century America* (Coral Gables, Fla., 1972), 73–74, 112, 127–28, 182; Alexander S. Salley, Jr., ed., *Narratives of Early Carolina, 1650–1708* (New York, 1911), 175–76; James W. C. Pennington, *The Fugitive Blacksmith; or, Events in the History of James W. C. Pennington, Pastor of a Presbyterian Church, New York, Formerly a Slave . . .* (London, 1850), 67, 77–78; and Levy, *Chavez*, 23–27, 35–39. Also see Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750–1925* (New York, 1976), 265–67.

⁵⁷ For my development of this point, see “A General Theory of Inter-Ethnic Relations among Peoples Migrating from the Old World to the New,” paper read at the Hopkins-Harwichport Seminar in American Religious History, August 1974. Milton Gordon, in contrast with Victor Greene, has remained preoccupied with majority-minority issues; see Gordon, “Toward a General Theory of Racial and Group Relations,” 101–05; and Greene, *For God and Country: The Rise of Polish and Lithuanian Consciousness in America, 1860–1910*, chaps. 4, 5, 8.

⁵⁸ For the Tymkevitch story, see Emily Greene Balch, “A Shepherd of Immigrants,” *Charities*, 13 (1904): 193–94. Also see Gollin, *Moravians in Two Worlds*, 16; and Robert Mirak, “On New Soil: The Armenian Orthodox and Armenian Protestant Churches in the New World to 1915,” in Miller and Marzik, *Immigrants and Religion in Urban America*, 139–40, 150–54, esp. 153.

settled here earlier than his own? One or another of the “native” American subcultures shared by persons of his religious faith? Or the secular and hence nonethnic culture of the wider “urban community,” which he identified with mass communications, politics, popular entertainment, and a soulless economic order? When one personal crisis or another prompted fears of the dissolution of the person the young immigrant thought he had been, ordinary questions of behavior led into more profound ethical ones, setting the terms by which the religion of his forbears had to respond. Occasionally, the response was a radically perfectionist one.⁵⁹

What Marcus Lee Hansen has called “immigrant Puritanism” owed virtually nothing to colonial New England. It was, rather, a predictable reaction to the ethical or behavioral disorientation that affected most immigrants, whatever the place or the century of their arrival. The surprising attraction of the nineteenth-century total abstinence movement to Irish, German, and Slovenian Catholics, as well as to Finnish Lutherans in Minnesota and Massachusetts, illustrates the force of that reaction.⁶⁰ Europeans sometimes complain that American religion is too much concerned with ethical behavior and too little with theological reflection. But to a nation composed of so many migrating peoples, action—right action—was the name of the game. The immigrant’s religion needed both rule and the reformation of rules, both the law and the prophets.⁶¹

Once conceptions of identity and proper behavior had been wrenched loose from the past, the theological interest of new settlers moved naturally to a deep fascination with the future. From its colonial beginnings, the migration of bonded groups or the formation of such groups in the new land made the biblical imagery of the Exodus seem a metaphor for the American experience, not only for English Puritans and Russian Jews, but for Christian villagers of Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox persuasions from all parts of Europe. If the last great wave did not find urban America to be the promised land, the

⁵⁹ Insofar as religious perfectionism has been pervasive in American religious life, its major social impulse lies here. For a discussion of this subject in a somewhat narrower framework, see my *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America* (Nashville, 1957), 103–47. For immigrant perfectionist responses, see Arlow W. Anderson, *The Salt of the Earth: A History of Norwegian-Danish Methodism in America* (Nashville, 1962), 12–17, 28–32; and Solomon Schechter, *Seminary Addresses & Other Papers* (New York, 1915), 42–43, 196–97. For Catholic examples, see Frederic W. Faber, *Growth in Holiness; or, The Progress of the Spiritual Life* (Baltimore, 1855), 1, 15, 34, 130–47; Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism in the United States, 1830–1900*, 178–79, 182; and Coleman and LaBud, *Monsignor Joseph F. Buh, Slovenian Missionary in America, 1864–1922*, 130–31.

⁶⁰ Marcus Lee Hansen, *The Immigrant in American History* (Cambridge, Mass., 1940), 97–128; Coleman and LaBud, *Monsignor Joseph F. Buh, Slovenian Missionary in America, 1864–1922*, 166–99, 226–27; James E. Brady, “Father George Zurcher: Prohibitionist Priest,” *Catholic Historical Review*, 52 (1976): 426–29; Dolan, *Catholic Revivalism in the United States, 1830–1900*, chap. 6; “Temperance and Temperance Movements,” *Catholic Encyclopedia*, 14: 482–93; and Smith, “Religious Denominations as Ethnic Communities: A Regional Case Study,” 210–12. Also see the passage on “Moralism in American Jewish Life” in Joseph L. Blau, *Judaism in America: From Curiosity to Third Faith* (Chicago, 1975), 69–72; and Martin E. Marty, *A Nation of Behavers* (Chicago, 1976), 33–51, 158–79.

⁶¹ For a discussion of the moral preachments of the *maggid* in late nineteenth-century London Jewry, see Lloyd P. Gartner, *The Jewish Immigrant in England, 1870–1914* (London, 1960), 189–91; and, for perceptive comments on the relationship of peasant society to an emerging “ecumenical” moral order geared to the “technical order” of urban civilization, see Robert Redfield, *Human Nature and the Study of Society: The Papers of Robert Redfield*, ed. Margaret P. Redfield, 1 (Chicago, 1962): 282–94.

vision of what William Ellery Channing called, in millennial and Protestant terms, "a Better Day" remained pervasive among them. Charismatic leaders in all ethnic groups were messianic and anticipated something like a New Jerusalem. Linking the American future with the Kingdom of God was not, therefore, an exclusively Yankee obsession, nor the Social Gospel a Protestant preserve. Jews of both Reform and Orthodox faith, radical Irish as well as Chicano Catholics, and Mormon converts from Europe (whose trek to the Great Basin Kingdom seemed at first a flight away from civilization rather than a pilgrimage toward a better one) have also been people of the dream.⁶²

Out of this pervasive social idealism emerged a conviction among both Jewish and Christian groups that theirs were pilgrim peoples, who had by their own choice responded to a divine call and made a covenant to walk with God. Covenant theology, which Perry Miller has demonstrated was central to the Puritan "errand in the wilderness," turns up at least occasionally in the faith of almost every American ethnic group.⁶³ We are not surprised, of course, to find Dutch Reformed, Scottish and Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, French Huguenots, and Reformed Magyars voicing this theme; their heritage in the Genevan Reformation, whether filtered through the Westminster Assembly of Divines or not, is obvious. But when Mennonites and Pietist Moravians sing about it in colonial Pennsylvania and pioneer Baptists, German Lutherans, and Scandinavian free-churchmen in the Ohio Valley pick up the refrain, we must stop to listen. We hear echoes of the same conviction in the appeals of nineteenth-century Irish, German, and French Catholic missionaries to the Midwest and, later, in the pastoral addresses of Eastern Orthodox bishops. The doctrine of a people in covenant with God attracted individuals who in the American maze way bonded themselves in faith with persons whom they would have regarded as strangers in their homelands.⁶⁴ Only in the last few decades have students of the ancient Near East discovered evidence that belonging in ancient Israel may have rested less on descent from

⁶² Ernest Lee Tuveson, *Redeemer Nation: The Idea of America's Millennial Role* (Chicago, 1968); William Ellery Channing, *The Perfect Life* (1873; reprint ed., Boston, 1901), 116–19, 194–96, *passim*; and Coleman and LaBud, *Monsignor Joseph F. Buh, Slovenian Missionary in America, 1864–1922*, 186. Also see Max Vorspan and Lloyd P. Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles* (San Marino, Calif., 1970), 157; Francis, *In Search of Utopia: The Mennonites of Manitoba*, 5, 35–39, 81–86; William Mulder, *Homeward to Zion: The Mormon Migration from Scandinavia* (Minneapolis, 1957), 137–45, 149, 154–55, 163, 178; and Forster, *Zion on the Mississippi: The Settlement of the Saxon Lutherans in Missouri, 1839–1841*, 87, 134–36, 151–52.

⁶³ Miller, "The Marrow of Puritan Divinity," in *Errand into the Wilderness* (Cambridge, Mass., 1956), 48–98. But George H. Williams has suggested that immigrant congregations were not preoccupied with the future, but looked either backward or upward; Williams, "The Wilderness and Paradise in the History of the Church," *Church History*, 28 (1959): 6–7.

⁶⁴ Robert Friedmann, "The Doctrine of the Two Worlds," in Guy F. Hershberger, ed., *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision* (Scottsdale, Pa., 1962), 110–13, 116–17; Gollin, *Moravians in Two Worlds*, 13–19; John F. Cody, *The Origin and Development of the Missionary Baptist Church in Indiana* (Franklin, Ind., 1942), 30, *passim*; Forster, *Zion on the Mississippi: The Settlement of the Saxon Lutherans in Missouri, 1839–1841*, 87, 134–36, 151–52; Armas K. Holmio, "The Beginnings of Finnish Church Life in America," in Ralph J. Kalkanen, ed., *The Faith of the Finns: Historical Perspectives on the Finnish Church in America* (East Lansing, Mich., 1972), 127–28; Simirenko, Introduction to *Pilgrims, Colonists, Frontiersmen: An Ethnic Community in Transition*; Henry Zwaanstra, *Reformed Thought and Experience in a New World: A Study of the Christian Reformed Church and Its American Environment, 1890–1918* (The Hague, 1973), 91–93; and George Dolak, *A History of the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States of America, 1902–1927* (St. Louis, 1955), "Epilog," 163. Also see Max Weber, "Ethnic Groups," 305–08.

Jacob than upon an act of commitment—that is, on the willingness of a company of former slaves from Egypt and of persons who became their confederates in the land of Canaan to own the Covenant of Righteousness and call themselves Jahweh's people.⁶⁵

Accompanying this fascination with a covenanted future was an extensive personalizing of religious faith—a process frequently confused with making it private or individualistic. True, the experience of uprooting and resettlement was a remarkably solitary one, and the traumatic aspects of it affected each person individually. The result, however, was not to make individual experience the measure of faith but to enlarge the sense of personal involvement in one's religious community and in its systems of belief and prescriptions for behavior. Immigrant congregations served diverse family, group, and individual interests. They were not transplants of traditional institutions but communities of commitment and, therefore, arenas of change.⁶⁶ Often founded by lay persons and always dependent on voluntary support, their structures, leadership, and liturgy had to be shaped to meet pressing human needs.⁶⁷ The same was true of the regional and national ethnic denominations or subcommunities which emerged in America. They had to justify themselves by nurturing those morally transforming experiences that the whole membership perceived to be “saving.”⁶⁸

Pastors, rabbis, and lay officers responded to this challenge to make religion more personal by reinterpreting scriptures and creeds to allow ancient observances to serve new purposes. The nineteenth-century Protestant custom of a weekly “social meeting” for prayer, testimony, and mutual encouragement was not the creation of native-born Baptist or Methodist enthusiasts. Nor was it a popularization of John Wesley's “class meeting.” Drawing upon the German tradition of Pietist conventicles, an immigrant pastor, Philip William

⁶⁵ For a summary of the scholarship of the preceding twenty years, see Edward F. Campbell, “Moses and the Foundation of Israel,” *Interpretation*, 29 (1975): 141–54.

⁶⁶ William Warren Sweet taught a generation of historians that revivalism made religion more individualistic; Sweet, *Revivalism in America* (New York, 1945), xi–xiv, *passim*. Also see William G. McLoughlin, ed., Introduction to *The American Evangelicals, 1800–1900* (New York, 1968); Marty, *A Nation of Behavers*, 15, 34. But see Kukkonen, “The Influence of the Revival Movements of Finland on the Finnish Lutheran Churches in America,” 132. W. Clark Roof has argued that substantive commitment, not organizational affiliation, should be the central conceptual concern in analyzing religious congregations; Roof, “The Local-Cosmopolite Orientation and Traditional Religious Commitment,” *Sociological Analysis*, 33 (1972): 1–3.

⁶⁷ This is a key point in my “Congregation, State, and Denomination: The Forming of the American Religious Structure.” Also see Dolan, *The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815–1865*, 53–84; Briggs, “Church Building in America: Divergent and Convergent Interests of Priests and Lay People in Italian-American Communities”; Daniel S. Buczek, *Immigrant Pastor: The Life of the Right Reverend Monsignor Lucyan Bójnowski of New Britain, Connecticut* (Waterbury, Conn., 1974), 13–16, 18, 39–52, 63; and Maxwell Whiteman, “Philadelphia's Jewish Neighborhoods,” in Allen F. Davis and Mark F. Haller, eds., *The Peoples of Philadelphia: A History of Ethnic Groups and Lower-Class Life, 1790–1940* (Philadelphia, 1973), 232–37.

⁶⁸ Conzen, *Immigrant Milwaukee, 1836–1860*, 159–68; Vorspan and Gartner, *History of the Jews of Los Angeles*, 55–58, 154–64; Dolan, *The Immigrant Church: New York's Irish and German Catholics, 1815–1865*, 64–66, 75–77; and Larkin, “The Devotional Revolution in Ireland, 1850–1875,” 649–52. Also see Gotthardt D. Bernheim, *History of the German Settlements and of the Lutheran Church in North and South Carolina . . .* (Philadelphia, 1872), 205–24, *passim*.

Otterbein, fashioned the new institution on the eve of the Revolutionary War in order to cultivate “inward Christianity” among his parishioners. Two examples of shifting emphases in Jewish rituals stand out. The steady elaboration of the ceremony of bar mitzvah reflected communal anxieties about growing up in a pluralistic society that did not recognize the norms of the subculture. And the intensified observance of kaddish (prayers for the dead) testified less to the strength of tradition than to the deepening sense of the significance of individual life in a world of relentless change.⁶⁹ The many forms of religious revivalism, I have argued elsewhere, were not “individualistic” in the usual sense that term suggests; though they made faith a profoundly personal experience, their aim and outcome was to bind individuals to new communities of belief and action.⁷⁰

Notions of pilgrimage and expectations of personal and cultural change magnified concern for a basis of moral and religious authority that could provide a sense of permanence to those adapting themselves to shifting social realities. Catholic and Jewish concepts of the authority of tradition, which in theory made the interpretation of biblical truth adaptive, gave place steadily to reliance upon the Bible itself. The result, however, was not to throttle but to enhance the freedom of immigrant pastors and rabbis to adjust faith and practice to new situations. True, the doctrine of papal infallibility—proclaimed, as chance would have it, in the period of greatest Catholic migration—attempted to freeze out innovative appeals to the Scriptures by asserting the ultimate authority of those traditions ratified by Rome.⁷¹ During the same era Protestant fundamentalists, in a doubly ironic development, employed a largely new conception of the Bible’s verbal inerrancy to promote innovations in millenarian doctrines as well as to protect other, older doctrines from the rise of scientism and religious modernism.⁷² Immigrant congregations, however, were in the vortex of change and found custom and tradition—whether rabbinical, denominational, or pontifical—insufficient to chart their path through a world that seemed increasingly like Alice’s moral Wonderland.

⁶⁹ For an incisive summary of the new—“modern”—meanings Czech peasants attached to old rituals, ceremonies, and festivals, see Barton, “Religion and Cultural Change in Czech Immigrant Communities,” 10–11, 15. Also see Miller, “Irish Catholicism and the Great Famine,” 87–93; and O’Dea, “Stability and Change and the Dual Role of Religion,” 161–65, 171–72. For the Otterbein story, see Tanis, “Reformed Pietism in Colonial America,” 70–72. My interpretation of Jewish rituals is based on a conversation with Lloyd P. Gartner in November 1976. For Irish resistance to the efforts of their priests to curb extensive wakes, see Dolan, *The Immigrant Church: New York’s Irish and German Catholics, 1815–1865*, 60–62, 92.

⁷⁰ Smith, “Congregation, State, and Denomination: The Forming of the American Religious Structure,” 174–75, and *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America*, 80–88. Also see Donald Mathews, “The Second Great Awakening as an Organizing Movement,” *American Quarterly*, 21 (1969): 23–43; and Rhys Isaac, “Preachers and Patriots: Popular Culture and the Revolution in Virginia,” in Alfred E. Young, ed., *The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism* (DeKalb, Ill., 1976), 138–40.

⁷¹ For a wise review of the “progressive” view of scriptural authority which papal action suppressed, see James T. Burtchaell, *Catholic Theories of Biblical Inspiration since 1810: A Review and Critique* (London, 1969), 282–305.

⁷² Ernest R. Sandeen, *The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism, 1800–1930* (Chicago, 1970), 103–31.

As in the cases of migrating Quakers and Mennonites in colonial Pennsylvania, growing attachment of nineteenth-century ethnic denominations to the authority of the Bible stemmed from expanding perceptions of the relevance of its central principles to new situations.⁷³ Leaders of the Christian Reformed Church, composed of Dutch Calvinists who emigrated to the upper Midwest after the American Civil War, explicitly disavowed both Old World social customs and their own formal commitment to a literal interpretation of Scripture when they supported the prohibition movement. The broader biblical principle of love for one's neighbor and of responsibility to bear his burdens, they said, was in this case binding. For two decades Swedish Mission Covenant congregations in America were able to cooperate with the Congregationalists at Chicago Theological Seminary because Paul P. Waldenström, their spiritual leader in Scandinavia, had taught them to use the Bible to cast off Lutheran scholasticism. His progressive use of scriptural authority—which exactly paralleled that of America's mid-nineteenth-century social reformers—held back his emigrant coreligionists from fundamentalism, even though they were committed to preserving the “fundamental” doctrines of Christian faith.⁷⁴

Major spokesmen for Judaism also displayed growing attachment to scriptural as against traditional authority. Isaac M. Wise, in a series of essays and addresses in support of Reform Judaism, appealed to the biblical prophets and to modern rational judgment in declaring that the Ten Commandments were the essence of the Torah. The “Law of Moses,” comprising the body of the Pentateuch, “reduces to practice the fundamental concept of the Decalogue,” he said, “and expounds and expands its doctrines”; but the detailed provisions of Mosaic law were binding only upon Jews residing in the Land of Promise. The Ten Commandments are, however, “eternal law and doctrine,” Wise declared. Progressive and law-abiding Jews must decide in the light of both conscience and reason which of their traditional rules and customs would fulfill those principles in the lands of their wandering and lead them to “salvation by righteousness.” Solomon Schechter declared at the dedication

⁷³ C. Norman Kraus, “American Mennonites and the Bible, 1750–1950,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 41 (1971): 320–23. Forster has recounted the crisis of discredited allegiances amidst which the Lutheran Missouri Synod's biblicism emerged; *Zion on the Mississippi: The Settlement of the Saxon Lutherans in Missouri, 1839–1841*, 75, 82, 173, 279, 464–66, 520. But see Milton L. Rudnick, *Fundamentalism & the Missouri Synod: A Historical Study of Their Interaction and Mutual Influence* (St. Louis, 1966), 68, 75–84. Armas Holmio and Walter Kukkonen have stressed the socially adaptive aspects of revivalist biblicism in Finland, but they have shown the potential for a rigid defense of the objective “word” that developed in one of the three branches of Finnish Lutherans in the United States; Holmio, “The Beginnings of Finnish Church Life in America,” 112–17; and Kukkonen, “The Influence of the Revival Movements of Finland on the Finnish Lutheran Churches in America,” 122–27.

⁷⁴ Zwaanstra, *Reformed Thought and Experience in a New World: A Study of the Christian Reformed Church and Its American Environment, 1890–1918*, esp. 220–23; and, for other evidences of a progressive adaptation of religious views, see *ibid.*, 49–58, 239–50; Frederick A. Hale, “Trans-Atlantic Conservative Protestantism in the Evangelical Free and Mission Covenant Traditions” (Ph.D. dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 1977), 143–53, 294–97; and Stephenson, *Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration*, 106–09. For progressive implications of Scandinavian free-church migration, see Anderson, *Norwegian-Americans*, 95–108; and Blegen, *Norwegian Migration to America: The American Transition*, 131–52. For German Catholic progressivism, see Gleason, *Conservative Reformers: German-American Catholics and the Social Order*, 116–44. Also see Forster, *Zion on the Mississippi: The Settlement of Saxon Lutherans in Missouri, 1839–1841*, 53.

of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in 1903 that “this country is, as everybody knows, a creation of the Bible, particularly of the Old Testament.” And the Bible is “still holding its own,” he continued, despite the rising influence of higher criticism, which Schechter called “Higher Anti-Semitism.”⁷⁵

Uprooted persons seeking a new community needed both a principle of authority and a dynamic and essentially “progressive” use of it. Their way of relying on Scriptures placed them in what had become the mainstream of American evangelical thought.⁷⁶ Even in the colonial period America was not settled by persons with radical religious views; either they were progressives or became so here. They were restrained from radicalism by the value they placed on their past and from reaction by their faith in a better future. In *Herzog* Saul Bellow expressed precisely one dimension of this American mood: “Personal responsibility for history, a trait of Western culture, rooted in the Testaments, Old and New, the idea of the continual improvement of human life on earth. What else explained Herzog’s ridiculous intensity?”⁷⁷

In such ways the acts of uprooting, migration, resettlement, and community-building became for the participants a theologizing experience, not the secularizing process that some historians have pictured. If George Gallup’s pollsters are even remotely accurate in their recent finding that Americans are second only to citizens of India in the pervasiveness and intensity of their religious beliefs and practices, the myths of wholesale secularization are no longer tenable.⁷⁸ Migration into modernity may have finished off the hilltop gods of village, tribe, and monastic retreat; but it neither dethroned in Jewish minds the God of Israel nor destroyed in Christian understanding the lordship of Jesus over history. The folk theology and religious piety that flourished in immigrant churches from the beginnings of American settlement were not merely traditional but progressive. Belief and devotion were powerful impulses to accommodation and innovation; and both helped legitimate the behavior, the perceptions, and the structures of association that sustained the processes of change.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Isaac M. Wise, *Essays and Addresses* (1901; reprint ed., New York, 1969), 133–34, 151–52, 157, 159–63; and Schechter, *Seminary Addresses & Other Papers*, 36–37, 48–49. The ethical emphases in Wise’s sermon on the character of Moses exactly parallel those of William Ellery Channing’s sermon, preached forty years earlier, on “Jesus Christ, the Brother, Friend, and Saviour.” For the text of the latter, see Channing, *The Perfect Life*, 238–40. For the importance of the Bible to Swedish Methodists, see Stephenson, *Religious Aspects of Swedish Immigration*, 118; and, for the centrality of biblical authority in Protestant social radicalism, see George D. Herron, *Social Meanings of Religious Experiences* (1896; reprint ed., New York, 1969), xiii–xxiv, *passim*.

⁷⁶ George M. Marsden, *The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience* (New Haven, 1970), 99–100, 111–16, 142–50, 169–74; and Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America*, 101, 144, 147, 216–20. Jerry Wayne Brown has provided evidence that the most sophisticated and “progressive” biblical scholarship in New England emanated from evangelical Andover, though the structure of his book argues a Unitarian pre-eminence; see *The Rise of Biblical Criticism in America, 1800–1870: The New England Scholars* (Middletown, Conn., 1969), 46–63.

⁷⁷ Bellow, *Herzog* (1976), chap. 11.

⁷⁸ Peter C. Wagner, “How Christian Is America?” *Christianity Today*, 21 (1976): 12–16.

⁷⁹ See Seymour Martin Lipset, *The First New Nation: The United States in Historical and Comparative Perspective* (London, 1963), 140–41, 158–69. The religious impulse to innovation was, I think, one basis for the working-class political progressivism described by J. Joseph Huthmacher; see his “Urban Liberalism and the Age of Reform,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 49 (1962): 234–39.

The role of Protestant evangelicalism among American blacks confirms that religion contributed in this progressive way both to the formation and to the ideology of ethnic groups. The situation of blacks differed dramatically from that of Europeans, Asians, and Hispanic-Americans, whose forebears came to this country by choice. Such memories as persisted of their African religious traditions were fragmented and suppressed as slaveowners denied them the freedom to choose their neighbors and companions and to follow their own ways and times of religious observance. Partly as a consequence of this imposed disorientation, the psychic and the organizational bases of the sense of peoplehood matured only in the nineteenth century, after generations of enslavement.⁸⁰ Emancipation rather than migration, therefore, was the watershed that separated their “new world” from the old. By the time of emancipation, however, their vanguard was explicitly committed to constructing a future out of materials borrowed from white Protestants, particularly from the evangelical Methodists and Baptists, who had secured their conversion and sanctioned, though sometimes reluctantly, their desire for separate congregations. Consequently, for decades Protestant blacks in America made their churches the center of their social life and of their efforts at ethnic—blacks called it “racial”—progress.⁸¹

But consider the ideas that black preachers, once free, made central to their exposition of biblical faith: the doctrine of God’s providential rule over history; close identification with the exodus of a liberated people who they understood were chosen for service, not sovereignty, and by grace, not merit; the conviction that internalized moral law, a covenant of righteousness, was the only sure basis for social order; and the biblical—especially the New Testament—affirmation of human worth and personal identity in this world and the next.⁸² Whether these elements in the theology of nineteenth-century blacks were in any part reconstitutions of ideas that had prevailed earlier in Islamic or other African religions is not, from the point of view of this essay, a crucial question. They were, in fact, aspects of the Hebrew and Christian faiths that most American immigrants also believed gave divine sanction and direction to their long pilgrimage toward a more just, happy, and humane tomorrow.

⁸⁰ Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York, 1974), 161–284. Herbert Gutman has pushed a fine point too far in positing a cultural system among slaves—or a racial element in their bi-culturation—that rested exclusively on the ties of family and kinship. He has, however, convincingly demonstrated that these ties were present and powerful. See Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom*, 260–64.

⁸¹ For their ambivalence, see Leon F. Litwack, “Free at Last,” in Hareven, *Anonymous Americans: Explorations in Nineteenth-Century Social History*, 142–51, 158–66. Also see E. Franklin Frazier, *The Negro in the United States* (rev. ed., New York, 1957), 338–53; Theodore Hershberger, “Free Blacks in Antebellum Philadelphia,” in Davis and Haller, *The Peoples of Philadelphia*, 120–21; James W. St. G. Walker, “The Establishment of a Free Black Community in Nova Scotia, 1783–1840,” in Martin L. Kilson and Robert I. Rotberg, eds., *The African Diaspora: Interpretative Essays* (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), 205–07, 214–19; and David M. Tucker, *Black Pastors and Leaders: Memphis, 1819–1972* (Memphis, 1975), 41–54, *passim*.

⁸² See my “Slavery and Theology: The Emergence of Black Christian Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century America,” *Church History*, 41 (1972): 497–512. For a sophisticated updating of the idea of the Exodus in black theology, see James Cone, “Biblical Revelation and Social Existence,” *Interpretation*, 28 (1974): 422–40.

MIGRATION AND RESETTLEMENT, then, altered the relationship between faith and ethnic identity by redefining the boundaries of peoplehood and by intensifying religious reflection and commitment. But it also breathed new life into messianic and millennialist hopes for the unity of all mankind and consequently prevented the cementing of the new patterns of belonging into a permanent American mosaic. In a new nation faced from its beginnings with the problems of unity and diversity, the revitalization of religious convictions accentuated the claim of both Judaism and Christianity to universality and renewed the impulse, largely suppressed among Jews since the first century of the Christian era, to recruit all human beings into a common circle of faith and fellowship.

The idea of a common humanity stands at the center of all major Western religions, and each of the ethnosectarian versions of Jewish and Christian faith in America affirms it. The countercurrents were formidable, to be sure, and on many occasions proved the stronger. But from the beginning—recall Count Zinzendorf's dream of establishing in colonial Pennsylvania an ecumenical "congregation of God in the Spirit"—the conviction that ethnic religiosity is not enough, that biblical faith is both incisive and inclusive and celebrates both particular and universal values has been an important support to the integrative pluralism John Higham has recently described in more secular terms. The ethnic springs of modern American religiosity have given the national culture not a backwater of static dogmas and rituals but a many-channeled stream of conviction that mankind must become one people.⁸³

A few illustrations, drawn from both dominant and marginal groups in each faith, must suffice. Reform rabbis in America revived the ecumenical view of monotheism, which in the Book of Genesis was associated with a migratory and pilgrim family, and linked it to reason, science, and progressive democracy. Isaac Wise unashamedly called their conception of the future identical to the Social Gospel's "Kingdom of God."⁸⁴ At an opposite pole, the most marginal Jewish sectarians, the *Hasidim*, revived mystical and messianic visions that, in their expectations of the future as well as their search for righteousness through spiritual devotion, likewise broke out of the constraints that rabbinical Judaism sought everywhere to maintain. Thus, in both Reform Judaism and Hasidism, universalism sprang not from the denial of themes that had long been integral to Jewish religious thought but from an enlarged emphasis upon them.⁸⁵

Originally, Christianity was a Jewish sect. Jesus' "good news" was to fulfill

⁸³ David J. O'Brien has stressed the ideal of universal human brotherhood, as opposed to class or national interests, in Dorothy Day's Catholic Worker movement; O'Brien, *American Catholics and Social Reform: The New Deal Years* (New York, 1968), 201–04, 221–27. On Zinzendorf, see Gollin, *Moravians in Two Worlds*, 18–19; and Jacob John Sessler, *Communal Pietism among Early American Moravians* (New York, 1933), 20–71.

⁸⁴ Wise, *Essays and Addresses*, 218–20.

⁸⁵ Gershom Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism, and Other Essays in Jewish Spirituality* (New York, 1971), 194–95, 200–01. For a sober re-evaluation of Martin Buber's interpretation of Hasidism, see *ibid.*, 238–48. Also see Scholem, *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism*, 337–44; and Fackenheim, *God's Presence in History: Jewish Affirmations and Philosophical Reflections*, 8–19, *passim*.

God's promise that in Abraham's seed the gentiles would also share the blessings of the covenant. St. Paul's insistence that in Christ there was neither Jew nor Greek wove together strands common to the theology of both faiths. In Western Christendom thereafter the resistance to sectarianism by the established churches rested on claims to universality that lie at the heart of the New Testament and, in the apostolic reinterpretation of it, of the Old Testament as well. We ought not to be surprised, therefore, to find the idea of catholicity as prominent in the teachings of eighteenth-century Quakers as in those of the Anglican Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. John Wesley's inclusive notion of a world parish served his followers as well in the eighteenth century, when they were dissenting Anglicans, as in the nineteenth, when Methodists became the largest Protestant denomination in the United States.⁸⁶ During the latter century also, Rome's "missionary" bishops in America appealed to the idea of catholicity in resisting the formation of ethnic parishes and dioceses. These separate units were demanded—first by German priests and then by Polish, Italian, Czech, Slovak, French Canadian, Slovenian, Portuguese, and Spanish-American ones—on alternative "ecumenical" grounds: God was not interested in Americanization but in Christianization. Francis Hodur, who left the Roman communion, stood for catholic Polishness, while his countrymen who remained loyal to the existing structure stood for Polish Catholicism in a pluralistic church.⁸⁷

Similarly, the ethnic Greeks, the dominant group among the Eastern Orthodox, supported the universalist policies of the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople. Though always Greek, the patriarchs were committed by their struggles for the leadership of Orthodoxy outside Eastern Europe to the ancient doctrine of "one city, one bishop" against the intentions of American Serbs, Rumanians, "Russians," Syrians, or Bulgarians to acknowledge only ethnic bishops who were loyal to the patriarchs of Belgrade, Bucharest, Moscow, Antioch, or Sofia. But in their devotion to the notion of ecumenicity the American Greeks were far behind the band of exiled Russian priests led by Georges Florovsky and his protégés, Alexander Schmemmann and John Meyendorff. Between the two world wars Florovsky made the tiny Paris hilltop where Saint Sergius Seminary and Nicholas Berdyaev were housed the intellectual and spiritual center for the theological revival of ecumenical Orthodoxy in Western Europe. After World War II Schmemmann and Meyendorff accomplished the same for Saint Vladimir's Seminary in Yonkers, New York.⁸⁸

With these illustrations in mind, the declarations of the religious leaders of American blacks, compounded of affirmations and renunciations of their

⁸⁶ Semmel, *Methodist Revolution*, 90, 97, 152–57; and Albert C. Outler, *John Wesley*, Library of Protestant Thought (Oxford, 1964), 20–21.

⁸⁷ Buczek, *Immigrant Pastor: The Life of the Right Reverend Lucyan Bójnowski*, 13, 15–16, 62–63; and William Galush, "The Polish National Catholic Church: A Survey of Its Origin, Development, and Missions," *Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia*, 83 (1972): 137–38, *passim*.

⁸⁸ For this story in more detail, see my "Refugee Orthodox Congregations in Western Europe, 1945–1948," 316–17, 321. Also see George H. Williams, "George Vasilievich Florovsky: His American Career (1938–1965)," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review*, 11 (1965): 9–12, 23–33, 100–06. On the "catholic" ideal in Uniate faith, see Nemeč, "Ruthenian Uniate Church," 386–87.

oneness with white Christians, reflect both their reaction to racism and their awareness of the biblical teaching of a common humanity. The African Methodist Episcopal Church, which for generations followed both biblical and Methodist prescriptions in proclaiming the unity of the human race, was in this respect not one step ahead of the Church of God and Bible Prophecy or of Father Divine.⁸⁹

THIS EXTENDED SUMMARY OF THE RELATIONSHIP between religion and ethnicity in America demonstrates that we have now come to the point where anthropological, sociological, psychological, and historical perspectives on ethnicity can coalesce.⁹⁰ The volume recently edited by sociologists Nathan Glazer and Daniel P. Moynihan and the recent work of numerous anthropologists reveal the enrichment and diversification of theory and empirical analysis that has come from the comparative study of worldwide ethnic group relationships. Meanwhile, Josef Barton's *Peasants and Strangers* has signaled the growing preoccupation of younger historians of ethnicity with complexity, ambivalence, contradiction, and what I call—in conscious rejection of the metaphors of both melting pot and mosaic—kaleidoscopic change. Scholars in all of these fields should abandon the notion that a set of fixed primordial realities lies behind the changing ethnoreligious relationships we are able to observe and analyze. That Heraclitus should replace Thales as our mentor will please those who find Alfred North Whitehead a modern culture hero. Perhaps also some may be pleased to discover that Moses, Jesus, and Paul were also prophets of process theology—men who called us away from simplistic notions of order, virtue, or psychic health and demanded that we deal with the real and mysteriously complex world of change in terms less doctrinaire and more compassionate than either religious or intellectual dogmatists have recently employed.

⁸⁹ Richard Allen, *The Life, Experience, and Gospel Labors of the Rt. Rev. Richard Allen, To Which Is Annexed the Rise and Progress of the African Methodist Episcopal Church . . .* (New York, 1960), 15–41, 70–71; and Benjamin T. Tanner, *An Apology for African Methodism* (Baltimore, 1867), 195.

⁹⁰ Edward Shils, "On the Comparative Study of the New States," in Geertz, *Old Societies and New States*, 12–15.